



RACISM MUST END FOR ALL TO BE FREE

SACRED + WORTHY + EQUAL



FOR ALL TO BE FREE

DIGITAL **WITNESS** TOOLKIT

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH TO LIFT THEIR VOICES IN
SUPPORT OF CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY

the END RACISM initiative by
United Methodists of the Baltimore-Washington Conference

OUR PURPOSE. OUR VISION OF FREEDOM.

WE RISE UNITED: DIGITAL WITNESS TOOLKIT

The purpose of the We Rise United: Digital Witness Toolkit is to support ongoing dialogue within the faith community about racism, bias, discrimination, privilege, and more by engaging through social media to extend the reach of equality and justice.

As the people called Methodists, our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world in ministry and witness. We unite to end racism to transform the world through the enactment of policies aimed at fostering justice. We seek the world's transformation by the renewal of heart sets, mindsets, and skill sets that reflect the love and light of Jesus. We are also called to be and build beloved community — which includes being an antiracist church — together, by affirming our shared personhood. We are not against anyone. And we stand for faithful, just, and fair policies and practices that afford equal human rights for all.

WHY WE MUST RISE TO END RACISM?

Racism is a sin, and we must reject it wherever it exists. It endeavors to permeate our society and potential, as all other sin does. It can appear subtle and benign. Yet it seeks to destroy us: our joy, our love for one another, our souls. It challenges us to deny its presence, defend its power and pervasiveness, and minimize its impact. So, we must continue to examine ourselves and our biases, seek timely and effective ways to identify racism, uproot it, and make no room for it within our hearts, homes, communities, churches, workplaces, and world. God created humanity in the Image of God and breathed human dignity into our being. With this in mind, we lean into this work and do so not for a moment, but for a lifetime.

WHY WE RISE UNITED?

The We Rise United Project affirms our collective global United Methodist commitment to end racism. Specifically, the Baltimore-Washington Conference is living out its commitment to be a beloved community and anti-racist church that is ever-growing in its intercultural competence, addressing the intent of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Call to Action on Racial Justice, and increasing BWC's cultural humility so that more transformed lives can transform lives in a sustainable way. Justice is a spiritual discipline. It is the way that we can love God and neighbor together.

We Rise United to become an anti-racist church that is focused on dismantling racism in our communities, and committed to seeking justice now and always, so that all are affirmed as sacred, worthy, and equal.

We Rise United to educate ourselves and those around us of the history of racism and its impact on people's lives in our community and around the world.

And, we will Rise in solidarity together until all are free. We invite you to lift your voice with us to support the momentum of a movement that continues to Rise.

To learn more please visit, www.bwcumc.org/justicenow.

The Baltimore-Washington Conference, a regional body of The United Methodist Church, continues to answer the charge for change through the "We Rise United" campaign to engage and unite our members in actions that support the advancement of racial justice.

This toolkit was inspired by the We Rise United Week of Action leading up to the celebration of Juneteenth 2020 after the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. We acknowledge and give thanks for the creative partnership of Leap + Pivot (leapandpivot.com) for bringing our sacred witness to the digital world.

RACISM MUST END FOR ALL TO BE FREE



#WERISEUNITED DIGITAL WITNESS

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH TO LIFT THEIR VOICES
IN SUPPORT OF CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY

As people of God, we uphold scripture and its power in our work. As United Methodists, we focus our lives and witness on three core principles, known as the General Rules of the Church, inspired by John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. These principles were expertly reframed in "Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living," by retired United Methodist Bishop Rueben P. Job.

The principles and charges are clear and straightforward:
"Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God."

We believe and affirm the guidance of these charges personally and online as we engage in digital witness to support the end of racism in our society.

The #WeRiseUnited Digital Witness Toolkit is a starting point to equip and empower disciples to engage in conversations that help dismantle racism in our communities and systems, wherever it exists, beginning with ourselves.



DO NO HARM

"TO DO NO HARM MEANS THAT I WILL BE ON GUARD SO THAT ALL MY ACTIONS AND EVEN MY SILENCE WILL NOT ADD INJURY TO ANOTHER OF GOD'S CHILDREN OR TO ANY PART OF GOD'S CREATION."

