

ECLC Racial Justice Resources

Whether you have just started learning about racial justice work or have been a racial justice warrior for years, these resources provide a current framework to antiracism.

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READ

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

This book explores the counterproductive reaction white people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, thus maintaining racial inequality.

How To Be An Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi

This book reshapes the conversation about racial justice in America. It points us toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and others.

My Grandmother's Hands by Resmaa Menakem

A journey through racialized trauma and its effect on modern life for bodies of color, white bodies, and police bodies. It includes internal body work that can be done alone or, most effectively, in a group.

I'm Still Here by Austin Channing Brown

An eye-opening account of growing up black, Christian, and female in middle class white America.

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson

Bryan Stevenson's book is a powerful true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice - from one of the most brilliant and influential civil rights lawyers of our time. *A movie adaptation made in 2019 is available on Netflix.*

Dear Church by Lenny Duncan

Lenny Duncan is the unlikeliest of pastors. Formerly incarcerated, he is now a black preacher in the whitest denomination in the United States: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Shifting demographics and shrinking congregations make all the headlines, but Duncan sees something else at work - drawing a direct line between the church's lack of diversity and the church's lack of vitality. The problems the ELCA faces are theological, not sociological. But so are the answers.

Heart of Whiteness by Robert Jensen

In *The Souls of Black Folk*, W.E.B. DuBois writes that the question whites want to ask him is: "How does it feel to be a problem." It is time for white people in America to self-consciously reverse the direction of that question and to fully acknowledge that in the racial arena, they are the problem.

Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race by Debby Irving

Waking Up White is the book the author wishes someone had handed her decades ago. By sharing her sometimes cringe-worthy struggle to understand racism and racial tensions, she offers a fresh perspective on bias, stereotypes, manners, and tolerance.

The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander

In the era of colorblindness, it is no longer socially permissible to use race, explicitly, as a justification for discrimination, exclusion, and social contempt. Yet, as legal star Michelle Alexander reveals, today it is perfectly legal to discriminate against convicted criminals in nearly all the ways that it was once legal to discriminate against African Americans. Once you're labeled a felon, the old forms of discrimination - employment discrimination, housing discrimination, denial of the right to vote, denial of educational opportunity, denial of food stamps and other public benefits, and exclusion from jury service - are suddenly legal.

Between the Word and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

An extended letter from a Black father to his son, this book offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation's history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of "race", a falsehood that falls most heavily on the bodies of Black women and men, who have been exploited through slavery and segregation, and today, threatened, locked up and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? Coates, in honest and often heart-rendering pathos, tells us.

[George Floyd's Death and the Long History of Racism in Minneapolis](#) By Olivia B. Waxman

Article published in Times Magazine in the wake of George Floyd's murder.

WATCH

13th

Filmmaker Ava DuVernay explores the history of racial inequality in the United States, focusing on the fact that the nation's prisons are disproportionately filled with African-Americans.

Available on Netflix

[Jim Crow of the North](#)

This video from Public Television reveals the history and impact of racist real estate covenants in the Twin Cities. *Also available on DVD – contact [Lauren Morse-Wendt](#) to borrow it*

[Bridging The Races: The Time Is Now](#) with Charles Avery and Dr. Dina Avery

Charles Avery, a Child Crusader of the Civil Rights movement, and his daughter, Dr. Dina Avery, led a conversation coordinated by ECLC's Racial Justice Action and Advocacy. It was a powerful evening with over 90 households attending.

LISTEN

[Seeing White](#) – Moderated by John Biewen of Duke University

Just what is going on with white people? Police shootings of unarmed African Americans. Acts of domestic terrorism by white supremacists. The renewed embrace of raw, undisguised white-identity politics. Unending racial inequity in schools, housing, criminal justice, and hiring. Some of this feels new, but in truth it's an old story.

From the ELCA

In June 2019, the ELCA issued a "[Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent](#)" that included apologizing for Lutherans' complicity in our nation's history of slavery. This included the following regarding white privilege:

"Unearned privilege runs deep, and white people can't escape it. It is not based on individual attitudes or behavior. Racism is a system of structural advantage for those who are white at the expense of indigenous people and people of color."

The [response from the African Descent Lutheran Association](#) can be read and watched.