

**ARCHIVE OF BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS
PART 5 – JANUARY 2025 – DECEMBER 2025**

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on behalf of the Racial Justice Group



BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, January 9, 2025

“What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”
-Jane Goodall (90 year-old anthropologist and activist who recently received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Biden)

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, January 16, 2025

What will you be doing on Monday, January 20th?

For the first time since 2013 Inauguration Day and the celebration of civil rights leader The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. fall on the same day. On this doubly significant historical day, may we hold King’s words uppermost in our thoughts:

“Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a better person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.”

(From his 1959 March for Integrated Schools address)

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Action by Action, January 30, 2025

A message from Chris DiMeo, Executive Director, Know Your Neighbor Woburn, *Neighbors Building Beloved Multicultural Community*:

As many of you are aware, immigrant and refugee communities and advocates are preparing for likely hostility and perhaps raids conducted by Homeland Security/ICE agents in the coming months. In addition to the risk of detention and deportation for undocumented immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, there is real risk for recent Haitian immigrants that TPS (Temporary Protective Status) may be reversed by Executive Order.

In Woburn, the Haitian Refugee Task Force together with Woburn Unites, coordinated by SCI Social Capital, Know Your Neighbor Woburn, Network for Social Justice, CARE, and other community leaders, are organizing to develop support including a family safety plan for our Haitian immigrant neighbors. The information at the two links below can be vital to our immigrant neighbors at risk.

- “Know Your Rights,” published by MIRA (Mass. Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition) <https://miracoalition.org/news/know-your-rights/>
- ACLU’s “Know Your Rights” document <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights>

To remain informed about how to support our immigrant community, we advise advocates to sign up for the Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) e-bulletin here: <https://miracoalition.org/>.

Thank you for your interest.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Birthday by Birthday, February 13, 2025 - From Wolves and Native American, December 2, 2024

Frederick Douglass spent his life fighting for justice and equality. He never knew the date of his birth. This is something he struggled with throughout his lifetime.

Douglass believed that he was born in the month of February in 1817. In fact, records show that Douglass was born in February of 1818. He chose the 14th of February for his birthday because his mother would call him her “little Valentine.”

Unfortunately, Douglass never knew much about his parentage. His mother, Harriet, was sold off when Douglass was a child, and he only met her a few times before she passed away. Though born enslaved in Maryland, he escaped as a young man and became a leading voice in the abolitionist movement.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Action by Action, February 20, 2025

There are many ways to help dismantle systemic racism, and learning is a great first step. A group in Melrose, Reparations for Melrose (www.reparationsformelrose.org), has developed a wonderful calendar for February, with a suggestion for each day of the month. An example: “Read about Robert

Bullard, the father of environmental justice.” A QR code on the calendar takes you to the resource. Go to their web page to see the calendar and enjoy some new learnings.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Learning by Learning, February 27, 2025

As Black History Month comes to an end and we look ahead to Women’s Herstory Month, those who have been following the email series “28 Days of Black History” will have noted that many of the Black Leaders in the labor movement who have been highlighted have been women. Read about these women—and men—who have been profiled in this series at www.28daysofblackhistory.com

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, March 7, 2025

“There is no doubt in my mind that we are bold enough, brave enough, and powerful enough. Creating the kind of massive change we need is going to take every single one of us — whether you’re a lifelong activist or you’ve been observing from the sideline until now. So ask yourself: What can I do right now to make my community, my workplace, or my school a better place for everyone? Then ... go out, and do it. Consider this your official invitation to make trouble — because we don’t have a moment to waste.”

Cecile Richards (1957-2025), *Make Trouble: Standing Up, Speaking Out, and Finding the Courage to Lead--My Life Story*

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, March 13, 2025

“You should be angry.

You must not be bitter. Bitterness is like a cancer. It eats upon the host. It doesn’t do anything to the object of its displeasure.

So use that anger. You write it. You paint it. You dance it. You march it. You vote it. You do everything about it.

You talk it. Never stop talking it.”

