

## RESOURCES FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY 12/18/2020

In the November 15<sup>th</sup> sermon, Rev. Tom spoke of 5 major crises currently affecting of us.

Racial Relationships

Climate Change

Economic Crisis

Public Health Crisis (Covid Pandemic)

Challenges for our Democracy

The Missions Team, with input from members of the congregation, has assembled a list of resources on these topics. As we will likely be spending a good deal of time at home this winter, it might be a good time to dig in to some of this information. Feel free to share with us other suggested reading, viewing or listening ideas that you have found helpful.

### RACIAL RELATIONSHIPS/JUSTICE

#### Books

**Me and White Supremacy** by Layla Saad – Began several years ago as a 28-day Instagram challenge. The book encourages readers to keep a journal, answer tough questions, and do 'the work' of dismantling racism.

**How to Be an Anti-Racist** by Ibram X. Kendi – Kendi's concept of antiracism reenergizes and reshapes the conversation about racial justice in America – but, even more fundamentally, points us toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other.

**Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America** by Ibram X. Kendi – In this deeply researched and fast-moving narrative, Kendi chronicles the entire story of anti-black racist ideas and their staggering power over the course of American history. He uses the life stories of five major American intellectuals to drive this history: Puritan minister Cotton Mather, Thomas Jefferson, abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, W.E.B. Du Bois, and legendary activist Angela Davis.

**The Hate U Give** by Angie Thomas – (good for teens and young adults) (also a movie) Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer.

**Skin, Skin, Wonderful Skin** (for children) by our very own Danby Whitmore – Children will learn how wonderful it is to accept and appreciate people whose skin is not like ours.

**Piecing Me Together** (for children) by Renee Watson – A powerful story about a girl striving for success in a world that too often seems like it's trying to break her.

**New York Times** book list to help explain racism to kids.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/02/parenting/kids-books-racism-protest.html>

**NPR** list of books on racism

<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2020/06/06/871023438/this-list-of-books-films-and-podcasts-about-racism-is-a-start-not-a-panacea>

**Stony the Road: Reconstruction, White Supremacy, and the Rise of Jim Crow** by Henry Louis Gates Jr. – A profound new rendering of the struggle by African-Americans for equality after the Civil War and the violent counter-revolution that resubjugated them, as seen through the prism of the war of images and ideas that have left an enduring racist stain on the American mind.

**A Long Walk to Water** by Linda Sue Park, Ginger Knowlton – Begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours' walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the "lost boys" of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya's in an astonishing and moving way.

**The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace: A Brilliant Young Man Who Left Newark for the Ivy League** by Jeff Hobbs – This celebrated account of a young African-American man who escaped Newark, NJ, to attend Yale, but still faced the dangers of the streets when he returned is, "nuanced and shattering" (*People*) and "mesmeric" (*The New York Times Book Review*).

**Between the World and Me** by Ta-Nehisi Coates – In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates 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 damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men—bodies 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? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden?

**We Were Eight Years in Power** by Ta-Nehisi Coates – "We were eight years in power" was the lament of Reconstruction-era black politicians as the American experiment in multiracial democracy ended with the return of white supremacist rule in the South. In this sweeping collection of new and selected essays, Ta-Nehisi Coates explores the tragic echoes of that history in our own time: the unprecedented election of a black president followed by a vicious backlash that fueled the election of the man Coates argues is America's "first white president."

**The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley** – If there was any one man who articulated the anger, the struggle, and the beliefs of African Americans in the 1960s, that man was Malcolm X. His autobiography is now an established classic of modern America, a book that expresses like none other the crucial truth about our times.

**Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption** by Bryan Stevenson – Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

**Born a Crime** by Trevor Noah – Autobiographical story of a mischievous young boy who grows into a restless young man as he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist. It is also the story of that young man's relationship with his fearless, rebellious, and fervently religious mother—his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life.

**White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide** by Carol Anderson – From the Civil War to our combustible present, *White Rage* reframes our continuing conversation about race, chronicling the powerful forces opposed to black progress in America.

**White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism** by Robin DiAngelo – In the larger national conversation about race, racism, antiracism, individual and systemic action and reaction, *White Fragility* has been a key title for readers seeking guidance. DiAngelo calls out past indifference from whites when facing critiques of race and class and challenges their often "fragile" response of tears and anger.

**Uncle Tom's Cabin** by Harriet Beecher Stowe – Although the American anti-slavery movement had existed at least as long as the nation itself, Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) galvanized public opinion as nothing had before. The book sold 10,000 copies in its first week and 300,000 in its first year. Its vivid dramatization of slavery's cruelties so aroused readers that it is said Abraham Lincoln told Stowe her work had been a catalyst for the Civil War.

