

Coming to the Table
Annapolis Local Affiliate Group and the
“Racial Justice” Listserv
By Lynda Davis

The Coming to the Table Annapolis Group is a local affiliate of [Coming To The Table](#) (CTTT), a national group with local affiliate groups throughout the country. CTTT was founded by descendants of both enslaved people and enslavers and inspired by the vision of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said in his 1963 March on Washington speech “I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit together at the table of brotherhood.” Coming to the Table is working on Taking America Beyond the Legacy of Enslavement (TABLE) by facing and uncovering history, making connections, working toward healing, and taking action. You can read about the Mission, Vision, Values, and Approach of CTTT [here](#) and you can sign up to become a member at no cost [here](#).

The Coming to the Table Annapolis Local Affiliate Group has been having monthly conversations about race and racism since July 2015. In our gatherings, we have facilitated conversations using [Touchstones](#) as our guidelines and the [Circle Process](#) as our format. We encourage everyone to contribute to the dialogue and allow people to pass when it is their turn to speak. Our dialogue circles offer a powerful way for people from different racial backgrounds to come together to talk about their experiences with race, listen to each other’s stories and perspectives, embrace deeper truths, build relationships, and work toward healing and transformative change in ourselves and our systems and structures. Some of the topics we have covered include the ones on this list of [Suggested Topics, Discussion Questions, and Reading](#).

One long-time member of our group shared that CTTT Annapolis:

“is a valuable and important part of my life. I've learned so much, met so many interesting people, talked about things I'd never talked about before, and learned how to talk to people who have not started their journeys toward anti-racism yet. I've a long way to go--it's a lifetime process--but I think and act so differently than I did pre-CTTT...The facilitators come up with such interesting topics, help us keep the conversation going, and set an example by not being afraid to be vulnerable. Most of all, [the facilitators] accept all of us and are not judgmental, even if [they] disagree. [They] create a safe space where we can open our minds and our hearts.”

The Coming to the Table Annapolis Local Affiliate Group met at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis from July 2015 until February 2020. Because of the COVID19 Pandemic, we started meeting on zoom in April 2020. We have continued to meet on zoom. Since we are meeting virtually, we opened up our meeting to members of Coming to the Table who do not live in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County. We meet on the 3rd Monday of every month from 7:00-9:00 p.m. If you would like to attend our meetings, please contact us via our [webpage](#) on the Coming to the Table website.

We have partnered with other groups in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County including Connecting the Dots which works closely with Equal Justice Initiative [Community Remembrance Project](#) and the [Maryland Lynching Memorial Project](#). We have facilitated CTTT discussions after several Connecting the Dots events including the installation of historic markers about the victims of lynching, a soil collection ceremony for one of the lynching victims, a panel discussion featuring CTTT member Karen Branam about her book [The Family Tree: A Lynching In Georgia. A Legacy of Secrets. My Search for the Truth](#), and several film screenings.

Most members of our CTTT Annapolis Local Affiliate Group are active in other racial justice groups throughout Annapolis and Anne Arundel County. We encourage our members to run the RACE against systemic racism and oppression by cultivating **R**elationships, taking **A**ction, **E**ducating ourselves and others, and having courageous **C**onversations. We recommend that people get involved with their local chapters of other national groups such as Showing up for Racial Justice (SURJ) and the NAACP.

In order to assist people with finding ways to get involved in the multiracial movement for human rights, I curate a listserv called the "Racial Justice" Listserv Mid-Atlantic Region which is a comprehensive listing of meetings, events, information, workshops, organizations, etc. related to racial and economic justice that people can access at anytime and/or receive in a weekly email. I update the list every weekend and indicate new entries on the list with *NEW* highlighted in yellow. You can always access the latest version of the listserv by clicking the Racial Justice Listserv link on the [RRC Education Sources webpage](#) or by clicking [here](#). If you would like to subscribe to the listserv and receive it weekly (Sundays) via Mailchimp, email me at lyndadvis@aol.com. I will not share your email with anyone. You can unsubscribe from the listserv at any time using the unsubscribe link at the bottom of the weekly email or by letting me know directly. If you have anything that you would like included on the listserv, please email me.

We hope to see you at an event or at the TABLE soon.