

I commit to spend time each day for the next 21 days learning, growing, reflecting and praying with an open mind and an open heart. I acknowledge that this will not be easy and I will likely be uncomfortable, however, I know that I am alone in this journey. I will strive to realize Micah 6:8 and to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with our God.

21 Day Challenge Tracking Journal					
DAY	READ	WATCH	NOTICE	LISTEN	What I read, watched, noticed, listened to:
1		x			Life of privilege explained in \$100 race
2	x				Raising White Kids
3	x				Ahmaud Arbery holds us accountable
4		x			What is implicit bias? Am I biased? Implicit Association Test
5	x				Prayer in a time of anger, unrest and injustice, Belhar Confession
6		x			Weaponizing white privilege
7		x			Just Mercy
8				x	If you see racism, say racism
9	x				Raising White Kids (Jennifer Harvey)
10				x	How does racism affect your health
11		x			Stop shooting us please
12	x				Be the Bridge (Latasha Morrison)
13	x	x	x	x	Juneteenth resources
14		x			13th, Netflix documentary
15		x	x		50 states, 50 different ways of teaching America's past
16				x	Black Like Me
17	x				Guide to Allyship
18	x				Waking Up White (Debby Irving)
19	x				Bible
20	x				How to be an Anti-Racist (Imbram X. Kendi)
21	x				Letter from Birmingham Jail (MLK)

Day 1: Sunday, June 7

On Sunday, Margaret preached a sermon that made me really question what I was doing to bring justice and love into our hurting world. On Monday and Tuesday, I simply curled up on the couch crying with feelings of hopelessness and loss for our country. On Wednesday, I reached out to my friends who have been doing this work longer than me, looking for guidance. On Thursday, I sat at this desk putting the finishing touches on the resources for this challenge. On Friday, I dropped off strips of fabric to be added to the prayer station being created at our church. On Saturday, our family headed downtown with over 1300 brothers and sisters for a peaceful protest organized by

the Athens Anti-Discrimination Movement. On Sunday, fifteen families gathered on Zoom to kick off the 21 Day Challenge. So much can change in one week's time. As Dr. King reminds us, ***"Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."***

Day 2: Monday, June 8

I've been reading the book *Raising White Kids* for a while now. It's heavy and hard to get through more than one chapter at a time.

Jennifer Harvey presents a lot of good, challenging ideas. I thought I was doing a good job of raising Ben and Kate to be race conscious, to have the tools they need to speak out when they see racism, to be allies for Tenny and all POC. But I have not done nearly enough. I have rested in the comfort of thinking of our family as "aware," "liberal," "open". I assumed too much. While Erik and I talk about these issues A LOT, I realized that we are not talking as much about them as a whole family. The conversations we have with Tenny need to be heard by Ben/Kate. The

conversations we have with Ben/Kate need to be heard by Tenny. I think that we are raising race conscious children, but I know there is so much more should/can be doing. In the book she reminds us, *"We get better at understanding, seeing, and responding the more we simply try to do it. We get clearer, more courageous, and more confident every time we do it despite feeling uncertain...(engaging in these conversations) is nothing less than the gift of a future that could be different in desirable ways than the present so many of us are living in now. And that is everything."*

