



2018 Interfaith and Ecumenical Series of Sacred Studies Race, Justice and Liberation

Union Baptist Church | D. C. Rice Fellowship Hall | 12 Midland Avenue
Montclair, NJ | (973) 746 – 3270 | union@unionbaptist-montclair.org
Rev. Dr. Campbell B. Singleton, III – Senior Pastor

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2018

Title: Christian Supremacy, White Supremacy: How the Bible was used to promote ideologies of America as a White Christian Nation

Description: This discussion will highlight some of the research of Dr. Jeannine Hill Fletcher, Professor of Theology at Fordham University from her new book, *The Sin of White Supremacy: Christianity, Racism and Religious Diversity in America* (Orbis, 2017). She will explore some of the many dangerous (mis)uses of Scripture in American history: in the dispossession and displacement of Native Peoples, the enslavement of Africans, the exclusion of Asian people from citizenship, and the exploitation of African-Americans and Latino-Americans. The presentation will highlight some of the key theological themes identifiable in these patterns, and the legal and material outcomes of these interpretations. Our discussion will include the use of Christian Scripture and Tradition in the continuing legacies of these patterns in our present moment, and the use of Scripture and Tradition to create a more racially just world.



Facilitator: Professor Jeannine Hill Fletcher is a Roman Catholic, constructive theologian whose research is at the intersection of Christian systematic theology and issues of diversity (including gender, race and religious diversity). Her most recent book is entitled, *The Sin of White Supremacy: Christianity, Racism and Religious Diversity in America* (Orbis, 2017). Other works include *Monopoly on Salvation? A Feminist Approach to Religious Pluralism* (Continuum, 2005) and *Motherhood as Metaphor: Engendering Interreligious Dialogue* (Fordham University Press, 2013). She is Professor of Theology at Fordham University, Bronx NY, and board member of the grassroots social justice organization, the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition.



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2018

**Title: Abuse of Power In The Shadow of Exploitation: Our Responsibility to Injustice –
Isaiah 1:17, 61:1-2, God's Response to Injustice - Isaiah 61:3-11**

Description: The book of Isaiah takes on the complexity of systems of power that are integrated into today's political, social and theological grievances. In this study, we will explore what the bible has to say about those who become vulnerable in a society that exploits human life as a commodity and those who are subjected to negligence established by the power that is sanctioned to protect them.

God operates in the creativity of God's own freedom, justice and righteousness. It was expected that leaders in positions of power then were to rule displaying the same attributes of God. The truth of God's demand did not resonate, which prompted the prophetic calling of Isaiah's voice. Unfortunately, this same truth has yet to resonate with those in leadership positions today, prompting the prophetic calling of the believer's voice.



Facilitator: Minister Peggy Thompson currently serves as a member of the Christian Education Ministry, Sunday School Superintendent, Adult Sunday School teacher, Women's Ministry leadership group and Ministerial Team at Union Baptist Church. In addition, she serves as a member of the Sisters Who Share prayer call ministry and has served as the Correspondence Secretary for the New Brunswick Theological Seminary Association of Black Seminarians. In 2010 Peggy Thompson was honored at the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey Annual Session for receiving the first-place award for the 2010-2011 Emerging Scholars Seminarian grant. She was the 2013 recipient of The George Augustus Sandham Scholarship in recognition of student achievement on the basis of classroom standing through the academic year at New Brunswick Theological Seminary. She holds a Master of Divinity degree from New Brunswick Theological Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies from Montclair State University. Minister Thompson is a Program Associate for the Academic Success Center at Montclair State University where she assists with providing academic support programs and tutorial services for the campus community of students, as well as assessment for incoming freshmen and continuing students. She is married to Anthony Thompson and they are the proud parents of one son, Elijah, one adopted son, Robert and two daughters, Seniah and Trinity. She strongly believes that someone else's opinion of her is none of her business but God's opinion of her is all of her business. Psalm 139:1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me.



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018 (ASH WEDNESDAY)

Title: What is Patriotism?

Description: There has been a lot of conflicting imagery of what patriotism is in the news cycle. For some Colin Kaepernick is a patriot exercising his constitutional right to protest and for others he has disgraced the country. For others Joe Arpaio is a patriot and for others he IS diametrically opposed to what this country is about. We will view what the bible has to say about patriotism in the midst of confusing concepts.



Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Campbell B. Singleton, III, is the ninth Senior Pastor of Union Baptist Church. He serves on the program staff of the American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York. He has earned a Doctorate in Ministry at Hartford Seminary and a Masters of Divinity Degree from Union Theological Seminary. Through this Interfaith and Ecumenical Series of Sacred Studies and other community program initiatives, Rev. Singleton is working to bring together diverse groups of people to accomplish mission and ministry.



