

**Atonement
Lutheran
Church**

voice of Atonement

February 2021

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ATONEMENT STAFF

Senior Pastor

Pastor Kristi Beebe

Music Director

Brandon Bill

Office Administrator

Audrey Brack-Banks

Choir Accompanist

Carol Ott

Organists

Gayle Gunderson

Carol Ott

pastor's message

Eleven-year-old Mark, an orphan since his Mom died when he was younger, lived with his aunt, a bitter middle aged woman, greatly annoyed with the burden of caring for her dead sister's son. She never failed to remind young Mark, if it hadn't been for her generosity, he would be a vagrant, homeless waif. Still, with all the scolding and chilliness at home with his aunt, he was a sweet, gentle child.

Mark's school teacher had not particularly noticed him until he voluntarily began staying after class each day (at the risk of arousing his aunt's anger, his school teacher later found out) to help her straighten up the room. They did this quietly and comfortably, not speaking much, but enjoying the solitude of that hour of the day, and one another's calming presence in the room together. When they did talk, Mark spoke mostly of his mother. Though quite small when she died, he remembered a kind, caring, gentle, loving woman who always spent much time with him.

After New Year's, however, Mark failed to stay after school each day. The whole first semester, his teacher had looked forward to his coming, and when day after day passed in the New Year, and he continued to scamper hurriedly from the room after class, she finally stopped him one afternoon and asked why he no longer helped her in the room. She told him how she had missed him, and his large gray eyes lit up eagerly as he replied, "Did you really miss me?"

Mark's teacher explained how he'd been her best helper ever. "Oh, sorry I haven't been here, but I've been making you a surprise," he whispered confidentially. "It's for Valentine's Day." With that, he became embarrassed and dashed from the room. He didn't stay after school

any more after that.

Finally, Valentine's Day arrived. During the school day, kids exchanged their Valentine's cards and candies, but Mark didn't give his gift to his teacher. Instead, Mark crept slowly into the room late that afternoon with his hands concealing something behind his back. "I have your present," he said timidly when his teacher looked up. "I hope you like it." He held out his hands, and there lying in his small palms was a tiny wooden box he had made.

"It's beautiful, Mark. Is there something in it?"

she asked opening the top to look inside.

"Oh, you can't see what's in it," he replied, "and you can't touch it, or taste it, or feel it. But before she died, my mother always said it makes you feel good all the time, warm on cold nights, and safe when you're all alone."

The teacher gazed into the empty box. "What is it Mark," she asked gently, "What is it that will make me feel so good and warm and safe?"

"It's love," he whispered softly, "and mother always said it's best when you give it away." With that, he turned and quietly left the room, leaving the teacher with tears of happiness in her eyes. Oh, and by the way, Mark was right back in the classroom after school the next day quietly and comfortably helping his teacher straighten up the room, and she was so happy to have him there.

Christian friends, no matter what else you do, always remember that it's best when you give love away ... especially when the love you give away is Jesus' love.

February, the month we traditionally associate with love, because of Valentine's Day, of course, is also associated with love because of February

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IN OUR PRAYERS

Recent:

Daniel and Cindy Antonson
 Robert and Marie Berry
 Todd Gilbert
 Grace Gillette
 Lou Harding
 Jane Hoeft
 Julie Johnson
 Lizzie Koch

Danielle and Jaime Lewis

Linda Hupala

Ken McGrahahan

Jodi Paynter

Kim Reed

Pam Struesse

Bridget Thompson

Randy and Charlotte Updike

The family and friends of Inge Luders

Ongoing:

Jim Bland

Katy Brackeen

Evangie Conklin

Leslie Crowe

Olivia Estep

Tracy Ford

Arlene Karika-Thompson

Oscar Otto

Charlotte Pienkos

Matthew Ruggles

Aimee Rupprecht

Lisa S

Linda Schueller

Shelly Slinkard

Beth Thompson

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17, 2021. “Why’s that?” you might ask. It’s because February 17th marks the beginning of this year’s Lenten Season with Ash Wednesday. The Lenten Season is a clear reminder to us of how God gave Jesus to humanity out of great love to be our Savior, and it’s this great love that we are then called to go out and give away to others.