Day 3: Tuesday, June 9

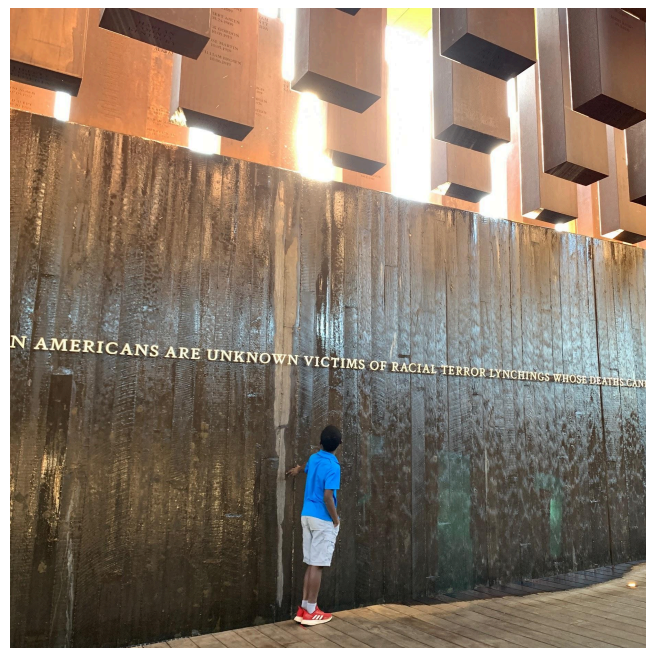
I have not watched the video of Ahmaud Arbery's murder, but I read the description in this article and the author's clear connecting of it to a modern lynching. My mind brought up an image of my beautiful, innocent child walking through the Legacy Museum in Montgomery just one week before Ahmaud's murder.

The murder of Ahmaud Arbery was one of the hardest conversations we've had as a family. We had just recently begun to allow Tenny (10y/o) to go for a run around the block in our (nearly all white) neighborhood. We had lots of talks with him about safety and responsibility; and he was loving his new

A PRAYER FOR TRUE JUSTICE

Oh Heavenly Father, our hearts are heavy. Broken. Please give us eyes to see and ears to hear where Your Spirit is working. Help us to see every person the way that You see them. Break our hearts for what breaks Yours, God. Let us not merely say that we love each other. Give us strength to mourn with those who mourn, to weep with those who weep. Let Your justice roll like waters. Let your righteousness and love flow from us like rivers of living water. Purify our hearts, Lord, and fill us with genuine hunger for justice, for mercy, and for true peace. Heavenly Father, let justice and mercy start with me.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.



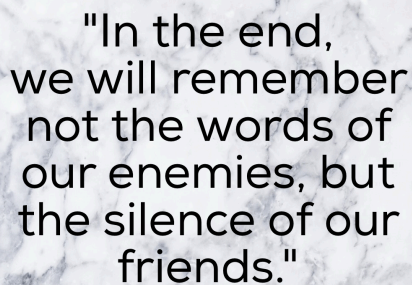
independence. After news of Ahmaud's murder, we told Tenny he could no longer go on runs by himself. To see the fear and worry in your child's eyes about possibly being hurt in his own neighborhood...I don't have words. And I don't think we're overreacting. I know we have naively been counting on our privileged bubble to protect him, but that will not be the case once he leaves this house. Will he be next? Everytime he leaves the house I worry for his safety. What can I do now to protect him? How can I help his friends, my friends, our community to see not only Teninait, but every person of color as their neighbor and a beloved child of God? God protect my child.

Day 4: Wednesday, June 10

Sat with all three kids today to watch the first two videos on implicit bias. It's a concept I was familiar with, but trying to explain it to a 10 yr old was hard. We talk a lot about fairness in our family, but this idea of unconscious beliefs and stereotypes shaped by all the things we see and hear is so unfair. Peanut butter is to jelly as black men is to violence. Ok, I can see that, but I'm sure it hasn't impacted ME?! My child is a young black boy, how can I think that about him or others who look like him? The Implicit Association Test showed otherwise. While I may consciously believe one thing, my subconscious is telling a different story. And so I must work even harder to challenge my own history and beliefs. I need to watch shows and read books that counter the narrative of black men as violent. I need to stop and consciously question when I repeatedly see images of black men being only portrayed as "thugs" while white men doing the same thing are patriots. And we need to talk about this as a family so my kids will not be 45 before they fully realize this truth.

