

Lesson Plans that Work

Racial Justice Lesson Plans for Youth

Introduction

About the Racial Justice Lessons

With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high?
God has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to
walk humbly with your God?

- *Micah 6:6a, 8*

Philosopher-theologian Josiah Royce first used the phrase “The Beloved Community.” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made the term popular and gave it a deeper meaning.

“For Dr. King, The Beloved Community was not a lofty utopian goal to be confused with the rapturous image of the Peaceable Kingdom, in which lions and lambs coexist in idyllic harmony. Rather, The Beloved Community was for him a realistic, achievable goal that could be attained by a critical mass of people committed to and trained in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence.

“Dr. King’s Beloved Community is a global vision, in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. In the Beloved Community, international disputes will be resolved by peaceful conflict-resolution and reconciliation of adversaries, instead of military power. Love and trust will triumph over fear and hatred. Peace with justice will prevail over war and military conflict.”

- from *The King Center* (<https://thekingcenter.org/>)

We are called to seek Beloved Community. Part of that is seeking racial justice so that we might live in love, trust, and peace.

Dismantling racism is hard work. As Christians, we’re blessed to have a roadmap to support us. Our ancestors’ stories in scripture teach us much about what the Beloved Community looks like and what happens when God’s people fall out of the covenant God made with us and that we made with each other.

These lessons will support you on your journey to break down the barriers of systemic racism and oppression to see each other as God’s children and, therefore, siblings. While they are ready to be implemented as they are, please adjust them to your use. Use one scripture passage instead of both. Change the scripture as needed. Write your own prayers.

Each lesson includes prayer, a brief meditation about the theme, questions on each theme, the theme's connection to the Becoming Beloved Community Four-fold path, the Baptismal Promise, and the Way of Love, Bible Study, and a theme-related activity.

While these lessons were prepared for teenagers grades seven through twelve, you can adjust the Bible study questions and discussion for intergenerational groups and adults.

I pray you find healing and community building as you study and grapple with racial justice issues.

Goals:

- To read, engage, and grapple with scripture.
- To understand concepts related to racial justice: racism, bias, privilege, anti-racism, solidarity, and Beloved Community, supported by inclusive spiritual practices.
- To claim ownership of prayer. Write and rewrite prayers as needed.
- To claim ownership of our Baptismal Covenant and learn how it calls us to racial justice.
- To find our place in the work of racial justice and reconciliation.
- To be anti-racist and invite others to join you.

Lesson Theme	Becoming Beloved Community Fourfold Path	Scripture 1	Scripture 2	Way of Love
Beloved Community	Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community	Genesis 1:1-31 Focus: 1:26-27	1 Corinthians 12:12-27 13, 27	Pray
Racism	Telling the Truth about the Church and Race	Mark 7:24-30 Focus: 7:27-28	Matthew 15:21-28	Learn
Privilege	Telling the Truth about the Church and Race	James 2:1-26 Focus: 2:1-4	Matthew 20:1-16 Focus: 20:11-16	Bless
Bias	Practicing the Way of Love	John 4:1-42 Focus: 4:7-9	Luke 18:9-14 Focus: 18:13	Turn
Anti-racism	Repairing the Breach in Society and Institutions	Isaiah 58 Focus: 58:6-7	Luke 6:27-49 Focus: 6:27-35	Rest
Solidarity	Repairing the Breach in Society and Institutions	Ephesians 2:13-22 Focus: 2:15-16	Micah 6:1-8 Focus: 6:8	Go
Inclusive Spiritual Practices	Practicing the Way of Love	Luke 10:25-37 Focus: 10:27	Romans 12 Focus: 12:4-5	Worship

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Published by the Department of Faith Formation of The Episcopal Church, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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