-Bishop Rueben P. Job



LOOK + LISTEN + RESEARCH:

An overwhelming amount of information is directed toward us daily, and it can be challenging to focus on what is most important and accurate. As you consider a post, begin with prayer and do no harm. Take a moment to examine posts, the site referenced or shared, and the person or group that made the original post. We live in a diverse world, and we must all do our part to reduce harm and dispel false narratives wherever possible. Cross-reference information from reputable sources to ensure what you are encountering is in fact true.



AVOID SHARING CONTENT WHICH IS TRAUMATIC:

Do not share violent or graphic content. No matter your intent, it is essential to consider that videos of Black or Brown people being abused and hurt can cause additional harm, great sadness, anger, or fear. The trauma of racism is real. Understand that we should speak out, but we must do so without causing additional harm. Where possible, consider offering a reflection on the specifics of a situation while using a common hashtag (esp. on Twitter and Instagram - i.e. [#breonnataylor](#) [#justicenow](#) [#weriseunited](#)) that will help tell the story in greater detail and allow people to dig deeper into content that may expand their knowledge of the matter.



REMEMBER CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY:

We recognize that each person is a "beloved child of God – a recipient of love unearned, unlimited, and underserved – just like ourselves." We will commit to speak civilly, even with those who do not live up to the values we support. Pray for all, affirm that God's grace is available to all, and remind all persons that racism is a sin.

As we seek to be advocates, commit to learning the terminology of the movement, the hopes of those who care for its mission, and what it aims to achieve. Choose not to dismiss it as derogatory, divisive, or against our Christian witness. When we say "Black Lives Matter," we reestablish that they matter in God's eyes and, therefore, must matter to others, so we affirm equal value for all in all places, at all times, and by all people.

God created us all and we are all sacred, worthy, and equal. We call for [#justicenow](#), [#blacklivesmatter](#), and for an end to racism so all will be free.



SACRED. WORTHY. EQUAL.



**GRACIOUS GOD: BREAK DOWN THE WALLS THAT SEPARATE US.
 UNITE US IN BONDS OF LOVE... HELP US TO WORK THROUGH
 OUR STRUGGLES TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR PURPOSES ON EARTH.**

-Bishop LaTrelle Easterling



ERIC LAW'S*

"RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES"

**TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT YOU SAY
 AND FEEL WITHOUT BLAMING OTHERS**

USE EMPATHETIC LISTENING

**BE SENSITIVE TO DIFFERENCES IN
 COMMUNICATION/CULTURAL STYLES**

**PONDER WHAT YOU HEAR AND FEEL
 BEFORE YOU SPEAK**

**EXAMINE YOUR OWN ASSUMPTIONS
 AND PERCEPTIONS**

KEEP CONFIDENTIALITY

**TOLERATE AMBIGUITY BECAUSE WE
 ARE NOT HERE TO DEBATE. THERE
 ARE NO "WINNERS" OR "LOSERS."**



DO GOOD



LOOK + LISTEN + RESEARCH:

Commit to being a life-long learner. Learn more about the impacts of racism, trauma-informed care, white privilege, implicit bias, unconscious biases, and race. Examine and challenge your assumptions, and think about your ethnic heritage and how you feel about generalizations and stereotypes. Start by reviewing the resources at bwcumc.org/justicenow and other trusted sources.



LIKE + FOLLOW + RETWEET + ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME:

There are well-researched, anti-racist, and faithful voices speaking out on systemic racism. Research those who challenge you to be more just, equitable, and faithful in your call. Be an advocate and expand their reach by offering likes, comments, following, retweets/shares, and encouraging others to do the same.



DONATE, IF AND WHEN YOU CAN:

The mission to end racism is critical, and many groups will need continued financial support to carry on the work required to make change a reality. Consider donating regularly to one organization or semi-regularly to a few that align with our values, social principles, and denominational commitment to end racism. You can also encourage or challenge others to give with you, or engage your faith community in activities to raise funds and look for opportunities where "matching" donations are available.