So be a part of the Season of Lent this year. Worship on the Sundays in Lent to hear, speak, and sing of God’s great love. Share in Bible Study on Facebook Live on Tuesdays at 7pm to learn more about God’s great love. Tune in to Facebook at 11am on Wednesdays to experience the Lenten music of God’s great love. Sit down with your dinner, or after dinner, and join in Midweek Lenten Worship at 6:45 p.m. (Facebook or YouTube Live). And during other times of the week, how about

picking up the phone, and calling some people you haven’t heard from in a while and share, or “give away,” some of God’s great love with them ... or maybe go “practice” some “random act of kindness”/love for someone, ... either way, I guarantee, it’ll touch their heart in a way you can’t even imagine!

Share the love, dear Christian friends, share Jesus’ love this Lenten season and the world will be a better place because you did!

In Christ’s Love,

—Pastor Kristi Beebe



ASH WEDNESDAY ~ FEBRUARY 17th DRIVE-THROUGH ASHES

Receive your Ashes for Ash Wednesday via Drive-Through at the following times along Yale Avenue:

8:00 – 9:00 a.m. (on your way to work/school)

11:30 – 12:30 p.m. (during your lunch hour, or errands)

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. (on your way home from work/school)

If you are unable to Drive-by to receive Ashes, please contact the church office at 303-985-1122 to make arrangements for Pastor Kristi to bring the ashes to you. She will be pleased to do this, just know that both you, and Pastor will be required to wear masks.

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP ~ February 17th

6:45 p.m. ~ Facebook or YouTube Live;

Holy Communion will be a part of Worship

(have your individual Communion Kits, or your bread/wine/juice, available)

MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP

Wednesdays: February 24, March 3, March 10, March 17, March 24

6:45 p.m. ~ Facebook or YouTube Live

There is still time...

You can return your Statement of Intent for Atonement's 2021 Giving Appeal: Reflecting in Faith, Responding with Purpose. If you need a brochure and Statement of Intent form, please let the church office know, and we'll get these out to you promptly! Thank you for your generosity to your church and its ministries!

A MESSAGE ABOUT VACCINES FOR COVID-19

Friday, January 22nd, Governor Polis, as well as Jill Ryan and Rick Palacio from the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, and their team, gave an update about Vaccinations for the State of Colorado.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE ... Anyone age 70+ ... YOU CAN GET YOUR VACCINE NOW! **Yippee!** (Ok, the Governor and Team didn't say that, your Pastor did!). This is exciting news! The sooner 70% of the population gets vaccinated, the sooner we gather together besides just in cars, lawn chairs, or online!

So if you are 70+, go online to find out how and where you can sign up, and/or go to receive your vaccine, starting now! Or, call 303-453-2477. That's the HealthONE Vaccine Hotline. Leave your number and you will receive a return call within a few days getting you all the information you need to get your vaccine! You lucky people!

HEAR YE, HEAR YE ... You can get your shot anywhere you want in the State ... it's FREE ... No Drivers License is needed; everyone has access, regardless of immigration status ... it's 95% effective ... it's FDA Authorized safe ... they're hoping for a faster distribution in upcoming days!

If you're 70 years or older, help Governor Polis meet his goal of:

"70% of Coloradans age 70+ vaccinated by February 28th!"

Once the 70+ age group is vaccinated, then it can move on down the age groups, and soon, before you know it ... THIS PANDEMIC WILL END AND WE'LL BE WORSHIPPING AGAIN **ALL** TOGETHER, FACE TO FACE! HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN!

More importantly, please make it happen because we love and care about each other in our families, faith communities, nation, and world, and we want to keep people safe, well, and healthy from here on out!

BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION ... GET VACCINATED!



MASK UPDATE

President Biden issued a mask mandate today, January 21, 2021. He asked that we all wear masks for 100 days, which is May 1, 2021. Covid 19 is proving to be

a more serious disease than was first thought. Some that have had the disease are being called a "long hauler". This has caused some people to have symptoms such as fatigue, dizziness, depression, inability to return to work, and even affecting the organs, such as your heart and thyroid gland. Some children have developed Multisystem Inflammatory Disease which affects many organs and tissues. One wonders what symptoms will develop later in life. Some people that developed polio as a child have now had more distressing symptoms later in life.