—Maya Angelou (1928-2014)

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, March 20, 2025

We offer up these stirring words of Sikh activist, filmmaker, lawyer and author Valarie Kaur:

“Revolutions do not happen only in grand moments in public view, but also in small pockets of people coming together to inhabit a new way of being. We birth the beloved community by becoming the

beloved community...When a critical mass of people practice together, in community, and as part of movements for justice, I believe that we can begin to create the world we want, here and now.”

- From the introduction to her book

See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Book by Book, March 27, 2025

Near the end of Percival Everett’s current best-selling novel *James* (a retelling of Mark Twain’s classic *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*), James asks young Huck:

“How’s the war going?” I asked.

“Still goin’. Judge Thatcher says I’m too young to go join up.”

I considered the northern white stance against slavery. How much of the desire to end the institution was fueled by a need to quell and subdue white guilt and pain? Was it just too much to watch? Did it offend Christian sensibilities to live in a society that allowed that practice? I knew that whatever the cause of their war, freeing slaves was an incidental premise and would be an incidental result. “Have you picked a side yet?” I asked. (Page 286.)

One might well hear echoes of Martin Luther King’s challenge to white liberals from his “Letters from a Birmingham Jail” in those words.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, April 3, 2025

Movement building isn’t about finding your tribe—it’s about growing your tribe across difference to focus on a common set of goals.

-Alicia Garza from the book *Calling In* by Loretta J. Ross

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, April 10, 2025

“Deep listening is an act of surrender. We risk being changed by what we hear. When I really want to hear another person’s story, I try to leave my preconceptions at the door and draw close to their telling... Empathy is cognitive and emotional—to inhabit another person’s view of the world is to feel the world with them.”

-Valerie Kaur from her memoir, *See No Stranger*

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, April 17, 2025

“Differing perspectives are a central feature of democracy, and building bridges across our differences

for the common good has been a perpetual goal. However, too often in the history of the United States, compromise has meant denial of equality for Black and Indigenous people, other communities of color, and groups who were historically excluded. Recognizing that centuries of injustice have characterized our nation, bridging initiatives today must also center the ideals of inclusivity and expanding democracy.” -Brandon J. Haas in “Learning for Justice,” SPLC, Fall 2024

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, May 1, 2025

In 1939 renowned American singer Marian Anderson was, because of her race, denied access by the Daughters of the American Revolution to Constitution Hall for a concert of patriotic songs. Through the intervention of President Roosevelt and the First Lady, Anderson gave a concert from the Lincoln Memorial steps to thousands present, as well as radio listeners.

Anderson said, “No matter how big a nation is, it is no stronger than its weakest people, and as long as you keep a person down, some part of you has to be down there to hold him down, so it means you cannot soar as you might otherwise.”

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Action by Action, May 8, 2025

May 12th is Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda Action Day, and we can demonstrate our support by contacting our legislators personally and/or joining the action at the State House in Boston. The specific legislative areas support removing public school mascots, honoring Indigenous People’s Day, teaching Native American history and culture, protecting sacred cultural objects held in government and nonprofit collections, and supporting the education and futures of Native American youth. To stay informed about the latest initiatives and to support directly important actions, go to www.mainindigenousagenda.org.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Book by Book, May 15, 2025

You may choose to follow up the May 12th Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda Action Day with a good read.

Patty Shepard, leader of the Racial Justice Group and active Winchester League of Women Voters member, shared suggestions on the Native American experience from the League with us:

- *Sentence* by Louise Erdrich, 2021
- *The Serviceberry* by Robyn Wall Kimmerer, 2024
- *The Rediscovery of America: Native People and the Unmaking of US History* by Ned

Blackhawk, 2023

- *Education for Extinction*, by David Wallace Adams, 2020

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Celebration by Celebration, May 22, 2025

May is the month designated for celebrating the cultural heritage of Asian countries, Hawaii, and the Pacific Islands. Visit our own Griffin Museum of Photography to see the current exhibit, *New Horizons: Korean Contemporary Photography*.

Our communities are enriched by the presence of our neighbors from the many countries that comprise the area. Learning about their cultural heritage is one way to foster inclusion and make our towns feel welcoming.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, History by History, May 29, 2025

As we mark Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, it's a good time to reflect on what we know—or don't know—about the history of immigration to the United States from the countries that make up this area.