ENGAGE IN HEALTHY CONVERSATIONS:

Social media is a great avenue to make connections, have fun, share stories, find resources, and raise awareness. However, social media can open users to challenging conversations. Make sure you find ways to not only care for the mission, but to care for yourself and those with whom you engage in conversation with. Here are some practical ways you can "take care":

- Be mindful of your tone; resisting combativeness is critical.
- When a conversation has moved beyond healthy dialogue, invite individuals to chat more privately via direct message if you are comfortable. Consider asking someone you have a personal relationship with to talk more via phone or in person if you feel it will be beneficial to hear or see each other. Provide the opportunity to cool down and recompose yourself when necessary.
- When the conversation is no longer productive, disengage and consider ways to respectfully end it.
- Engage with values: The goal of conversation should be to help understand where your values align. Note that endless arguing will get you nowhere, and only continue to deepen the divide.
- Speak out against harmful, hateful rhetoric and misinformation. Please do this respectfully and with love. Be factual and exact.

*Eric Law also outlines seven principles for respectful, inclusive, and productive conversations which align with creating open dialogues that move us forward.

RACISM MUST END FOR ALL TO BE FREE

#WERISEUNITED DIGITAL WITNESS

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH TO LIFT THEIR VOICES
IN SUPPORT OF CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY



STAY IN LOVE WITH GOD



LOOK + LISTEN + RESEARCH:

As you become a collaborator through your digital witness to end racism, take care of yourself. You will become more aware of the violence and injustices experienced by Black and Brown people, and you may discover challenges in continuing some relationships with friends, colleagues, church members, and potentially even family. Explore ways to support those struggling with the need to distance themselves from those relationships, as it can be scary and isolating. Also, remember to pace yourself and tend to your spirit through this work. The mission to end racism is critical, and may require frequent sabbatical moments to maintain your energy. Care for yourself throughout this journey by taking breaks from social media to help you gain balance and renewal. When you feel overwhelmed, seek meaningful ways to retreat through prayer, worship, and staying in love with God.

YOU MUST LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR BEING, WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH. THE SECOND IS THIS, YOU WILL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. NO OTHER COMMANDMENT IS GREATER THAN THESE.

Mark 12:30-31 (CEB)



TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER:

We each will find moments when it may seem as though the weight of systemic racism is too heavy for us to handle, or that it is impossible to move. Again, this is not the work of one; the mental, physical, and spiritual toll can be high. This is the work of a beloved community. So, please check in with your friends, make sure they are doing okay, and take care of yourself. Be a prayer partner, a shoulder to lean on, and an ear to listen as you are able.



BE AN ADVOCATE & REMEMBER WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT:

It is important not to deny or minimize the experiences of others. Empathize and keep the experience of others central to the conversation. Be respectfully engaged in the conversation (see Eric Law's Guidelines for Respectful Communication on pg. 3). Resist the urge to talk about your experiences unless asked. Be kind to others and remember to do no harm.



STOP SUPPORTING HATE:

When you notice organizations that have positions, controversial statements, or actions against any minority group, address them and decide if it is ethical to support them. We each must stay in love with God and each other, and hate is a threat to that love. Resist violence of all forms, including violent speech, racism, hate, and bigotry.



WALK TOGETHER:

Impacted by the stories of **Ahmaud Arbery**, **George Floyd**, **Breonna Taylor**, and others lost in 2020, many of us have joined in peaceful protest. These are non-violent opportunities to align our speech with our actions. Now, We **Rise** United as people of faith to stand against racism so that all may be free. However, it should not take another act of hate or brutality for people of faith to continue to show support and love for our neighbors. Keep supporting organizations that celebrate differences, equality, and justice. Support media, initiatives, charitable organizations, and businesses continuing the work after the attention has quelled. Most importantly, support each other in working for change and healing from the harm and division that racism causes in our society. We cannot make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world if we are unwilling to be transformed. We must be faithful in our witness and collaborative in our efforts. Love God, love your neighbor, and love yourself.



#WERISEUNITED DIGITAL WITNESS

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH TO LIFT THEIR VOICES
IN SUPPORT OF CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY

RESOURCES

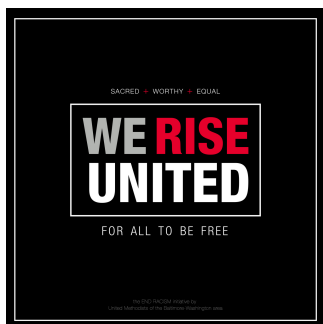


The Baltimore-Washington Conference has created strategic resources to support people and churches in their continual efforts to promote awareness, speak out against hate, and call for justice now, because every life is sacred, worthy, equal, and **#blacklivesmatter**. BWC is also journeying through this work and will continue developing social media tools to keep the message at the forefront of our hearts, minds, and souls. We **Rise** United because this is not a moment, this is a movement that requires more than a few social media posts. We are committed to do our part.