During the polio epidemic in the 1940's, as a young child, my mother told me to hold my breath while the elevator went from 1st to 3rd floor so I would not get polio. We are asked now to wear a mask.

I thought it might be helpful to review some points on wearing a mask since this is one way to protect yourself

but also everyone else. These are some recommendations I found from the CDC.

- Wash your hands before and after putting ON your mask and before and after taking OFF your mask!
- Do not touch your mask! If you do, wash or sanitize your hands! How many times do you see people pulling it up or down? I am guilty of that touching. I'd be better protected if I didn't touch where there are Covid germs waiting to get me.
- When you take off the mask, touch only the loops or ties. Put it in a sealable baggie, until it can be washed in the laundry or by hand.
- Wash your hands immediately!
- Wearing a mask DOES NOT substitute for social distancing!

Writing this for the newsletter has made me decide I need to improve my mask wearing! We all may know people who have had the disease, developed the "long haulers" symptoms, and or died. We all need to be very careful so we stay healthy for the future.

—Beverly Karika

Gratitude...

Dear Atonement Family,
It is with gratitude and fond caring that I want to show my appreciation for all the prayers and support you have given Me, My family, Beverly and her family in the last year as we have had so many people and situations that have needed your prayers. We also want you to know that it is so special to have a church family who is there for us and for others in our time of need. This long cold winter will pass and we all look forward to a time we can gather together and talk and share our experiences with all of you!! God shows the way by providing us with prayer partners, and caring people You have been His hands and heart for many in this pandemic. It is unfortunate that we, being older and less hardy, have not been able to be near the caregivers we would like to be for all of you!! Please call if you would like to talk or share a prayer concern.

Ruth A Zartman
and Beverly Karika

A Note of Thanks

Thank you for your prayers and cards of well wishes following my recent surgeries. I am feeling much better. God bless and have a great new year!

Jane Hoeft.

president's thoughts

[Paul] I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ... Ephesians 4:1-6 ESV

Unity and Hope

I must admit I am late turning in my newsletter article. Sorry Audrey and Cathy. I was "locked on" to my TV yesterday, the 20th of January, watching the inauguration of our new president and vice president. I was listening to all the speeches, inspired by the young poet laureate's poem and enjoyed the celebration around this day. While I know that each of us has our own political views which is right and proper, I look forward to a new tone of hope, working together, and faith.

Please have confidence in your church leadership and pastor that we will be back in our building to worship, meet, host community events, funerals and more as soon as it is safe. We do not want anyone to catch or spread COVID-19 at Atonement. We have members and friends that have passed away. We would hate to have people contact the disease at Atonement. We are following the recommendations of the Governor, CDC, and local health directives. While some churches have chosen to resume activities, we do not think it would be wise to do that right now. We are waiting for rates of infection to decrease following the holidays that had increased infection in December and January. When we do reopen it will be slowly. Small groups meeting and worship in the Fellowship Hall where we will wear coats and gloves so we can open all the windows and doors. Just like worshipping in the parking lot but a little closer contact. Please hang in there with patience and hope. YOUR support and help in so many ways have allowed ministry and mission to go on at ALC this past year. We are in a good place financially for the first time in years. We have found new ministry tools that

we will continue when we get back to the new "normal".

It is hard to believe that we will be moving into Lent on February 17th with Ash Wednesday. Music and Worship Ministry are working on plans for Ash Wednesday and Lent. This will be Year 2 of a remote Lent. Hard to believe! There will be Lenten resources on our website < atonementdenver.org > for personal and family use. The Family Sunday School page provides material to download. Right now, we have video and leaflets from Holy Moly. If your family (or other adults) enjoy coloring, illustrated Ministry's beautiful and inspiring coloring pages are on this page too.

So, as we prepare for Lent, I would like to share this poem. I hope it helps to transition from Christmas to the solemn time of Lent.