What do you know about Angel Island, the Chinese Exclusion Act, the interning of Japanese-Americans during World War II, the “model minority”? A mere glance at the table of contents of historian Ronald Takaki's book *Strangers From a Different Shore* will give you clues to the vast and rich histories that few of us have been exposed to.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Memory And Martyrdom, June 5, 2025

May 25th was the anniversary of George Floyd, Jr's death.

Aba Taylor, former executive director of the Winchester Network for Social Justice and now the president and CEO of YW Boston, wrote:

“But let's name a painful truth: George Floyd, like Dr. King, has become a symbol—a martyr whose legacy is often used to signal progress, rather than to make progress. Today, Dr. King is nearly universally revered. But in 1968, at the time of his assassination, he had a 75% disapproval rating.

Why? Because he was unapologetically radical. He opposed not just racial segregation, but our economic system, war, and the entire ideology of white supremacy.

Too often, we celebrate Black people only once they've been martyred. We quote them, paint murals of them, and make them palatable. We erase their radicalism. We forget their full humanity. And we abandon the living while memorializing the dead.

So, let this anniversary be more than a remembrance. Let it be a reckoning of our own—a reckoning of

the reckoning. Because movements are made not just in the streets, but in sustained policies, practices and the everyday choices we make to confront injustice, to consistently push for change – for the better of all.”

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Book by Book, June 12, 2025

The Serviceberry, Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World

by Robin Wall Kimmerer, illustrated by John Burgoyne.

In only 112 pages, Kimmerer brings us into her world of nature, botanical science, her indigenous heritage and its gift economy, while challenging our acceptance of capitalism, its doctrine of scarcity, and the “tragedy of the commons” framework.

Kimmerer questions readers quickly: “Recognizing ‘enoughness’ is a radical act in an economy that is always urging us to consume more. Data tell the story that there are ‘enough’ food calories on the planet for all 8 billion of us to be nourished. And yet people are starving.

Imagine the outcome if we each took only enough, rather than far more than our share. The wealth and security we seem to crave could be met by sharing what we have. Ecopsychologists have shown that the practice of gratitude puts brakes on hyper-consumption. The relationships nurtured by gift thinking diminish our sense of scarcity and want. In that climate of sufficiency, our hunger for more abates, and we take only what we need, in respect for the generosity of the giver. Climate catastrophe and biodiversity loss are the consequences of unrestrained taking by humans. Might cultivation of gratitude be part of the solution?” (page12)

As she argues, “All flourishing is mutual.”

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, September 25, 2025

As ICE and deportation efforts build, let us make time to honor our Hispanic neighbors. Chris DiMeo, executive director of Know Your Neighbor Woburn writes:

It's that magical time of the year when our community embraces the rich cultural heritage and contributions of the Latino and Hispanic community. Hispanic Heritage Month was established in 1968 under President Johnson and expanded by President Reagan 20 years later in 1988. While we embrace Latino and Hispanic culture all year long, Hispanic Heritage Month, from September 15 to October 15, is a time when we give extra recognition to the many contributions made to the history and culture of the United States, including vital public policy, advocacy, justice, and equity work.

Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations also honor the historic resilience and determination of the Hispanic community in the historic struggle for freedom from colonial rule and oppression. Key Independence Days celebrated within Hispanic Heritage Month include: September 15 - Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua; September 16 – Mexico; September 18 – Chile; September 21 – Belize.

¡Viva la libertad!

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Song by Song, October 9, 2025

Hymn 2023, a Quaker round from the women of Greenham Common peace occupation, England, 1983:

Building bridges

between our divisions,

I reach out for you.

Won't you reach out for me?

