

THE PULSE

MCFARLAND UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a church with heart - weekly newsletter

*"I will put my teaching in their minds and write it on their hearts..!"
Jeremiah 31:33*

January 13 - January 20, 2022

(This Pulse is the same as the one sent earlier today except the date above is corrected. Sorry if that was confusing!)

HAPPENING EVERY WEEK

You can find brief descriptions of these weekly programs on our website:

mcfarlanducc.org



SUNDAY Morning, 10 am Zoom Worship

<https://zoom.us/j/97010988439> Password: **bettogether**



SUNDAY Morning, 12 noon Zoom Bible Study

<https://zoom.us/j/262314649>



MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8 am Morning Devotion

<https://zoom.us/j/94276813637>



WEDNESDAY Eve., 6:30 pm Midweek Inhale Spiritual Practices

<https://zoom.us/j/123020606>

Happening This Week

**Sunday, January 16th, 10:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship On Zoom
Only <https://zoom.us/j/97010988439>**

Password: *bettogether*



N.I.O.N.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN
TO END CHILD SEPARATION
AT THE BORDER.

*Thursday, January 20th at 6:30
p.m. NION Monthly Meeting*

(NION stands for "Now In Our Name" and is our Immigration Justice and Compassion Outreach Group.) We meet the third Thursday of each month on zoom. Here's the zoom link for this meeting, and remember that zoom links for meetings are also always available on our website calendar.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88499213430>

Upcoming Events

Kickstarting Our McFarland UCC Racial Justice Conversations (beginning Tuesday, February 1st)

New year, new conversations! (From Jayne Fischer and our Racial Justice Ministries Team)

We are continuing our journey to educate ourselves on what has happened and is still happening to people of color in our country. Last year we read and discussed three books on Racial Justice issues. This year, we plan to watch the PBS Wisconsin series "Why Race Matters," which aired in 2021 but can be streamed at <https://pbswisconsin.org/why-race-matters/videos/>.

Each video is about 20 minutes long, and we'll watch one episode each week and then discuss what stood out to us and what we learned. **We'll meet on Zoom every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m., starting Feb. 1, for seven weeks.** Our local PBS Wisconsin reporter Angela Fitzgerald is host and producer of the series, and each episode features an interview between Angela and a local person of color on a different topic relevant to racial justice.

If you would like to be part of this discussion, please contact Jayne Fischer at jdfischer2@gmail.com.

Also, here are two upcoming opportunities to learn more about racial justice:

1. *Monday, January 17th at 8:00 p.m.* PBS Wisconsin Martin Luther King Day Special



A series of conversations recognizing the unique challenges Black people face in the U.S. today and celebrating the resilience of those fighting for social justice. This show is produced by Angela Fitzgerald, host and producer of the “Why Race Matters” PBS series.

2. *Tuesday, January 25th at 6:30 p.m.* Nikole Hannah-Jones at the Wisconsin Union Theater and streamed online for free (registration link below)



Nikole Hannah-Jones is the Pulitzer Prize-winning creator of The 1619 Project, staff writer at The New York Times Magazine, and co-founder of the Ida B. Wells Society for Investigative Reporting. Hannah-Jones will reflect on the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., through the lens of her award-winning work investigating racial injustice and the consequences of slavery in American history.

This in-person event will also be streamed online for free.

Register at <https://union.wisc.edu/events-and-activities/event-calendar/event/mlk-symposium-an-evening-with-nikole-hannah-jones/>.



January 14 (Friday) Younger Youth Meeting Canceled

As I shared last week, SaLT and I agreed we should not meet in person in our building this month. At this point let's assume that we're on for the second Friday of February (2/11/22). I'll be in touch as that time approaches, and if the pandemic is going to keep us from meeting in person then we'll have a zoom meeting again for the younger kids in February.

Teen Youth: Pastor Bryan will be in touch with you all through email to figure out our next steps.