Lent

Lent is a time to take the time

to let the power of our faith story, take hold of us,

a time to let the events

get up and walk around in us,

a time to intensify

our living unto Christ,

a time to hover over

the thoughts of our hearts,

a time to place our feet in the streets of Jerusalem

or to walk along the sea and listen to his word,

a time to touch his robe and feel the healing surge through us,

a time to ponder and a time to wonder...

Lent is a time to allow a fresh new taste of God!

—*Kneeling in Jerusalem* by Ann Weems

May the Holy Spirit fill your heart with patience, hope, and faith,

—*Eileen Koppenhaver*
Congregation President

The Corner Desk



Whew! Our office made it through the Christmas rush (Advent services! Christmas baskets! A Christmas Eve service! Spectacular Drive-Through Nativity!) only to be blindsided by Congregational Meeting Annual Report. What a job! However, it was great to see how much we at Atonement have accomplished, even in a pandemic year! God has indeed been good to us.



Even after our extensive Christmas toy and food drives, people continued to donate food to Community Ministry in January. I am truly blown away by this congregation's generosity!



The office continues to percolate along, trying to keep things running smoothly. Many, many thanks to our volunteers, Barbara Krug, Marilyn Andersen and Shauna Skaff, without whom our office be a lot less efficient, and definitely less fun!



February may be a bit less eventful, even though Ash Wednesday is on the 17th. Make sure to keep looking forward to the Lenten and Easter seasons. (Be on the lookout for more details–You never know what we may be cooking up!)



Have a Great Valentine's Day, everyone!

Wishing God's best for you,
Audrey Brack-Banks
Atonement Office Manager

from the vice-president

As I write this, we are beginning a new year of *Drop in the Bucket*. It is kicking off with CRU (formerly known as Campus Crusade for Christ) in January and then we will see a return of New Beginnings, a synodically authorized worshipping community of the ELCA that meets inside the walls of the Denver Women's Correctional Facility, a prison for women in Denver, Colorado. New Beginnings mission is to restore shattered lives to wholeness through the love of Jesus Christ.

By the time you read this, we will have conducted our *Drop in the Bucket* feedback session on January 24. I'll have a report back to you next month.

In the meantime, here's the final tally for your giving in 2020 and our tentative plan for 2021. I thank God for your

great generosity and look forward to the year to come.

May the peace of the Lord that passes all understanding be with you all.

—Phil Pienkos

Ministry	Month	2020 Bucket
CRU	January	Not Applicable
New Beginnings	February	\$1,957
ELCA World Hunger	March	\$967
Community Ministry	Lent	\$2,068
Lutheran Disaster Response	April	\$1,110
Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey, El Paso TX	May	\$2,290
Urban Servants Corps	June	\$530
Christ Church International School, Tanzania	July	\$858
Westgate Elementary School, Lakewood	August	\$1,300
Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp	September	\$1,264
Holiday Baskets	October	\$785
Habitat for Humanity	October	\$1,204
Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp	November	\$665
Pastor's Assistance Fund	December	\$4,897
Year to date total		\$19,895

stewardship

Love Your Neighbor

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." —Matthew 22:37-40

What a shame that February – the one month of the year with keen focus on love – is also the shortest. We sure could use a lot more love in our world, especially for our neighbor.

The last 12 months have been particularly hard, as race riots, a divisive election and civil unrest have all unfolded against the traumatic backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic. Currently in very short supply, more love for neighbor would go a long way in helping us to solve our problems.

Love for neighbor is integral to not only good discipleship, but also good stewardship. The greater the "love for neighbor" factor in our

lives, the better stewards we will be of every blessing God provides – creation, time, relationships, money, possessions, health, to name just a few. By cultivating love for neighbor we will also enjoy a happier life and promote a healthier and more civil society.

The opposite is also true. Cultivating enmity for neighbor leaves us sour, selfish and cynical, while also making our nation angry and selfish.

This year make February "Love Your Neighbor" month in your personal devotions and your congregational life. Give the concept breathing room in your life. Keep it in your thoughts, sow it in our heart, talk about it to your family and friends.

Pray for God to teach you what it means to love our neighbor. Pray for God to give you the strength and will to live it. And watch as love heals and invigorates your life ... and our world.

—Rob Blezard

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Faith in Action

NEXT MEETING: February 2nd, 7 pm
Please call Suzanne if you will be
joining us (We're zooming!)