Day 5: Thursday, June 11

What does it mean to be the Church during this time? How are we called to respond? I am proud to be a member of PC(USA). At the national level our church is outspoken about issues of justice, inclusion and confession. We not only talk the talk, but we walk the walk. I have been lucky to be a member of churches that followed in the national model of activism (Second Presbyterian Church in Nashville and East Liberty Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh). When we moved to Athens, the commitment to outreach was what connected us to FPC. Living out the Gospel is how I relate to God. It's what church is for me. I can't separate my faith from my life, from my voting, from my interpretation of what I see going on in the world. I secretly wish I had been arrested for protesting alongside other activists for our brothers and sisters in Christ. So when I feel weary, I can go visit the Presbyterian Mission Agency site and remember that I am part of something much bigger than just what is happening here in Athens...and I can get inspiration and courage from others to help bring change here to my own small town. As this prayer charges, "Let us release our attachment to our current world order and walk bravely into the world you've intended for us, even and especially when it costs us something."



"In the end,
we will remember
not the words of
our enemies, but
the silence of our
friends."

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Day 6: Friday, June 12

Today I rewatched the video of the white woman at the park calling the police on the "black man threatening her dog." I was even more disgusted by her actions. It was obvious to me that she knew

exactly what she was doing. She could have walked away, but she walked toward him. She could have simply said, I'm calling the police. Instead, she threatened his life by saying she was going to tell 911 that a "black man" was the aggressor. There is no other reason to say that than to use the history of black men experiencing violence from police more often than white men. She knew what she was doing. And then to hear her use the damsel in distress voice with the police, she upped the game. I do not think this was an unconscious reaction. I believe she knew exactly what she was doing and she was using her white privilege to potentially bring serious harm to a man who did nothing besides ask her to leash her dog (which was the law). Had something happened to him, I would see her as an accomplice. On the other hand, as a white woman, I can watch the news with a sense of detachment, so does that also make me an accomplice? There is a poster I've seen a lot at protests recently, "SILENCE = VIOLENCE". I'm really struggling with what that means for me as a white woman.

Day 7: Saturday, June 13

Early in quarantine, Ben, Kate read and I read the youth version of Just Mercy as homework. Tonight we finally sat down as a family to watch the movie. This story is not from that long ago. The events took place during my senior year of high school and first few years of college. Similar events are taking place today. And while a huge part of this story is about individual racists, it is equally about the unwillingness of white people (even good white people) to admit that racism/systemic racism exists. To admit that you have to risk losing something. And none of us like to lose. None of us likes to admit that we benefit from a system that treats white people far better than black people. Even if I can say I am not racist (which I can't because I was raised in this country and can't escape all the experiences and implicit biases that creates), but even if I did say that about myself, I can't say that systemic racism doesn't exist. The system failed Walter McMillan over and over again. Even after irrefutable evidence the courts refused to admit that they had been wrong. I truly believe that until we can all admit our sins, until we can all confess, nothing will change. Back in February we took the youth to the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, AL (founded by Bryan Stevenson with the Southern Poverty Law Center). At the end of the tour, we each had a chance to sign the Wall of Tolerance which reads: *By placing my name on the Wall of Tolerance, I pledge to take a stand against hate, injustice and intolerance. I will work in my daily life for justice, equality and human rights - the ideals for which the Civil Rights martyrs died.* I wonder if this pledge would feel different if we also had to admit to our own history of racist thoughts and actions and our role in a system that is built on white privilege.

Day 8: Sunday, June 14

I want to raise race-conscious, color-competent children. I want to model to my kids what it means to be an anti-racist versus not-racist. I want to bring my kids up in a community that is committed to dismantling racist systems. I want to teach my children the real history of America. I want my white kids to know what it means to be an ally and give them the tools to stand up for their black brother. I want my black child to be safe and know how to act if pulled over by the police. I want to use my white privilege to help bring change. BUT, I am afraid. I am afraid of losing friends by speaking up. I am afraid of being targeted on social media if I post something that others disagree with. I am afraid of instilling fear in my youngest and hopelessness in my oldest. I am afraid of what I'll have to

give up if I truly commit to being an anti-racist. AND, yet, the stakes are too high to let fear stop me from acting. God, please be with me and guide me on my way.