Sunday, January 23rd, Congregational Annual Meeting On Zoom Only Once Again

As we did last year, we will have a shortened 30 minute zoom worship on the 23rd and then begin our annual meeting immediately. Please plan on being with us for the meeting so that we have a quorum of members present. Visitors and friends are more than welcome to stay for the meeting but you can also feel free to jump off zoom once our worship is over and our meeting begins.

All of our annual reports are available on our church website, and ***here is a link if you would like to read them.***

If you would like a printed copy of these reports please let Pastor Bryan know, though of course you can print them out yourself from the website.

A Few



Words From Pastor Bryan

This coming Monday is Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday

once again. This past week it has become clear that our elected representatives are most likely not going to pass the voting rights legislation currently before them that will protect the rights of all persons and minority populations in particular to vote as easily as possible.

The irony of celebrating King as a national hero while refusing to pass voting rights legislation is both obvious and lamentable, to put it mildly. Actually, I don't feel like putting it mildly. When I think of all the effort and political maneuvering that has gone into trying to limit the vote of communities of color in the past couple of years alone, with a view toward stealing upcoming elections, I find it disgusting, dangerous, cowardly, and demonic--not to mention a threat to democracy and brazen contempt for the best values at the heart of the American experiment.

Yeah. I've got some strong feelings about this, and I am glad that a number of you do as well.

On the positive side, I am so grateful that our congregation will soon be starting a new racial justice series of discussions on Tuesday evenings. I am grateful beyond words that so many of you want to engage this topic and that you and we as a congregation refuse to be silent regarding racism. I am proud (humbled really) that we are continuing as a congregation to wrestle with issues connected to white privilege and implicit bias, and that we are willing to do the hardest work of all, which is to be willing to look into our own hearts and attitudes and family backgrounds and to be willing to acknowledge our own growing edges and complicity with racist ideas and practices. I am so glad that our congregation realizes how little sense it makes to gather in the name of Jesus and NOT deal openly and deliberately with racism and injustice wherever it is found.

What I most want to lift up in these "few words" however is how much I value Martin Luther King Jr.'s courage and faith as a follower of Jesus. Like all of us, he was an imperfect human with his own struggles and issues. But he was willing to take a stand for Spirit-Centered, Love-

Centered Justice, and to pay the price for his bold witness with his life. That's why I chose a picture of him here with the cross in the background. He knew full well that his position on racial justice would likely cost him his life, and he refused to back down. In other words, he was willing to follow Jesus all the way to the cross. In one of his books Dr. King recounted the moment he was sitting at his kitchen table just after hearing about the 4 young girls who were killed when their church was bombed. He said that from that day on he knew his life would be a consistent march toward the cross and that his own days were numbered. And march on he did.

Not many of us will ever be asked by God to literally put our lives on the line in order to stand for justice and love and Gospel Truth. For most of us, the crosses we sometimes carry come in more subtle forms. Being willing to speak up when it would be easier to be quiet for example. Being willing to let someone know that you don't find a "racial joke" funny or a racial slur acceptable, and that you simply don't want to hear their racist opinions anymore. Being willing to lose a friend or a job or some kind of opportunity because you refuse to be quiet. Being willing to challenge a policy or practice that you know is somehow skewed against people of color, even when that was not the overt intention of the policy. Being willing to have the reputation of being the "pain in the neck who is always bringing this stuff up." The one who can't just relax and go along. The one who can't take a joke, and who takes life too seriously. The one who is always "virtue signaling." Things like that.

We as a church will continue to take deliberate steps toward "doing justice" when it comes to issues connected to race, regardless of what the rest of our nation chooses to do or not do. For that I give thanks, and I know God will guide, sustain, and bless our efforts.

I close below with a several of my favorite quotes from Dr. King. God knows we desperately need his wisdom, faith, and courage at this point in history.

Hope to see you all Sunday,

Pastor Bryan

From Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter."

"There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love."

"Those who passively accept evil are as much involved in it as those who help to perpetrate it. Those who accept evil without protesting against it are really cooperating with it."

"We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. Whoever is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies."

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend."

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