February!

Two things that come to mind
for the FIA Ministry Team:
Lutheran Day at the Legislature
and Black History Month.

Here is some information on both.

At press time, we do not have any details on **Lutheran Day at the Legislature** but we do have the *Colorado Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Policy Agenda*. The Policy Agenda includes seven major advocacy areas focusing on Hunger, Poverty, Housing, Criminal Justice, Public Health, Migrants and Refugees, and Care for the Environment. Various individual initiatives are listed for each. The complete Policy Agenda is available at: <https://www.rmselca.org/colorado-2021-advocacy-agenda>.

Currently, it is expected that the Colorado Legislature, both houses, will reconvene February 13th for its regular business. Much depends on the state of the COVID pandemic. When it does, Faithful Thursdays will also begin again, sponsored by the Colorado Interfaith Alliance and Monday briefings will begin, sponsored by the Colorado Social Legislation Committee. FIA members will be monitoring both, especially if they are virtual. More to follow on each. As details become available on Lutheran Day at the Legislature, FIA will include them in Atonement's email blasts and announcements. Look for updates.

February is Black History Month. In honor of that FIA will look here at how it started (are you surprised?) and we will be recommending some of the most impactful movies, DVDs, books that we have covered in the past as FIA PICs. Like to cook? There's something here for you, also!

When did it begin? The story of Black History Month *begins in 1915*, half a century after the abolished slavery in the United States. That September, the Harvard-trained historian Carter G.

Woodson and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching



and promoting achievements by black Americans and other peoples of African descent.

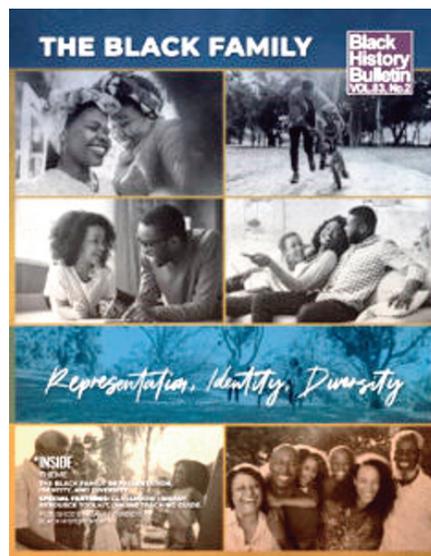
Portrait of American historian and educator Carter Godwin Woodson (1875 - 1950), 1910s.

Who? Known today as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the group sponsored a *national Negro History week in 1926*, choosing the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The event inspired schools and communities nationwide to organize local celebrations, establish history clubs and host performances and lectures.

Why? "If a race has no history, it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated," Woodson said of the need for such study.

Bottom of Form

By the mid-1960s, the most popular textbook for eighth-grade U.S. history classes mentioned only two black people in the entire century of history that had transpired since the Civil War—and that problem could no longer be ignored. It was in that decade that colleges and universities across the country transformed the week into a Black History Month on campus.



President Gerald Ford decreed Black History Month a national observance in 1976, on both the fiftieth anniversary of the first iteration and America's bicentennial year. "In celebrating Black History Month,"

Ford said in his message, "we can seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

Presidents have issued national decrees with each year's theme since the 1970s. (From Julia Zorthian)

The Theme for 2021 is **The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity**. The black family has been a topic of study in many disciplines—history, literature, the visual arts and film studies, sociology, anthropology, and social policy. Its **representation, identity, and diversity** have been revered, stereotyped, and vilified from the days of slavery to our own time. The family offers a rich tapestry of images for exploring the African American past and present.

(Association For The Study Of African American Life And History The Founders Of Black History Month)

Looking for a different way to experience Black History Month? How about a new cookbook, with recipes and histories! Here is a list compiled by Cathy Bajsci, FIA Member:



Jubilee: Recipes from Two Centuries of African American Cooking: A Cookbook (Toni Tipton-Martin) This incredible book — it won a James

Beard award last week — is a look at and celebration of African-American cooking beyond soul and Southern cooking to all of the foods of the African diaspora.