**The Road to Dawn: Josiah Henson and the Story That Sparked the Civil War** by Jared Brock – A major literary moment: after being lost to history for more than a century, *The Road to Dawn* uncovers the incredible story of the real-life slave who inspired *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Author-filmmaker Jared A. Brock retraces Henson's 3,000+ mile journey from slavery to freedom and re-introduces the world to a forgotten figure of the Civil War era, along with his accompanying documentary narrated by Hollywood actor Danny Glover.

**Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance** by Barack Obama – In this lyrical, unsentimental, and compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American. It begins in New York, where Barack Obama learns that his father—a figure he knows more as a myth than as a man—has been killed in a car accident. This sudden death inspires an emotional odyssey—first to a small town in Kansas, from which he retraces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii, and then to Kenya, where he meets the African side of his family, confronts the bitter truth of his father's life, and at last reconciles his divided inheritance.

**The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream** by Barack Obama – The Audacity of Hope is Barack Obama’s call for a different brand of politics—a politics for those weary of bitter partisanship and alienated by the “endless clash of armies” we see in congress and on the campaign trail; a politics rooted in the faith, inclusiveness, and nobility of spirit at the heart of “our improbable experiment in democracy.” He explores those forces—from the fear of losing to the perpetual need to raise money to the power of the media—that can stifle even the best-intentioned politician. He also writes, with surprising intimacy and self-deprecating humor, about settling in as a senator, seeking to balance the demands of public service and family life, and his own deepening religious commitment.

**Becoming** by Michelle Obama – In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world’s most famous address.

### Movies

**13<sup>th</sup>** (Netflix, Youtube) – In this thought-provoking documentary, scholars, activists and politicians analyze the criminalization of African Americans and the U.S. prison boom.

**Let it Fall: Los Angeles 1982-1992** (Netflix) – The film dives into the ten years leading up to the 1992 uprising that erupted after the verdict of police officers being cleared of beating Rodney King. The similarities between then and now are hard to look away from, and this documentary does a good job of giving you a look into the perspectives of both the black community and the police during these riots.

**If Beale Street Could Talk** (Hulu) – In early 1970s Harlem, daughter and wife-to-be Tish vividly recalls the passion, respect and trust that have connected her and her artist fiancé Alonzo Hunt, who goes by the nickname Fonny. Friends since childhood, the devoted couple dream of a future together, but their plans are derailed when Fonny is arrested for a crime he did not commit.

**Just Mercy** (Amazon Prime) – Two days after the killing of nine African-Americans during Bible study at Emanuel A.M.E. Church, the families of the victims forgave their killer.

### Podcasts

**1619** – a New York Times audio series, hosted by Nikole Hannah-Jones, that examines the long shadow of American slavery. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/23/podcasts/1619-podcast.html>

**Codeswitch** – A multi-racial, multi-generational team of journalists fascinated by the overlapping themes of race, ethnicity and culture, how they play out in our lives and communities, and how all of this is shifting. <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/>

**Scene on Radio** – A podcast that tells stories exploring human experience and American society. In Season 2, the Peabody-nominated *Seeing White*, host John Biewen and collaborator Chenjerai Kumanyika explored the history and meaning of whiteness. <https://www.sceneonradio.org/about/>

**Reveal** – from the Center for Investigative Reporting, covers current topics including racial injustice and climate change. <https://revealnews.org/>

## Bookstore

**Frugal Bookstore** – A community bookstore located in Roxbury with a passion of promoting literacy within our children, teens and adults. “Changing Minds One Book at a Time”

<https://frugalbookstore.net/>

## Video Sermon

**Sermon on the intersections of the climate crisis, racism and health disparities in our nation** by Rev. Mariama White-Hammond, Founding Pastor of New Roots AME Church

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Woix3P6Sb04&ab\\_channel=OldSouthChurchinBoston](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Woix3P6Sb04&ab_channel=OldSouthChurchinBoston)

## THE ENVIRONMENT

### Books

**The Hidden Life of Trees** by Peter Wohlleben – Draws on groundbreaking scientific discoveries to describe how trees are like human families: tree parents live together with their children, communicate with them, support them as they grow, share nutrients with those who are sick or struggling, and even warn each other of impending dangers. Wohlleben also shares his deep love of woods and forests, explaining the amazing processes of life, death, and regeneration he has observed in his woodland.

**Sustainability for the Rest of Us: Your No-Bullsh\*t, Five-Point Plan for Saving the Planet** by John Pabon – If you’ve ever asked yourself “but what can I actually do?” – this book is for you. If you’ve said “yes, but I’m only one person” – this book is for you. This book is for everyone.

