



An Update from the Anti-racism Care Group, a Priority of LOAM's Vision of

As we reported here last September, our group formed last summer after the horror of George Floyd's murder spurred us to learn more about racial inequities in our society. After months of study and discussions that expanded our understanding of the scope of the problem, we started to explore how we could make a difference. Below are some actions that individuals in our group have taken on as "baby steps" to advancing racial equity:

- Volunteer activities with the Gaithersburg Beloved Community Initiative (GBCI) (<https://www.gaithersburgbelovedcommunity.org>)
 - Drive boxes of donated food weekly from the Epworth UMC food pantry to the Cider Mill community for distribution to residents in need.
 - Mentor local high school students who aspire to be first generation college students (1 hour biweekly during spring semester by Zoom).
 - Tutor students this fall who have fallen behind in their studies during covid remote learning.
 - Help with covid vaccination event at Lake Forest Mall
 - Identify and transport surplus resources that would help the Cider Mill community, such as books and toys from the closed Faith pre-school.
 - Attended a Montgomery County Council meeting to ask that South Lake Elementary School be rebuilt. Rebuilding had been deferred in favor of a school in a more affluent, white community. Council members approved unanimously, saying they were impressed by the show of support from white neighbors.
- Volunteer to read with young disadvantaged students, such as through the nonprofit Reading Partners in DC (1-2 hours per week at an assigned school). (<https://readingpartners.org/location/washington-dc/>)
- Help at the Interfaith Works Clothing Center and Food Hub, Twinbrook Parkway in Rockville, by sorting and organizing donated items or by filling and loading grocery bags. (<https://www.iworksmc.org/>)
- Attend "diversity dinners", gatherings of people from diverse racial, ethnic and economic groups, with the purpose of learning from each other and building relationships. Learn how to organize similar dinners at FUMC. (<https://www.bwcumc.org/ministries/advocacy-action/racial-justice/mapping-a-path-to-racial-justice-a-journey-to-beloved-community/>)
- Analyzed racial health disparities for Bread for the World's analysis of racial inequity as a cause of hunger. (<https://bread.org/>)
- Organize and/or attend a discussion group of a book or articles that aim to educate about systemic racism. (<https://vimeo.com/537512755>) An Asbury group discussed a

series of 10 articles written by Washington Post business columnist Michelle Singletary.
(<https://vimeo.com/493869303>)

- Donate to organizations that promote anti-racism or provide benefits to black and brown communities, such as the NAACP, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, United Negro College Fund or specific Historically Black Colleges & Universities.

We hope that this list will inspire you to take action too. If you feel that eliminating racism is an impossible goal for one person, listen to your heart and just take one small step. As Mother Teresa said: "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

Our website has a list of resources that you could use to learn more (<https://www.faithworkshere.com/anti-racism-care-group>). Members of our group would be happy to provide more information and help you get started on your own journey. If interested, please call the office for the date of the next meeting, which typically occurs on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7pm.