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018

Title: *Justice and “Othering”: Developing a Culture of Inclusion in a Bullying World*

Description: While our nation becomes more multi-cultural, the forces of division and exclusion seem to be gaining power. How do we create communities that celebrate differences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity and ability? What do our faith traditions have to say about human diversity and “imago dei” (the image of God)? How can we find within our faith the courage to create communities where we are not afraid of the “other”, but embrace all people as teachers and companions on the way?



Facilitator: Rev. Ann Ralosky is Senior Minister at First Congregational Church, UCC, an Open and Affirming, multi-cultural, multi-racial congregation in Montclair, NJ. A graduate of Fordham University, Rev. Ralosky received her Masters of Divinity degree from Drew Theological Seminary in 2007. Prior to serving at First Congregational Church she held the position of Protestant Chaplain at Montclair State University. She has served on the board of First Montclair House (affordable senior housing in Montclair) and the Pre-Ordination Commission of the New Jersey Association of the United Church of Christ. Rev. Ann testified in Trenton, NJ on behalf of Marriage Equality and received the "Pride of Essex County" award in 2012 for her advocacy of the LGBTQ community. In 2016 she received the Benjamin L. Hooks Ministry Award from the Montclair chapter of the NAACP. Her greatest joy in ministry is to explore and celebrate the many ways that God shows up in our messy, imperfect, but blessed human lives.



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2018

Title: Resisting Tyranny in the 21st Century

What can we learn from the last century to help us safeguard freedom and human dignity in this century? Using Prof. Timothy Snyder's book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, as a springboard we will consider what are the spiritual attributes that we must develop to support a just and democratic society. We will study the religious practices and texts that can prepare us for loving, truthful and courageous action.



Facilitator: Rabbi Elliot Tepperman joined B'nai Keshet, Montclair in July 2002. His rabbinate is characterized by interwoven commitments to teaching, spirituality and social justice. He received a B.A. with honors in American Studies from the University of California at Santa Cruz. He graduated from the RRC, where he served as president of the Reconstructionist Student Association, with honors for rabbinic work that best exemplifies the fusing of tikkun olam (social action) and ru'ach hakodesh (sacred spirit) and for social action within the college. Rabbi Tepperman was the first rabbi to serve as President of the Montclair Clergy Association, he has served on the NJ Greenfield board and now chairs its programming committee, a statewide coalition to work on issues of environmental stewardship, justice and spirituality. He has served in a leadership capacity in the Reconstructionist movement to encourage congregation-based community organizing, helping to teach a course on that at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) in spring 2007.



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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7, 2018

Title: "Wrestling with White Fragility"

Description: The broad American culture has made little progress in racial reconciliation, and many places, even places of worship, remain segregated spaces. Given the core Abrahamic tradition to love our neighbor, why aren't the people of God leading the way in honest explorations of racism? What can move us from being stuck somewhere between fear and indifference? Dr. Robin DiAngelo coined the term "white fragility" in 2011 to describe a spectrum of responses he believes white people have that impede discussing racial issues. How could wrestling with this concept benefit the people of God and promote justice? Let's put our faithful heads together and find ways to lead ourselves to deeper racial reconciliation.



Facilitator: Rev. Margo Walter, is a native Alabamian who has lived in Montclair, NJ for 29 years with Frank, her husband of 35 years. She works as a Pastoral Associate at Grace Presbyterian Church, where she is also an ordained elder and long-time member. She is a candidate for ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA), a candidate for certification as a Spiritual Director and is a part-time Hospital Chaplain at NYC's Mt. Sinai hospital. She has raised three children to adulthood, been involved in many areas of civic life, and earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering (1981) and an M.Div. (2013) from Princeton Theological Seminary. Her love of God, curiosity and desire to help others makes every day an adventure!



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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018

Title: Reflections on Modes of Protest

Description: This workshop will look at what is an appropriate and acceptable way of protesting injustice. In this session we will have an historical view of protests in America and explore what the bible has to say about it.



Facilitator: Rev. Jevon A. Caldwell-Gross is a native of Detroit, MI and is the son of John Gross and Pamela Caldwell. He received the call to ministry at the age of 16 and delivered his first sermon while a freshman at Kalamazoo College located in Kalamazoo, MI of which he now serves on the Board of Trustees.

After graduating from Kalamazoo College with a B.A. in Psychology, Pastor J decided to further his education at Princeton Theological Seminary to receive a Masters in Divinity. He is currently enrolled in a Doctor of Ministry program with a concentration in Transformational Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary.

As many can attest, Pastor J is unabashedly intentional about congregation vitality, reaching out into the community and empowering persons for visionary leadership. He is an effective teacher, a passionate preacher, a courageous visionary, and a loving pastor.

Through the grace God, he is now the senior pastor at St. Mark's United Methodist Church and a resident of Montclair, NJ with his wife Nicole Caldwell-Gross who is currently serving as the Director of Missions for the Greater New Jersey Conference. They have two beautiful children, Joshua Alexander and Olivia Grace.