Day 9: Monday, June 15

I finally finished the book *Raising White Kids* today. This book reminded me that our kids can handle way more than we give them credit. They are already being exposed to racist behaviors and words whether we like it or not. If we don't give them the language to understand what they're seeing, they will either internalize it or negatively interpret it through the racist lens that we all are implicitly exposed to by living in America. It feels daunting to talk to kids about issues that most adults are not comfortable talking about, but we have the power to break this cycle of silence. We can struggle together to learn the language, walk through our mucky emotions, and be different. I was raised to be color-blind but we now know all the harm that has done. The path forward is not at all clear, but I know the first step is becoming more aware. I am thankful for my children who are not afraid to ask questions. I pray we can find the answers together.

Day 10: Tuesday, June 16

While Ben and I listened to the story on racism and health, I was lost in my own feelings of doubt and loneliness. There is a heavy weight on my chest at all times. There is a ticking clock that seems to be counting down. I am worried each morning to turn on the news, fearful of reading about another murder. I am anxious to scroll through facebook for fear of seeing a negative post on a friends' page. I have sleepless nights imagining what Tenny's life will be like, how to protect him while also fighting to make the country better, safer for all who look like him. I am tired of being brave, knowing I am fighting an uphill battle centuries in the making. I have moments of wanting to go into my protective white bubble and ignore it all. But I will fight against that urge, because I know all of these feelings pale in comparison to those of my brothers and sisters of color. I will turn to God for strength. I will be vulnerable with friends. I will practice grace with myself. I will remember the words of a fellow justice seeker - this is a marathon, not a sprint.

Day 11: Wednesday, June 17

Today is the 14th birthday of my first born and while he is off kayaking, I will spend time [reading](#) about and praying for black lives lost to racial profiling, police violence and vigilantes. Today is also the 5th anniversary of the mass shooting at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. I lift up the legacies of Clementa C. Pinckney, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel L. Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Myra Thompson. May God give us the courage to speak up against hate whenever we see it, both within individuals and institutions.

1) *Eric Garner, 44*

7/17/14 New York City chokehold in police custody

2) *Amadou Diallo, 24*

2/4/99 New York City shot, unarmed, mistaken id

- 3) *John Crawford III, 22*
8/5/14 Beaver Creek, OH shot while shopping at walmart
- 4) *Randy Evans, 15*
11/25/76 New York City shot point blank in the head
- 5) *Claude Reese, 14*
9/15/74 New York City shot after officer mistook handsaw for gun
- 6) *Clifford Glover, 10*
4/28/73 Queens, NY shot by undercover officers with his grandfather
- 7) *Cory Jones, 31*
10/18/15 Palm Beach Gardens, FL shot by plainclothes officer waiting for tow truck
- 8) *Terrance Crutcher, 40*
9/16/16 Tulsa, OK shot while unarmed after being tazed
- 9) *Philando Castile, 32*
7/6/16 St. Paul, MN shot after pulled over with girlfriend and daughter
- 10) *Oscar Grant, 22*
1/1/09 Oakland, CA shot in the back while pinned to the ground
- 11) *Trayvon Martin, 17*
2/26/12 Sanford, FL shot by neighborhood community watch person
- 12) *Tamir Rice*
11/22/14 Cleveland, OH shot by police while playing with a toy gun
- 13) *Michael Brown*
8/9/14 Ferguson, MO shot by police after altercation
- 14) *Aiyana Jones*
5/16/10 Detroit, MI shot in head during raid on her house