The Jemima Code: Two Centuries of African American Cookbooks (Toni Tipton-Martin) Also, by Tipton-Martin, she spent years amassing one of the largest private collections of cookbooks by African American authors. This book collects 150 of them. There's a rare 1827 house servant's manual but also more modern classics from authors like Edna Lewis and Vertamae Grosvenor, annotated with historical details hoping to give us a view of African-American cooking beyond the "Aunt Jemima" stereotype.

High on the Hog: A Culinary Journey from Africa to America (Jessica B. Harris) This book celebrates "the foods of the African American experience" — chitlins,

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ham hocks, and vegan recipes too. There's a great vegetable gumbo in here, watermelon pickles, and also her mother's fried chicken recipe.



Black Girl Baking: Wholesome Recipes Inspired by a Soulful Upbringing (Jerelle Guy) Guy is the food blogger behind

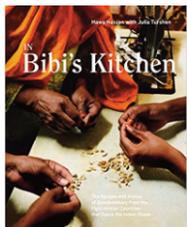
Chocolate For Basil and a NYT Cooking

contributor. Enjoy the stories behind the recipes and the bits of memories she inserts throughout — she writes in a such an evocative, poetic way.

The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African American Culinary History in the Old South (Michael W. Twitty) The is an epic James Beard award-winning memoir by culinary history and educator Michael W. Twitty, whose site is Afroculinaria. He traces his ancestry, both black and white, through food from Africa to America, in slavery and freedom, and he adds real insight into the idea of who “owns” barbecue, soul, and Southern food. It's fascinating and in-depth.

Carla Hall's Soul Food: Everyday and Celebration Carla Hall is an amazing writer and cook. Cracked Shrimp with Comeback Sauce. Tomato Pie with Garlic Bread Crust. Poured Caramel Cake. And she's pretty famous, to say the least, for her Nashville Hot Chicken.

Bound to the Fire: How Virginia's Enslaved Cooks Helped Invent American Cuisine (Kelley Fanto Deetz) Deetz uses cookbooks, plantations records, and even folklore to take a nuanced look at the lives of enslaved plantation cooks before and after emancipation, as well as the foods they created from — from oyster stew, gumbo, and fried fish — that were a credit to their white owners. This specifically focuses on Virginia plantations — Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and George Washington's Mount Vernon.



In Bibi's Kitchen (Hawa Hassan and Julia Turshen) The Recipes and Stories of Grandmothers from the Eight African Countries that Touch the Indian Ocean; Eritrea, Somalia,

Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa, Madagascar and Comoros.

Bon Appetit!

FIA Picks:

In honor of Black History Month, Martin Luther King Jr. and the continued struggle of our African-American brothers and sisters, the FIA Ministry Team has chosen some of the more poignant movies, books, etc. as their recommendations to you.

Events:

- ✓ **The Denver Public Library will sponsor a series of events during February to honor Black History Month. Check with the Library for additional details.**
- **February 4th:** Mavis! Gospel Music Legend and Civil Rights Activist Mavis Staples' - Doc & Talk Series
- **February 6th:** Virtual 2021 Juanita Gray Community Service Award Presentation
- **February 17th:** 'We're Better Than This' - A Discussion of Congressman Cummings' Political Memoir
- **February 23rd:** 'The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature' - R.A.D.A. Social Justice Book Discussion

Movies/Streaming/Posts:

- ✦ **Short TED Talks** (YouTube) by an Author that has written about Race. I recommend Authors: Debby Irving, Robin DiAngelo, Ibram X. Kendi, Michelle Alexander, Bryan Stevenson, and Isabel Wilkerson, just to name a few. (Michelle Healey)
- ✦ **The 13th**, (Netflix) Named for the 13th Amendment, which outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude “except as a punishment for crime...”, this film expertly threads us through the myriad ways that loophole has been used. As the film argues, politicians and a compliant media have stoked and exploited an irrational fear of African Americans — especially young African American men — initially to secure white votes, and more recently to feed a



profit-driven private prison system. The film is hopeful that things actually can change if knowledge can be turned into momentum and momentum can become legislation. (Michelle Healey)