**How Bad are Bananas?: The Carbon Footprint of Everything (2020 Update)** by Mike Berners-Lee – “Carbon footprint” was a newer concept when this book first came out in 2009. This updated 2020 edition uses the latest data to quantify carbon footprints, and it’s been expanded to include technology like a Zoom call and the Cloud.

**Wear No Evil: How to Change the World with Your Wardrobe** by Greta Eagan – If you haven’t yet looked into the atrocities of the garment industry, you are in for a bit of a shock. Wear No Evil takes a close look at the fashion industry and how we can support sustainability while shopping for our wardrobe.

**Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Economist** by Kate Raworth – Despite the title, this book has more to do with sustainability than sweet treats. Employing a doughnut shape to illustrate her new vision for economic theory, Kate Raworth argues that it’s possible to meet all of humanity’s needs with what our planet can provide. She replaces old economic myths with seven new insights that are sure to get business- and economically-minded people rethinking everything they’ve been taught.

**Diet for a Hot Planet: The Climate Crisis at the End of Your Fork** by Anna Lappe – There’s something fundamentally wrong with our food system, and this book delves into the reasons why. Lappe picks up the conversation her mother started in the book “Diet for a Small Planet” and expands on how our diet choices are contributing to the current climate crises.

**Lab Girl** by Hope Jahren – Geobiologist Hope Jahren has spent her life studying trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. Lab Girl is her revelatory treatise on plant life—but it is also a celebration of the lifelong curiosity, humility, and passion that drive every scientist. Warm, luminous, compulsively readable, Lab Girl vividly demonstrates the mountains that we can move when love and work come together.

**The Wild Trees: A Story of Passion and Daring** by Richard Preston – Until recently, redwoods were thought to be virtually impossible to ascend, and the canopy at the tops of these majestic trees was undiscovered. In The Wild Trees, Richard Preston unfolds the spellbinding story of Steve Sillett, Marie Antoine, and the tiny group of daring botanists and amateur naturalists that found a lost world above California, a world that is dangerous, hauntingly beautiful, and unexplored.

**Terra: Our 100-Million-Year-Old Ecosystem-and the Threats That Now Put It at Risk** by Michael Novacek – In this brilliant synthesis of evolutionary biology, paleontology, and modern environmental science, Michael Novacek shows how we can understand and prevent what he and others call today's "mass extinction event".

**Break Through: Why We Can't Leave Saving the Planet to Environmentalists** by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus – In this eagerly awaited follow-up to the original essay, the authors give us an expansive and eloquent manifesto for political change. What Americans really want, and what could serve as the basis for a new politics, is a vision capable of inspiring us to greatness. Making the case for abandoning old categories (nature/market, left/right), the authors articulate a pragmatism fit for our times that has already found champions in such prominent figures as Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

**Smeagull the Seagull: A True Story** (for children) by Mark Seth Lender – Introducing children to the natural world through a very special herring gull

<https://www.smeagulltheseagull.com/shop>

**How the Groundhog's Garden Grew** (for children) by Lynne Cherry – Little Groundhog, in trouble for stealing from his friends' gardens, is taught by Squirrel to grow his very own. From seed-gathering to planting, harvesting, and eating home-grown fruits and vegetables, children join Little Groundhog in learning about the gardening process. At the end, Little Groundhog invites his animal friends to a Thanksgiving harvest feast.

### Videos/Movies

**Before the Flood** (Amazon, iTunes, Hulu) – Filmmaker Fisher Stevens and actor, environmental activist and U.N. Messenger of Peace Leonardo DiCaprio present a riveting account of the dramatic changes now occurring around the world due to climate change, as well as the actions we as individuals and as a society can take to prevent the disruption of life on our planet.

### **Kids Take Action Against Ocean Plastic**

<https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/short-film-showcase/00000159-6bba-d620-a3d9-7bbed2e30000?gc=%2Fvideo%2Fenvironment>

### **Why the Ocean Matters**

<https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/00000144-0a26-d3cb-a96c-7b2f454b0000?gc=%2Fvideo%2Fenvironment>

## **Video Field Trip: Landfill**

[Video Field Trip - Landfill - YouTube](#)

## **What Really Happens to the Plastic You Throw Away**

[What really happens to the plastic you throw away - Emma Bryce - YouTube](#)

## **Are You Eating Plastic for Dinner?**

<https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/short-film-showcase/00000148-9ef6-d8d5-a7e9-feffb2950000?gc=%2Fvideo%2Fenvironment>

## **Climate Change 101 with Bill Nye**

<https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/news/101-videos/00000151-5a9a-dd5e-a751-7fdea1660000?gc=%2Fvideo%2Fenvironment>

## Podcasts

**Living on Earth** – Public radio’s environmental news magazine. <https://loe.org/>

**Reveal** – From the Center for Investigative Reporting, covers current topics including racial injustice and climate change. <https://revealnews.org/>

