

Salem Presbytery--Antiracism Study Resource Suggestions

A Toe in the Water---Places to Start

1) Race: The Power of an Illusion a superbly done educational video about the pseudo-science of “race” and the devastating social construct of race that has permeated the United States since its inception. **It is not faith-based** but is rooted in historical realities of which many of us are sublimely oblivious. The whole series has a “Ken Burns” documentary feel to it with penetrating expert commentary along the way. It is not a Ken Burns production but it has similar hallmarks of scholarship and thoughtfulness. The revealing series is presented in 3 episodes:

- Episode 1 entirely debunks the idea of race as a biological fact and shows race to be a calculated tool of persistent and systemic advantage for “whites” and of planned disadvantage for non-whites.
- Episode 2 traces this racially defined power play through the laws and institutions of our society from before the states united as a new nation through the end of the 19th century.
- Episode 3 documents the deliberate footprint of race continuing to be stamped into our society, with particular emphasis on government generated housing patterns which persist today. It also elucidates the absurd complicity of the highest court in the land in maintaining “whiteness” as a condition of naturalized citizenship.

The series is neither a finger-pointing guilt-trip nor an indictment of our personal behaviors or attitudes, but an unveiling of systems entrenched with racial disparities, into which we are born and bred and held captive.

Each episode is 55 minutes long. Each episode is produced in bite-sized segments—some a minute or two, others 5 minutes or longer, which can be skipped, so that a program can be tailored to a particular emphasis.

This resource and study aids are available for check-out from Salem Presbytery. If congregations wish to have their own copies for no-charge classes, retreats, forums, etc., the video is available for church purchase at the vastly reduced rate of \$49.95 + shipping totaling \$54.95 and can be ordered from California Newsreel at 877-811-7495 at <http://newsreel.org/video/race-the-power-of-an-illusion>. Can also be streamed for a week via Vimeo for the whopping sum of \$4.99

2) Waking Up White by Debby Irving, 2014—not faith based but courageous and unblinking in its revelations. Short chapters and an easy, engaging read.

3) America's Original Sin by Jim Wallis, 2016. A faith-based call for repentance and redemption.

4) Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community, 211th General Assembly 1999 PCUSA. (11 pg.)
<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/facing-racism-vision-beloved-community>

5) Facing Racism: A Vision of the Intercultural Community Antiracism Study Guide
http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/racialjustice/study_guides/rev3_antiracism_study_guides_201631.pdf

6) "Racial Equity Institute"(REI)—a penetrating, eye opening 2 day training event in diverse groups of 30-50 people, which is for many a **transformational epiphany**. Offered at various venues in NC, usually several times per year. Racialequityinstitute.com

Digging Deeper

7) When Affirmative Action Was White by Ira Katznelson, 2005. A foundational book-- a stunning revelation of how national policies of the 1930's and 1940's intentionally disadvantaged African Americans, the consequences of which still reverberate today.

8) Understanding & Dismantling Racism by Joseph Barndt, 2007. Written by a parish pastor but not through a sectarian lens. A basic primer on race, race history and race relations.

9) Race in a Post-Obama America: The Church Responds—David Maxwell, editor, 2016. A short primer on racism that is faith based. Short chapters, good for a study group.

10) Deep Denial by David Billings 2016. Autobiographical tales of a white pastor growing up in the deep south. Personal stories interspersed with racial history in America.

Hidden in Plain Sight—Truths spoken to Power by People of Color

11) Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates, 2015. A small, short book brilliantly and insightfully written. Unapologetically provocative from the perspective of a young-adult well-educated African American male. Note: This book is better read after some other introductory work, as it assumes a certain level of race dialogue awareness.

12) Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson, 2015. An autobiographical recounting of his astonishing career in fighting "Jim Crow" death row cases and unstacking the deck in criminal cases against black people in the deep south.

13) The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander, 2012. A compelling exposé' of the oppressive and discriminatory application of the war on drugs and other sentencing disparities on people of color.

14) I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown 2018. A no-holds-barred, no-punches-pulled dive deep into the corrosive effects of white supremacy among Christians. See Note in #11.

15) The Cross and the Lynching Tree by Dr. James H. Cone, 2011. A founder of black liberation theology draws parallels between the crucifixion of Jesus and the lynching of black people in the U.S.