

# AFSC Midwest Digest – May 2021

*Highlights of work from around the region*



Chicagoans protest for Gaza. Photo: [Jennifer Bing](#)

## Act now to support the people of Gaza

Following weeks of increasing tensions and violence in Palestine and Israel, the Israeli military launched new attacks on Gaza on May 10. In the U.S., [political action](#) is needed now to bring these attacks to an end and [stop US arms sales to Israel](#). Here are [five ways you can support Palestinians in Gaza](#). Learn more by watching this [webinar](#) facilitated by Jihad Abusalim and listening to this [interview](#) featuring Jennifer Bing.



## Plug into Chicago Peacebuilding work

In their latest [newsletter](#), Mary Zerkel and Debbie Southorn share about federal legislation on policing, a “Surveillance Ain’t Safety” webinar, a recap of AFSC’s Mother’s Day Action to #FreeThemAll, and the No Cop Academy toolkit release party on Monday, May 24 at 7 pm CT. On June 2, check out [Stopping Police Militarization](#), the next in AFSC’s series of Community Safety Beyond Policing webinars.



## Lifting up the voices of people in prison

India Porter, who works with the AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program and is incarcerated at Women’s Huron Valley in Ypsilanti, recorded this [statement](#) for the #FreeThemAll workshop at the [AFSC Corporation](#) meeting in April. “I began having personal interactions with AFSC, mainly Natalie Holbrook, probably 10 years ago.... It was just so refreshing and just a safe feeling to know there was somebody outside of my family and friends who saw us as humans, as individuals, as people. They have always been there to give us a voice....”



## Twin Cities YUIR promotes upcoming community events

The Twin Cities Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR) is encouraging people to take part in a number of events, including a “George Floyd Inaugural Remembrance: Rally/March” on May 23 and “An Evening Vigil to Honor the Life of George Floyd” on May 25, the first anniversary of his murder by Minneapolis Police. Please visit YUIR on [Instagram](#) for more details about their work, both past and upcoming.



## Juneteenth event to celebrate Black power and Black Joy

AFSC in St. Louis is joining with partners for a [Juneteenth cookout](#) on June 19 with a theme of “Building Black Power and Sharing Black Joy!” Organizers are inviting people to “party with us and hear about campaigns for change and renewal through real community control.” For more updates, please check out their latest [newsletter](#) from Jonathan Pulphus and this [blog](#) from Sarah Nash on the need for restorative justice.



## Standing up for people in Palestine and migrants in Iowa

Two programs with deep AFSC roots in Iowa – the Middle East Peace Education Coalition (MEPEC) and Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice (IMMJ) – continue to organize and advocate. MEPEC recently hosted a rally (see [photos](#) and [media](#)) calling for an end to the Israeli bombardment of people in Gaza. IMMJ’s first [newsletter](#) includes this [critique](#) of President Biden’s first 100 days of immigration-related actions.

## Short takes

[Join AFSC staff at Friends General Conference](#) June 27 to July 3. Participate in the “Quakers, Blacks, and Abolition” or “Decolonizing the Future” immersive workshops or join us for one of four afternoon events.... Check out AFSC’s latest [Alumni Newsletter](#), the spring edition of [Quaker Action](#), and AFSC’s [2020 Annual Report](#).... Read General Secretary Joyce Ajlouny’s article about Palestine in [Sojourners](#) and former Regional Director Brant Rosen’s [thoughts on Gaza](#).

## Grateful for your support

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