Other podcasts are listed here: <https://earther.gizmodo.com/here-are-10-of-the-best-climate-change-podcasts-out-rig-1845397380>

## Links to Other Resources

**Creation Justice Ministries** – Creation Justice Ministries educates, equips and mobilizes Christian communions/denominations, congregations and individuals to protect, restore, and rightly share God's creation. <https://www.creationjustice.org/>

## **Southern New England UCC Conference Environmental Ministries**

<https://www.sneucc.org/environmental-ministries>  
<https://www.facebook.com/SNEUCCClimateJustice>

**Greenpeace** – <https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/>

## **ECONOMICS**

### Books

**The Good Ancestor: A Radical Prescription for Long-Term Thinking** by Roman Krznaric – Krznaric reveals six practical ways we can retrain our brains to think of the long view, including Deep-Time Humility (recognizing our lives as a cosmic eyeblink) and Cathedral Thinking (starting projects that will take more than one lifetime to complete). His aim is to inspire more “time rebels” like Greta Thunberg—to shift our allegiance from this generation to all humanity—in short, to save our planet and our future.

**Money: The True Story of a Made-Up Thing** by Jacob Goldstein – The co-host of the popular NPR podcast Planet Money provides a well-researched, entertaining, somewhat irreverent look at how money is a made-up thing that has evolved over time to suit humanity's changing needs. Money only works because we all agree to believe in it. In *Money*, Jacob Goldstein shows how money is a useful fiction that has shaped societies for thousands of years, from the rise of coins in ancient Greece to the first stock market in Amsterdam to the emergence of shadow banking in the 21st century. At the heart of the story are the fringe thinkers and world leaders who reimagined money.

**2030: How Today's Biggest Trends Will Collide and Reshape the Future of Everything** by Mauro F. Guillen – The world is changing drastically before our eyes—will you be prepared for what comes next? A groundbreaking analysis from one of the world's foremost experts on global trends, including analysis on how COVID-19 will amplify and accelerate each of these changes. Once upon a time, the world was neatly divided into prosperous and backward economies.

**All About Money - Business - Economics for Kids & Teens - Ages 10+** by Margarita Brown, Isaac Joshua Brown, Anna Kidalova, Sarah Janisse Brown – The activities and lessons will help students to understand money, business, economics, government, and so much more. Students will study how money works and how the government influences the economy. This book is current! Students will also research topics such as how the COVID-19 Pandemic is impacting the United States and the world today.

**Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future** by Bill McKibben – In this powerful and provocative manifesto, Bill McKibben offers the biggest challenge in a generation to the prevailing view of our economy. For the first time in human history, he observes, "more" is no longer synonymous with "better"—indeed, for many of us, they have become almost opposites. McKibben puts forward a new way to think about the things we buy, the food we eat, the energy we use, and the money that pays for it all. Our purchases, he says, need not be at odds with the things we truly value.

### Podcasts

**Money for the Rest of Us** – A podcast about money, how it works, how to invest it and how to live without worrying about it. <https://moneyfortherestofus.com/episodes/>

**Planet Money** – The economy explained. Imagine you could call up a friend and say, "Meet me at the bar and tell me what's going on with the economy." Now imagine that's actually a fun evening. <https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510289/planet-money>

## COVID

### Podcasts

**Coronavirus Fact vs. Fiction** – Join CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Sanjay Gupta for the latest news about the coronavirus. He'll make sense of the headlines, speak with the experts and give you all the information you need to stay safe and healthy. <https://edition.cnn.com/audio/podcasts/corona-virus>

**Coronavirus Daily** – A podcast from RADIO.COM here to give you the very latest information to help guide you and your family through the global COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic. Hosted By Mike Simpson & Charles Feldman from KNX Newsradio.

<https://www.radio.com/podcasts/coronavirus-daily-35534>

## **DEMOCRACY**

### *Podcasts*

**Civics 101** – What's the difference between the House and the Senate? How do congressional investigations work? Why do we have the Electoral College? Civics 101 is the podcast refresher course on the basics of how our democracy works,

<https://www.civics101podcast.org/>

**Throughline** – The past is never past. Every headline has a history. Join us every week as we go back in time to understand the present. These are stories you can feel and sounds you can see from the moments that shaped our world. <https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510333/throughline>

**Civics Made Simple** – American Civics Lessons - Quick & Easy! As Americans, we all have Rights and Responsibilities! Listen & Share! <https://www.kimsanderson.me/civics-podcast>

### *Website*

**Center for Voting and Democracy** – FairVote is a nonpartisan champion of electoral reforms that give voters greater choice, a stronger voice, and a representative democracy that works for all Americans.

<https://www.fairvote.org/>