With all of our voices

and all of our visions,

Friends, we can make such sweet harmony.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Quotation by Quotation, October 16, 2025

“Famous Last Words” is the title of a Netflix documentary--an interview with Jane Goodall that was made to be aired after her death. In the final segment, she is alone, speaking just to the camera. Her advice to the viewer is compelling. Here is an excerpt: “I want you to know that whether or not you find that role that you’re supposed to play, your life does matter. And that every single day you live, you make a difference in the world, and you get to choose the difference that you make.” Watch “Famous Last Words” to learn more.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Story by Story, October 24, 2025

Renee Graham, Boston Globe columnist, reported on Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson's story told recently at the Chevalier Theater in Medford:

“Decades before ...Ketanji Brown Jackson was just another homesick Harvard freshman. In Cambridge she lamented that she would spend a milestone birthday, her 18th, alone, far from family and friends in Miami, where she grew up. Days after her arrival on campus, Jackson had begun to wonder if she'd made ‘a mistake.’ Then one day, a Black woman she did not know walked toward her in Harvard yard. As we crossed, she leaned over and said, ‘Persevere.’ It was what I needed to hear to start me thinking about turning it around.”

What encouragement or sincere compliment might we offer someone this week?

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Book by Book, October 30, 2025

In Peter Beinart's 2025 book, Being Jewish, After the Destruction of Gaza, a Reckoning, the author expressed his desire: "My hope is that even people who disagree fervently with my arguments will feel that it was written in a spirit of Jewish solidarity and love." We warmly invite you to join us for a sharing conversation - on Sunday, November 9 at noon in the parlor - on the tragedy of the continuing war in Palestine. You need not have read the book. How do you experience, react to, understand this complex, deadly conflict?

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, November 6, 2025

As media outlets focus on recent U.S.election results, let us, members of the Winchester Unitarian Society, review the Congregational Resolution of Conscience and Resistance we passed in May 2025:

We reaffirm:

- our determination to preserve the Constitution of the United States of America;
- our belief that people everywhere have more in common than what separates them;
- and our demand for the restoration of the norms and institutions that have been a model and beacon of democracy for the world.

May it be so.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Book by Book, November 13, 2025

As we learn more accurate version of the history of the Native peoples of this country and Alaska, we can turn to contemporary writing of fiction and non-fiction, each of whom is writing from their own unique perspective while rejecting the whitewashed stereotypes of old. Go to <https://reedsy.com/discovery/blog/native-american-authors> for a list of authors and books to peek your interest.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Book by Book, November 20, 2025

The Cost of Free Land, Jews Lakota and An American Inheritance, by Rebecca Clarren.

As a child, the author Rebecca Clarren knew her great great grandparents and their six children had fled antisemitism in Russia and settled on a 160 acre homestead in South Dakota. There was no mention of that prairie land's history: cruelly and often violently wrested from the Lakota, followed by hundreds of broken treaties, given almost for free to white settlers.

With empathy and through strong investigative reporting she begins to disentangle her intertwined family story of struggle with the Lakotas' tragic story of injustice and dispossession. How can one reconcile this perpetual cycle of oppression, she asks.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, By Listening to Native Voices, November 26, 2025

“Within each of us lies the power of healing, of understanding, of peace.”

-Chief White Eagle, Ponca Chief, from the changeshealingcenter.com

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Peace by Peace, December 4, 2025

As we enter December, peace and goodwill are the focus of religions and cultural observances.

UNESCO, which observes World Day of Peace, reminds us:

"Being responsible for peace means acting to overcome the flaws and injustices which continue to prevent us from achieving an egalitarian world. Because a planet eroded by division is a planet which knows no peace." By Listening to Native Voices, November 26, 2025

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Song by Song, December 11, 2025

Perhaps you can hum along to this old Girl Scout campfire song, based on a poem by Glendora Gosling and set to music by Viola Wood.

“Peace I ask of thee o river, peace, peace, peace.

When I learn to live serenely, cares will cease.
From the hills I gather courage, visions of the days to be,
Strength to lead and faith to follow, all is given unto me.
Peace, I ask of thee o river, peace, peace, peace.”

May we find peace together in community.

BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, Welcoming with Inclusion, December 18, 2025

“Without all its colors, a rainbow would feel incomplete—and the same goes for humanity. Diversity is what elevates our world from dull and mundane to rich, innovative and full of depth. It’s those differences in culture, ability, background and perspective that make all the difference...”

(No specific author cited)