Day 12: Thursday, June 18

It's the halfway point of this challenge and I am exhausted. There is so much to learn, and the only way to truly change is to allow my heart to be fully open. But by opening my heart, I also risk breaking it. I understand why so many prefer to stay in their bubbles, to commit to being a good person, but not wading into the abyss that takes us to real systemic change. I have had some really hard conversations these last 12 days and struggled with feelings of hopelessness and despair, anger and disappointment, confusion and doubt. This challenge has been more than just a learning opportunity for me, it has been an intentional prayer to God to show me the way forward, my way

forward. I have also allowed myself to be vulnerable with friends who have provided avenues for the Spirit to speak to me. I am so grateful for these God messages and commit to spend additional time these next 9 days wrestling with what they mean for me:

- *Pace yourself. This is a marathon, not a sprint.*
- *Do some personal theological digging to see how you are being called to live out your faith.*
- *Practice grace. Assume that everyone is doing the best they can and meet them there.*
- *You are not alone. The world, your world is already filled with allies. Lean on them.*
- *Don't give up. The world needs justice seekers.*

Day 13: Friday, June 19 (Juneteenth)

I learned so much yesterday. History of our country that I should have known. The day is not only about celebrating freedom, it is also a call to action. How am I going to fight to make sure this freedom is realized for all? The Sweet Honey In The Rock concert at Lincoln Theatre touched me to my core. Songs of lament. Songs of hope. Songs of stories untold. Songs of freedom fighters. Music is a different type of learning, it creates a different level of soul change. I am looking forward to hearing and feeling more. <https://sweethoneyintherock.org/>

Day 14: Saturday, June 20

This challenge has been all about humbling myself to my ignorance, my privilege and my selfishness. I am so embarrassed by how little I know about the plight of people of color. I can't unknow what I've read, watched and listened to...but the risk, the temptation to go back into my bubble is high. At the end of the documentary 13th, Bryan Stevenson said it best, *"People say all the time, 'well, I don't understand how people could have tolerated slavery?' 'How could they have made peace with that?' 'How could people have gone to a lynching and participated in that?' 'That's so crazy, if I was living at that time I would never have tolerated anything like that.' And the truth is we are living in this time, and we are tolerating it."* Kim, what are you going to tolerate? When the Challenge is over, when the media has moved on to the next tragedy, when quarantine ends and life resumes, where will you stand?

Day 15: Sunday, June 21

Fifteen intentional days focused on learning about race, power and privilege. There have been many times when I wanted to quit and just go watch reality tv. I have procrastinated with the excuse that I didn't have the emotional capacity to immerse myself any more. I have had to stop myself from skimming an article and pretending like that counted. The reality is that's what we as a country have been doing for centuries. It's too hard, too personal to talk about our history, so we look the other way. We literally whitewash our history books and curriculum/standards so we don't have to face the reality of our crimes. Either we don't want to expose our kids to the unimaginable pain of the past or shed light on our ancestors' wrongs (even when "everyone else was doing it"). But that's not going to work any more. There is a movement building. Let us look back and find ourselves as part of the tide rather than another stone in the wall. I have often wondered how I would have responded during the Civil Rights Movement. Would I have been marching alongside my brothers and sisters of color or would I have been sitting in my nice house watching on tv. I don't

know, but I have an opportunity today to make a choice, to take a stand for justice, for truth, for reconciliation, and I pray I am courageous enough to keep going even when I am tired and scared.

Day 16: Monday, June 22

I met my mom in Montgomery today to hand off Kate for a week of Camp Nana. As I drove through town I listened to the podcast Black Like Me remembering our youth retreat here just a few short (long) months ago when I had become overcome with emotions while praying at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. I can still feel the warmth and love of the deep hugs we received from the tour guides. Their love-filled courage to tell the stories inspired me then and inspires me today to seek out ways to connect on a deeper level with people of color here in Athens. I don't know how, but I know I need to find a way.

Day 17: Tuesday, June 23

I have revisited *The Guide to Allyship* a few times since I first read it months ago. So many helpful reminders as I strive to be an ally. The one that stands out today is that just because I am nearing the end of this 21 Day Challenge, I cannot stop learning and working for justice.