Please visit bwcumc.org/justicenow to download these free resources available to individuals and churches.

WE **RISE** UNITED CAMPAIGN "NARRATIVE" SET

Use this simple yet informative graphic set to equip others to join us in the work to end racism, while illuminating the need for action and change so that all are valued as sacred, worthy, and equal.



WE **RISE** UNITED SOCIAL "TOGETHER" SET

'You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly.' (Eph. 4:4)

Our "Together" set includes graphics that embody unity, connection, hope, and progress. Use these images to engage others in the conversation and invite them to join us in dismantling racism and the invisible walls that divide us.

WE **RISE** UNITED CAMPAIGN "COMMITMENT" SET

The road to ending racism is long-haul work and requires a commitment to doing the work. Use images in this set to share our core values and promote conversation and engagement between those who need to know they are supported and those who differ in opinions. This is more than a moment. We are joining a movement, and we need your help to tell that story, inviting others to join us in creating change, beginning with ourselves.



WE **RISE** UNITED "QUOTE" SET

There are times in life when we need encouragement. The "Quote" set brings inspirational thoughts to challenge us to see the world with hope. Our journey to ready is unpaved, so use these quotes to encourage each other to press onward.

RACISM MUST END FOR ALL TO BE **FREE**

#WERISEUNITED DIGITAL WITNESS

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH TO LIFT THEIR VOICES
IN SUPPORT OF CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY

RESOURCES

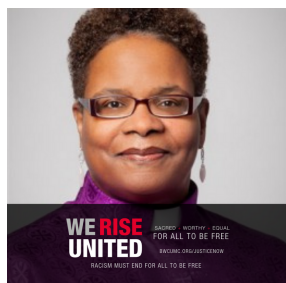
Bishop Easterling and the Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church commit to providing leadership, education, and resources that affirm the importance of our commitment to seek justice, do the work, and end racism so that all may be free.

The #WeRiseUnited social media sets will evolve and provide messaging to inspire and equip each of us to lift our voices in support of racial justice and equality. We are also committed to praying for those impacted by racism and will stand up for **#justicenow**. We must speak their names, and we must remember that their lives were sacred, worthy, and equal before their Creator; therefore, they must be so to us.

Please visit bwcumc.org/justicenow to download any of these resources.

WE RISE UNITED “NEVER FORGET” SET

We invite you to use these images to honor lives lost to hatred and injustice, while also inviting our communities to realize that We Rise United not only for the futures we hope to protect, but also for the futures that will never be realized.



WE RISE UNITED FACEBOOK PROFILE FILTER

Use these filters to add your own profile photo with the We Rise United campaign's brand to share with your friends, family, and colleagues that you are supporting the vision of Christ for all to be free!

As we seek to gain deeper understanding of the impacts of racism and bias on our society — and the lives at stake — we must continue to lift our voices and support systemic change.

Please feel free to use these images to share more with your colleagues, community partners, friends, and families, as we know there is much work to do in making the world a place of hope that affirms that all are sacred, worthy, and equal.

The #WeRiseUnited Digital Witness toolkit provides an entry point for learning more and showing up as a helpful advocate for the movement required to fuel the change we need. Visit bwcumc.org/justicenow to download any of these assets, as well as to find more information on the work, including reading lists, videos, and links to resources for detecting implicit bias, privilege, moral value, and more.

CORE #HASHTAGS

#WERISEUNITED
#FORALLTOBEFREE
#JUSTICENOW
#BLACKLIVESMATTER

SACRED. WORTHY. EQUAL.

SACRED + WORTHY + EQUAL

WE RISE
UNITED

FOR ALL TO BE FREE

LORD IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYER.

THE IMAGE ABOVE INCLUDES MORE THAN 110 NAMES OF LIVES ENDED BY THE VIOLENCE OF RACISM.
WHILE THIS IS NOT A COMPREHENSIVE LIST IT BEGINS TO FRAME THE MAGNITUDE OF THE SITUATION IN FRONT OF US.
RACISM MUST END FOR ALL TO BE FREE.