- ✦ **I Am Not Your Negro**, (Netflix) This documentary, based on James Baldwin's unfinished book, is a visual essay that explores racism through the stories of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. Narrated by Samuel L. Jackson, the film offers a incendiary snapshot of James Baldwin's crucial observations on American race relations and a sobering reminder of how far we've yet to go. (Michelle Healey)
- ✦ **Just Mercy** (DVD) After graduating from Harvard, Bryan Stevenson heads to Alabama to defend those wrongly condemned or those not afforded proper representation. One of his first cases is that of Walter McMillian, who is sentenced to die in 1987 for the murder of an 18-year-old girl, despite evidence proving his innocence. In the years that follow, Stevenson encounters racism and legal and political maneuverings as he tirelessly fights for McMillian's life. (Suzanne Rousso)



- ✦ **Ma Rainey's Black Bottom** (Netflix) When I first saw August Wilson's play at the Denver Center for Performing Arts decades ago, I was mesmerized and more than a trifle shocked. Now a movie, Viola Davis portrays Ma Rainey in the 1920's in Chicago. Ma Rainey was the Mother of the Blues. And although this story of the guys in her band is fictional, I absolutely loved Chadwick Boseman's portrayal of Levee, a trumpet player. I encourage you to see it. There are examples of the black experience that most of us at Atonement would not understand. (Barbara Kaare-Lopez)

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Randy Cunningham

Men's Ministry Open

Outreach Ministry

Wendy Brown

Stewardship

Randy Cunningham

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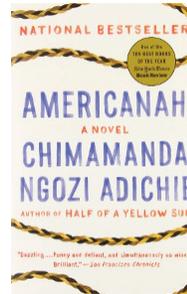
*Graciously serving as interim leader

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Books/Articles/Blogs:

❖ **Homegoing** by Yaa Gyasi This is Yaa Gyasi's debut historical fiction novel. "Each chapter in the novel follows a different descendant of an Asante woman named Maame, starting with her two daughters, who are half-sisters, separated by circumstance: Effia marries James Collins, the British governor in charge of Cape Coast Castle, while her half-sister Esi is held captive in the dungeons below. Subsequent chapters follow their children and following generations" through their lives in Ghana and the United States. (Wikipedia, Laura Buhs)

❖ **Americanah** by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie "tells the story of a young Nigerian woman, Ifemelu, who immigrates to the United States to attend university. The novel traces Ifemelu's life in both countries, threaded by her love story with high school classmate Obinze...Nigeria at the time is under military dictatorship, and people are seeking to leave the country. Ifemelu moves to the United States to study, where she struggles for the first time with racism and the many varieties of racial distinctions: for the first time, Ifemelu discovers what it means to be a "Black Person" (Wikipedia, Laura Buhs)



❖ **The Warmth of Other Suns** by Isabel Wilkerson, In this epic, beautifully written masterwork, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson chronicles one of the great untold stories of American history: the decades-long migration of black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities,

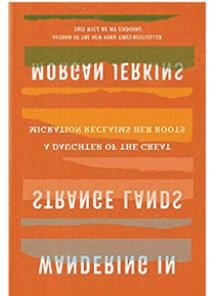
in search of a better life. From 1915 to 1970, this exodus of almost six million people changed the face of America. Wilkerson compares this epic migration to the migrations of other peoples in history. She interviewed more than a thousand people, and gained access to new data and official records, to write this definitive and vividly dramatic account of how these American journeys unfolded, altering our cities, our country, and ourselves. (GoodReads, Barbara Kaare-Lopez & Suzanne Rousso)

FIA Book and Lunch Group Changes Date:

The March meeting has changed to the 14th, still Sunday, still at 12:30pm and still via Zoom. The book under discussion is "Wandering in Strange Lands: A Daughter of the Great Migration Reclaims Her Roots", by Morgan Jerkins. From Publishers Weekly: "Forthright and informative....Jerkin's careful research and revelatory conversations with historians, activists, and genealogists result in a disturbing yet ultimately empowering chronicle of the African-American experience. Readers will be moved by this brave and inquisitive book." Contact Suzanne Rousso to join in on the discussion, she will provide Zoom contact information.

"For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it."
(*"The Hill We Climb"* Amanda Gorman)

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