

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY WANTS EVERYONE TO GET ON THE SAME PAGE WITH COMMUNITY READ 2021

Library to host dialogues on racism, social justice and activism

Charlotte, NC – November 2, 2020 – Charlotte Mecklenburg Library announces the return of Community Read in March 2021 with a focus on creating a community dialogue around the themes of racism and social justice. Community Read is the Library's month-long effort to have the community read (or listen) to books of current and relevant topics and participate in discussions, book clubs and events held at Library locations as well as hosted by community partners. The signature title, *I'm Not Dying with You Tonight* by Kimberly Jones and Gilly Segal, includes a scheduled appearance by the authors on March 24, 2021. Adults and teens are encouraged to read and discuss the main title, and the Library selected companion titles for all ages including: *You Matter* by Christian Robinson (children), *Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks* by Jason Reynolds (teens) and *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (adults). More information can be found at cmlibrary.org/community-read.

"Community Read has always been an important program supporting the library's mission, but this year more than ever we want everyone to get on the same page so we can have important conversations around race, social (in)justice and community activism while working toward improving Charlotte-Mecklenburg," said Meryle Leonard, outreach leader and co-program lead for Community Read at Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

"The Library is committed to the hard work of promoting racial equity and social justice by providing free and unhindered resources, materials and information, along with the spaces and facilitators to address these important issues," said Caitlin Moen, library director/chief customer officer at Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. "Community Read 2021 is one program under our larger equity strategy that is inclusive of all people and voices so our community can generate a deeper understanding from sharing experiences and viewpoints."

A community read is designed to bring people together around a single book while establishing a community of readers and learners. In 2021 the Library will again be joined by community partners to enhance the reach and impact of this significant reading program. Organizations, including the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the City of Charlotte Community Relations Department, will support activities and participate in Library programs to promote the value of reading and literacy throughout the community. To sign up as a community partner, contact Meryle Leonard at maleonard@cmlibrary.org

Community Read is presented with support from Wells Fargo, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation and Publix Super Markets Charities.

I'm Not Dying with You Tonight is a *New York Times* Bestseller and an NAACP Image Award nominee, and is currently in discussions to be made into a major motion picture

All books for Community Read 2021 are available through the Library's catalog in print, digital and audio formats. The signature title will also be distributed through Community Read partner organizations leading up to the events. In March 2021, the Library will hold readings, book discussions and other programs for participants that bring the book's themes to life.

To learn more about Community Read, visit www.cmlibrary.org/communityread.

About Charlotte Mecklenburg Library:

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is one of America’s leading urban public libraries, serving a community of more than one million citizens in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Through 20 locations, targeted outreach and online resources, the Library delivers exceptional services and programs, with a mission to improve lives and build a stronger community. For more, visit cmlibrary.org.

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Photo caption: Authors Gilly Segal and Kimberly Jones speak at EpicFest 2019. Join us in reading *I’m Not Dying with You Tonight* for Community Read in March 2021.



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Charlotte Mecklenburg Library newsroom: cmlibrary.org/library-news

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