"An individual from an underinvested community cannot easily cast away the weight of their identity (or identities) shaped through oppression on a whim. They carry that weight every single day, for better or for worse. An ally understands that this is a weight that they, too, must be willing to carry and never put down."

Day 18: Wednesday, June 24

I started another book on race today, *Waking Up White* by Debby Irving. I knew she was one of the original creators of the 21 Day Challenge along with Eddie Moore Jr. and her website has tons of resources. After only a few pages, I realized I don't want to read this one alone. For 18 days I have been doing intense personal reflection and growth. I have been reflecting here in this journal, which has pushed me and given me the freedom to be more honest and vulnerable than I maybe would have been in a in-person group or class. I believe this time of individual growth has set me up to take the next step - to be in community with others on this journey. To share our stories, our failures, our doubts, our questions, our hopes and to grow together. I am going to push pause on this book and hope to recruit a few others to join me in a book study as part 2 of this challenge.

Day 19: Thursday, June 25

While you could say that most of the resources in this challenge are non-religious, I do not separate the work of justice seeking from who we are called to be as Christians. And I think that's why the reluctance of the Church or good Christian people to act has been so hard for me to understand. I've never thought of myself as a "Jesus Christian". I grew up talking more about God and faith and haven't been as comfortable talking about or praying to Jesus. Which is weird because when I really think about what draws me to faith, it is Jesus. I love God. I feel comforted by God. I believe in God's plan for my life. But when it comes to what that life looks like - it is ALL ABOUT JESUS. WWJD?! Feed the hungry. Sit with the outcast. Stand up for the oppressed. Reach out to the lonely. Comfort the despairing. Wash the feet of sinners. Challenge unjust authority. Turn over tables if you need

to. The Bible is pretty clear to me of What Jesus Would Do. Jesus was a justice seeker through and through and I pray for strength to follow in his path. Help me to stand firm in my convictions. Show me the way to be the model of Christ's love and passion in today's hurting, fearful world.

Day 20: Friday, June 26

I listened to Ibram X. Kendi read his book *How to be an Anti-Racist* today on the drive to/from Montgomery to pick up Kate after her week at Camp Nana. While I bought the book earlier this month, I am really glad I was able to hear the author's voice, to hear his pain and his comfort. The most common thing I've heard from people these last few weeks as I've intentionally talked about race is "but, I'm not racist." It's an instinctual response, a defense mechanism. He describes how the word racist evolved from a description to a defamation. And with that switch, we lost the ability to look critically at ourselves, at our thoughts, behaviors and beliefs. By claiming I am not racist, I can step out of the conversation. It's no longer my problem. However, that's not reality. Kendi explains, *"One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an antiracist. There is no in-between safe space of 'not racist.' The claim of 'not racist' neutrality is a mask for racism."* If anything has become clear for me during this challenge it's that I have been (and am) a racist, but I am committed to being anti-racist everyday. *"The good news is that racist and antiracist are not fixed identities. We can be a racist one minute and an antiracist the next. What we say about race, what we do about race, in each moment, determines what -- not who -- we are."*

Day 21: Saturday, June 27

I think I last read Dr. King's Letter from Birmingham Jail in high school, but today was definitely the first time I understood what he was saying to his white Christian brothers and sisters. And it hit home. Dr. King wrote this letter in August 1963 in response to a public statement of concern from religious leaders that his actions (the civil rights movement) were "unwise and untimely." Fifty-seven years later I have heard that same concern echoed in response to the Black Lives Matter movement that is happening across our country. Some of my most favorite and inspiring quotes have come from the writings and sermons of Dr. King. He speaks to me and challenges me like few others. I have a bumper sticker on my car - *Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.* I didn't even realize that it came from this letter. He goes on to say, *"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."* This is the concept of UBUNTU that guides me. This is the retelling of the Greatest Commandment, *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'* It's simple and yet so very hard.