



First Parish in Cambridge Social Justice News July 6, 2020

How to Be an Antiracist Book Discussion Group!

The First Parish Cambridge Racial Equity Team (RET) is organizing a discussion in mid-August on the very readable and thought-provoking book **How to Be an Antiracist** by **Dr. Ibram X. Kendi**, director of the new BU Center for Anti-racist research. Please contact [Susan Shepherd](#) if you want to join in this discussion or have any questions. See the author's [website](#) for more about this book and his other writings. Contact Susan if you would like to order a copy of the book.

Home Efficiency Energy Team (HEET) Lunchtime Talk - July 8 at Noon

The nonprofit HEET (Home Efficiency Energy Team) is working with Eversource to pilot neighborhood networked ground source heat pumps. The EJTF is interested in supporting development of geothermal infrastructure (to replace natural gas infrastructure!) Learn more at a HEET lunchtime talk. [Sign up](#) and join us **Wednesday, July 8 from Noon-1:00 pm**.

Looking for a Summer Read?

Please join the Environmental Justice Task Force in reading ***The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where We Go From Here*** by Hope Jahre. Then, gather with us Zoom-style on **Tuesday, July 28 at 7:00 pm** to discuss it. Email [EJTF](#) to let us know you'll be joining us. The EJTF also highly recommends this essay, "**Racism Is Killing the Planet**", from the Sierra Club Insider. Click [here](#).

Also, there is still an opportunity to let your legislators know how important passing climate legislation is in this session! You are invited to sign this petition created by grassroots organizers in support of UU Mass Action and Mass Power Forward climate legislation goals. It was created in response to legislators stating that they need to hear more from their base. Please SHARE and SIGN [here](#).

UUMassAction

One way that First Parish connects with UUs statewide to put our faith into action is through UUMassAction. Current campaigns are: Climate Action and Justice; Immigrant Justice; Ending Mass Incarceration; Economic Justice.

It provides excellent resources for study and opportunities for action. See [UUMassAction](#) where you can also sign up for their weekly newsletter.

A message from BBSF *Safe Communities Act Week of Action*

Many of you have signed postcards at social hour in support of the Safe Communities Act, which would limit the cooperation of the Massachusetts court system and police in immigration enforcement. The Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security has set a deadline of July 15 to decide whether to advance the Safe Communities Act out of committee this legislative session. [See here](#) for ways to take action in support of advancing this important legislation.



Althea Bernstein, an 18 year old member of the First Unitarian Society of Madison, WI was the victim of a hate crime on Wednesday, June 24. Four men, approached Althea's car as she was driving near downtown Madison. They sprayed lighter fluid on her face and neck and then threw a lighter at her, causing serious burns. She is recovering and asks that donations be made to three local Madison non-profits working on racial justice.

We encourage you to consider making a donation to one or more of these agencies:

Freedom-Inc – www.freedom-inc.org

Urban Triage – www.urbantriage.org

Foundation for Black Women's Wellness – www.ffbww.org

Please send a card or note of support to Althea via the church First Unitarian Society of Madison

Attn: Althea Bernstein
900 University Bay Drive
Madison, WI 53705

Join us!

GBIO is Organizing In-District Meetings with our Representatives to Advocate for Racial Justice Legislation

We are reaching out as your GBIO liaisons to invite you to participate in an upcoming opportunity to advance racial justice in the Commonwealth! Many of you participated in our last round of In-District Meetings on healthcare reform - and our recent phone calls on police reform to Speaker Deleo that elicited a public statement of support from the Speaker. Now it's time to close the deal! Low income communities of color are faced with a triple threat in this moment: the pandemic, the economic decline, and the continuation of police brutality.

We have launched a statewide campaign to put pressure on the House of Representatives to pass legislation for racial justice in our Commonwealth at this critical time. We are organizing a series of meetings with our state reps in the month of July, demanding our state legislature to:

Policing:

- Put statutory limits on police use of force
- Institute an independent body for licensing and de-licensing police
- Release vulnerable inmates who don't pose a threat to public safety from crowded conditions in the midst of this pandemic

Health Care:

- Reduce patient co-pays and overall prescription drug prices for chronic conditions that put people at risk for Covid-19.
- Improve access to mental health and substance use services
- Ban surprise billing for medical procedures conducted by out-of-network specialists

(The full list of bills we are currently endorsing can be found [HERE](#); GBIO Strategy Team leaders are currently researching and reviewing opportunities in this legislative session to extend housing relief and other opportunities related to police reform and/or defunding police)

In order to make these changes a reality, we must make our voices heard to our state representatives. Here's what you can do:

FILL OUT THIS FORM to express your interest in attending a meeting with your state legislator. You will receive follow up from the appropriate in-district organizing team about when and what time a virtual meeting with your legislator will take place.

JOIN AN IDM (In-District Meeting) TEAM. If you would like to become more deeply involved, there are a handful of teams that need more leaders to pull off a strong In-District Meeting! If you live in one of the following towns/cities and are interested in joining an organizing team, please reach out to GBIO organizer, Zienab Abdelgany (zienab.abdelgany@gbio.org) expressing your interest:

a. In Suffolk County: Roxbury, Dorchester, South End, Back Bay, Hyde Park

b. In Norfolk County: Milton, Randolph, Canton, Stoughton, Avon, Quincy, Braintree, Holbrook, Weymouth, Sharon

c. In Middlesex County: Malden, Medford, Melrose

d. In Plymouth County: Brockton, Easton

Thank you for your commitment to racial justice in the Commonwealth!

Legislators respond to the personal experiences of their constituents. If you would like to share a story about how these issues are directly affecting you, your family or others you know, especially during this crisis, we would like to hear from you. Please contact one of your FPC GBIO team (list below), and we can help you prepare to share your experience during the IDM meeting.

Tod Hibbard - hibbard79@gmail.com

Elizabeth Kline - elizkline@gmail.com

Marcia Hams - marciahams@gmail.com

Sharon DeVos - sharondevos@gmail.com