

## CARTER G. WOODSON

(aka-The Father of Black History)

As the founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Dr. Woodson initiated the first Black History Week, in 1915. It became a whole month in 1976.

## CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

unacknowledged or inappropriate adoption of the customs, practices, or ideas of a people or society by members of another, and typically more dominant, people or society

## Suggested Online Resources:

<https://aaslh.org/> - Black History Month resources and virtual festival by the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History

## RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY NETWORK

Pr. Hillary Burns-Kite, Network Coordinator

February has been designated as Black History Month, in the United States, since 1976. Starting out as a week-long celebration, it was chosen, by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, to correlate with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

Here are a few resources that might be used to help you celebrate Black History Month in your congregation, classroom, community, or home.

### **Adult Study:**

\* [The Black Church: This is Our Story. This is Our Song.](#)

- Documentary hosted by Henry Louis Gates Jr., airing on PBS; <https://www.pbs.org/weta/black-church/>

\* [Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man](#)

- Series of short discussions on race and racism in the United States; book and online videos, <https://uncomfortableconvos.com/>

### **Children/Youth/Family:**

\* [Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt](#) by Deborah Hopkins,

Illustrated by James Ransome; (1993 and 2018), Dragonfly Books

- Children's book about slave life and the underground railroad

- Visit [https://jamesransome.com/?page\\_id=36](https://jamesransome.com/?page_id=36) for more books by this illustrator.

\* [Young, Gifted, and Black: Meet 52 Black Heroes From Past and Present](#) by Jamia Wilson, Illustrated by Andrea Pippins; (2018), Wide

Eyed Editions

- Family book, highlighting Black leaders across the globe

\* The "Who Was" book series is written for young readers, featuring

many leaders in Black History, as well as the present. Find out more at <https://www.whowasbookseries.com/books/>.

\* [The Life of Frederick Douglass: A Graphic Narrative of a Slave's Journey from Bondage to Freedom](#) by David F Walker; (2019),

Potter

- Youth and family graphic novel, based on Frederick Douglass' speeches and the history of the U.S. Civil War and emancipation

In response to the Omaha FBI Field office warning to Iowans of plans for armed protests of the Inauguration of President Biden and Vice President Harris at the Iowa State House, the Des Moines Black Liberation Movement issued a travel advisory to Black Iowans. They advised "Black Iowans to not travel alone at night and to always have an exit plan" in fear of racial violence.

The Racial Justice Advocacy Network of Northeastern Iowa Synod discussed the implications of these warnings from the Federal government and a local social action group. These warnings and advisories obviously spread valid fear and concern among people across the state. Racial violence is intended to instill horror in the potential victims and to generate a false sense of achievement in the perpetrator. As Christians, we must commit to listening to and addressing the anxiety of our siblings. Racial violence predators seek to divide and destroy the loving relationships with others which the second greatest commandment demands of us.

Martin Luther writes in The Small Catechism concerning the fifth commandment (You shall not murder): "We are to fear and love God, so that we neither endanger nor harm the lives of our neighbors, but instead help and support them in all of life's needs."\*

The Synod Racial Justice Network recognizes that the threat of racial violence anywhere in Iowa is credible. The Network is committed and dedicated to assuring all our neighbors they are loved. Drawing upon our Lutheran and Christian tradition, we take this moment to ask all those in the Northeast Iowa Synod to bring comfort, care and support to people living in fear, being exposed to and/or subjected to hatred and experiencing indifference with regard to racial justice. As individuals and congregations, we are called to do our part to support one another in times of need, especially when one member of Christ's body is threatened. We strive to lift our voice to embolden Synod members to participate with the Network in racial justice sponsored activities.

\* Luther, Martin. Luther's Small Catechism. Augsburg Fortress, 2016.