This event is a collaboration between Repair the World, One Table, American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta to catalyze the young adult Jewish community to join Hands On Atlanta's Signature Sunday Supper initiative.
Introductions:
Share your name and where you call home.

Community Agreements:
A first step to eliminating racism and inequality is to talk about it openly and honestly, which you’re about to do. Yet, talking about racial inequality can be challenging. In order to create a space in which we can all express and listen to each other’s lived experiences, we will work together to create community agreements.

Community agreements, sometimes called house rules or group norms, are the foundation for us to build a brave space where we can express our opinions thoughtfully and openly, and ask difficult questions, while respecting each other. We all need to buy into these agreements.

As a group, you should set and agree upon community norms for tonight's discussion. Think about other dialogues you have participated in and what worked well then. See the side bar if you need ideas.

We ask that everyone honors our mutual agreements as we move through the dinner. Tonight’s event has three parts: an appetizer, entree and dessert. Each will include a short text and discussion question. We encourage everyone to give a brief answer to each question, but how you use the guide is up to you. You can always pass if you don’t feel comfortable, but we encourage everyone to engage in “productive discomfort.”

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WHAT NORMS ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU FOR AN OPEN DISCUSSION?

Some suggestions:
- Acknowledge that you and others might have moments of discomfort.
- Use “I” statements; Speak about your own lived experiences.
- Assume best intentions. Ask clarifying questions.
- We all make mistakes; the important thing is to acknowledge and learn from them.
- Call people “in”, not “out.”
- Address the hurt that was caused while still engaging in conversation.
- Listen more than you speak.
- What’s said here stays here, what’s learned here leaves here.
- Take care of yourself. Take a break if you need to.

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1. For more information about the approach of calling people in, read Ngoc Loan Trân’s “Calling IN: A Less Disposable Way of Holding Each Other Accountable,” Black Girl Dangerous.
WARM-UP QUESTION:

What is your first memory of understanding race?

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “I am convinced that men hate each other because they fear each other. They fear each other because they don’t know each other, and they don’t know each other because they don’t communicate with each other, and they don’t communicate with each other because they are separated from each other.” – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1962

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Share a moment when you have gone out of your comfort zone to get to know someone of a different background, ethnicity or race.

What did you learn? What surprised you?

2. This quote was taken from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s speech in King Chapel at Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa, on Oct. 15, 1962.
3. Prompt and discussion question provided by Civic Dinners 2019: Bridging the Racial Divide.
4. Photo of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. center, flanked by Rev. Ralph Abernathy, left, Dr. Ralph Bunche, and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel at the 1964 march in Selma, Alabama.
In the 60’s, Martin Luther King Jr. was leading peaceful protests through the streets and people were saying “You can’t do that, you’re creating havoc, traffic, and problems.” What he was doing was seen as wildly inappropriate. Yet in the U.S. Constitution, our first amendment clearly states “the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” Fast forward to today, where athletes are using their visibility to peacefully protest, people are marching in the streets peacefully, and people are saying, “You can’t do that, you’re disrespecting our country.”

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:**
What are your thoughts on both past and current protests, and what is your definition of a “peaceful protest”?  

“[Jews] must pare our past trauma from our present truth... As Jews we share a history that is overburdened with tales of violent oppression. Though different Jewish communities have varying experiences, none of us have escaped painful legacies of persecution, including genocide... However seductive harsh policing, surveillance and incarceration may be in the short term, it will never serve us in the end. Not when those tactics brutalize other communities, humiliating and incarcerating our neighbors and perpetuate a status quo that leaves low-income communities of color on the other side of a sea of fear — still trapped; still stranded. The only real way out of the Mitzrayim of our fears is solidarity. Only by forging deep connections and sharing struggle with other communities will we creating the lasting allies who will walk with us into the promised land of our collective liberation. That is true Jewish freedom — true and lasting safety.” – Leo Ferguson, 2016

5. Prompt and discussion question provided by Civic Dinners 2019: Bridging the Racial Divide.
7. Leo Ferguson is a Jew of color and the Leadership Development and Communications Organizer at Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ).
8. Photo of Taiwanese Olympic athletes as they marched into Rome’s 1960 opening ceremony behind a sign reading “UNDER PROTEST.” The team was vexed at their committee’s decision to enter the games under the island’s western name, Formosa, instead of the Chinese Nationalist Party’s preferred designation, Republic of China.
“[Approaching] Martin Luther King Day we have an obligation to live up to the words of Frederick Douglass. Each year we congratulate our forefathers for the work they did during the Civil Rights Movement. We sift out the grittiness of King’s fight for Black freedom for his more palatable motifs of nonviolence. We listen to rabbis give sermons, we attend dinners intended to inspire us into action and instead of getting things done, we tuck away the black and white photos of King and Heschel and go on with our lives. When Heschel marched with King almost 60 years ago he said he prayed with his feet. Did Heschel know that he was paraphrasing Douglass? Was he using the words of a freed slave turned abolitionist to drive home his point about his time with King? I’m not sure. But in these 60 years while much has changed in regards to racial equality, we still do not live in a world that is racially equal. The institutionalized and systematic racism in our country exists because we allow it to with our complacency and our willingness to look the other way.” – Erika Davis, 2017

“Desegregation is only a partial, though necessary, step toward the ultimate goal which we seek to realize. Desegregation will break down legal barriers, and bring men together physically. But something must happen so as to touch the hearts and souls of men that they will come together, not because the law says it, but because it is natural and right. In other words, our ultimate goal is integration which is genuine intergroup and interpersonal living. Only through nonviolence can this goal be attained, for the aftermath of nonviolence is reconciliation and the creation of the beloved community.” – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1958

“...”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

What does Davis mean when she writes “we sift out the grittiness of King’s fight for Black Freedom”? Does this resonate for you?

If you grew up in the Jewish community, what is the narrative you have heard around Jewish communal involvement in the Civil Rights movement? How can that narrative explicitly or implicitly give permission for Jewish institutions to stand on the sidelines when it comes to engaging in racial justice today?

What do you see as the most important action we can take today to realize Dr. King’s vision of the Beloved Community?

9. Erika Davis is a Jew of Color, educator, and writer who writes about the intersection of race, sexual orientation, and religion
10. Photo taken by the Hartford Courant

“The beloved community is a framework for the future,” painted on the Northend Church of Christ on Albany Avenue in Hartford, is based on Martin Luther King Jr.’s principles of nonviolence.
WHAT'S NEXT?

We hope that after the MLK Shabbat Supper, you can leave the table with heightened awareness, having had the opportunity to speak up about complex issues, and feel driven to take action in the Atlanta community. At Repair the World, we act in solidarity with communities most affected by poverty and inequity through volunteering. We hope you will join us.

January 21st, honor the life and memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, and celebrate the Jewish New Year of the trees-- Tu B'Shvat-- together with a tree planting in Grove Park, or take part in a different project that works for you.

January 27th, help Ahavath Achim's AAACTS Committee (Action and Awareness to Abolish Child Trafficking for Sex) and The Diocese of Atlanta's Commission on DMST (Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking) label 20,000 soap bars with the national human trafficking 800+ hotline number and distribute them to hotels surrounding Mercedes Benz Stadium.