**Manchester United Methodist Church**

**Racial Justice Book List**

*This sampling of reading about racial justice was compiled by MUMC’s Racial Justice Committee.*

**NONFICTION**

* ***Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race***, Debby Irving, 2016. Elephant Room Press. Powerful, personal account of one woman’s journey toward awareness of racial disparities in the U.S.
* ***The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness***, Micelle Alexander, 2011. The New Press. Looks at the disproportionate incarceration of African-Americans and Hispanics in the U.S. as a caste system which imposes social control similarly to Jim Crow laws.
* ***Black Like Me***, John Howard Griffin, 1960. Reprinted 2003 New American Library. Classic account of a white man who medically darkened his skin to experience life as an African-American in the U.S. South during the Civil Rights Era.
* ***Ferguson & Faith, Sparking Leadership and Awakening Community***, Leah Gunning Francis, 2015. Chalice Press. Seminary professor Leah Gunning Francis was among the activists during the Ferguson protests after the shooting death of Michael Brown. Her interviews with more than two dozen faith leaders and with the new movement's organizers take us behind the scenes of the continuing protests.
* ***Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys and the Dawn of a New America***, Gilbert King, 2013. Harper Collins. This 2013 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction is a gripping true story of racism, murder, rape and the law. It brings to light one of the most dramatic court cases in American history, and offers a rare and revealing portrait of Thurgood Marshall, the future Supreme Court Justice, that the world has never seen before.
* ***What If?: Short Stories to Spark Diversity Dialogue***, Steve Robbins, 2008, Nicholas Brealey. Robbins provides 26 inspiring, lively, and sometimes deeply personal stories illustrating diversity and inclusion concepts. He offers insight and practical advice on how to reconcile unity with diversity and reframe our organizations for competitive advantages.
* ***Citizen: An American Lyric,*** Claudia Rankine, 2014, Graywolf Press. Rankine's bold new book recounts mounting racial aggressions in ongoing encounters in twenty-first-century daily life and in the media.
* ***Becoming Ms. Burton: From Prison to Recovery to Leading the Fight for Incarcerated Women***, Susan Burton, Cari Lynn, 2017. The New Press. Burton takes us on her own journey through the criminal justice system – from growing up amid poverty and abuse in L.A. to battling addiction after tragically losing her son, and cycling in and out of prison for more than 15 years. Her transformation into a powerful advocate for “a more humane justice system guided by compassion and dignity” is inspiring.
* ***Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”,*** Nora Neale Hurston, 2018. Harper Collins Publishers. Tells the story of the slave trade’s last survivor. Published eight decades after it was written, it offers a first-hand account of a Middle Passage journey. Listening, rather than reading this book is recommended.
* ***African American History & Devotions: Reading and Activities for Individuals, Families and Communities,*** Teresa L. Fry Brown, 2018. Abingdon Press. Each of the 28 days provides a biblical text, a short devotion, a prayer, and sections to “Do, Discuss and Dig Deeper.”
* ***Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption,*** Bryan Stevenson, 2015. Spiegel & Grau. An unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer’s coming of age as he defends Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn’t commit.

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* ***I Am Not Your Negro,*** James Baldwin, 2017. Vintage. To compose his stunning documentary film, “I Am Not Your Negro,” acclaimed filmmaker Raoul Peck mined James Baldwin’s published and unpublished oeuvre, selecting passages from his books, essays, letters, notes, and interviews that are every bit as incisive and pertinent now as they have ever been.

**FICTION**

* ***The Hate U Give***, Angie Thomas, 2017. Balzer + Bray. Sixteen-year old Starr Carter witnessed a shooting similar to Michael Brown’s and feels its impact on her community. Also an upcoming movie.
* ***Kindred***, Octavia E. Butler, 1979. Beacon Press. Portrays the contrast between our current time and antebellum-era slavery in the South, showing the harm to both enslaved Africans and their white owners.
* ***No One Is Coming to Save Us***, Stephanie Powell Watts, 2017. Ecco. This tale inspired by The Great Gatsby is set in the contemporary South and follows the difficulties endured by an extended black family with colliding visions of the American dream.
* ***Homegoing,*** Yaa Gyasi, 2017. Vintage. The novel follows the paths of two half-sisters born into different villages in Ghana in the eighteenth century, and eight generations of their descendants.
* ***Americanah***, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 2014. Anchor. The story of two Nigerians making their way in the U.S. and the UK, raising universal questions of race and belonging, the overseas experience for the African diaspora, and the search for identity and a home.

**CHILDREN**

* ***Painting for Peace in Ferguson*,** Carol Swartout Klein, 2015. Treehouse Publishing Group. Through poetry and art, this award winning book tells the true story of hundreds of artists and volunteers who turned boarded up windows into works of art with messages of hope, healing and unity in the aftermath of the Ferguson, MO riots.  (ages 5-12)
* ***This Is the Rope: A Story From the Great Migration,*** Jacqueline Woodson, 2017. Puffin Books. This beautifully written and illustrated book uses the image of a rope passed from generation to generation to convey the experiences and connections of African-Americans through the decades. (ages 3-8)
* ***Freedom Over Me,*** Ashley Bryan, 2016. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books. This heart-rending book is the answer to the question of whether and how the subject of slavery can be presented to young children. Bryan tells the personal stories of 11 real-life enslaved people who were about to be sold, each in the form of a simple and direct poem accompanied by a portrait. (age 6+)
* ***One Crazy Summer,*** Rita Williams-Garcia, 2011, Amistad. This witty and original novel won many awards including a Newbery Honor. Set in 1968, it’s the story of three sisters from Brooklyn who travel to Oakland, Calif. to visit their estranged mother, who has joined the Black Panthers. (ages 8-12)
* ***Brown Girl Dreaming,*** Jacqueline Woodson, 2016. Puffin Books. This hypnotic memoir in free verse renders Woodson’s childhood and family history as a gorgeous hybrid of migration tale, coming-of-age story, and meditation on African-American history. (ages 8-12)
* ***Chocolate Me***!, Taye Diggs, 2015. Square Fish. The boy is teased for looking different than the other kids. His skin is darker, his hair curlier. He tells his mother he wishes he could be more like everyone else. And she helps him to see how beautiful he really, truly is. (ages 4-8)
* ***The Soccer Fence: A story of friendship, hope, and apartheid in South Africa,*** Phil Bildner, 2014. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. Hector loves soccer and dreams of playing with the (white) boys from another part of Johannesburg, but apartheid and racism are too prevalent. When, over the years, Nelson Mandela is released from prison and elected president, and then the beloved Bafana Bafana national soccer team wins the African Cup of Nations finals, Hector and one of the white boys bond over the soccer win and forge a new friendship. (ages 6-8)