

Rocky Mountain Conference – Denver, CO

October 11-14, 2018

Workshop Presenter: Rev. Dr. Velda R. Love, Minister for Racial Justice, UCC National Office

Workshop Title: “*For God So Loved the World . . .*”

Description: “*For God So Loved the World . . .*” is an invitation for Christians to sit together and have *Sacred Conversations to End Racism*. Sacred conversations allows the Spirit of God to journey with people of faith as they listen to one another’s experiences about the ways racism has impacted and harmed humanity in general, but communities of non-European cultures and heritage in particular. Sacred conversations involve making a prayerful decision to become advocates and restorative justice practitioners in order to reclaim the Christian Church and society through God’s love.

Workshop participants will:

1. Explore practical ways to have “sacred conversation to end racism”
2. Engage with biblical texts regarding equitable treatment of all God’s people
3. Learn about the mythological construction of race and the reality of racism in America
4. Participate in roll play, active listening and response techniques, and learn how to invite others to be on the journey to engage with and end racism
5. Develop strategies to move from conversations to advocacy and activism

Friday, October 12, 9 am – 4 pm

In A Beginning: Welcome to a sacred conversation about the mythological construction of race and the reality of racism in America. Moving towards a new beginning invites attention to creating sacred space to honor all human bodies as sacred.

The Origin of Human Beings Before Race and Racism and What Does it Mean to Be a Human Being? Who Are Your People? This question invites group interaction and community building by naming one’s ancestral roots. The question also invites self-critical reflection on the theological inquiry of humans’ first appearance, where they originate from, and the connectedness and make-up of the human family.

New Encounters with Scripture: Confronting the Myth of Race

A New Encounter with Scripture is an exploration that is culturally and ethnically different from what many faith communities are used to. *Images of Jesus* invites us into a visual art display and discussion that deconstructs the myth that the Trinity, particularly Jesus is white and male.

American Exceptionalism is a Matter of Race and Racism

What does it mean to be white? This question invites a deeper understanding of not only the construction of whiteness, but how to deconstruct the intersections of whiteness and myths of superiority.

- Lament requires acknowledgement of human brokenness. Deconstructing traditional historical narratives and Western theology also means decolonizing our minds and behavior. Reimagining means developing new ways of living with our sisters and brothers in the world. It also means creating new language that appropriately makes space for all cultural and ethnic identities to experience equity, justice, restoration, and healing.

Group Discussion

- Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God, Kelly Brown Douglas
- White Fragility: Why Is It So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism,

Saturday, October 13, 9 am – 1 pm

#MYNEIGHBORMATTERS

Creating narratives of inclusion is radical resistance. Radical resistance begins with a commitment to listen and learn from people who are diverse, culturally rich, and contributors to world civilization.

- Think about people who are excluded, invisible, or not welcomed because their humanity is different than yours.
- Begin developing agreements of hope that changes American narratives to inclusion, equity, recognition, visibility, and power sharing.

#MYSTORYMATTERS: Strategies of Righteous Resistance and Prophetic Reconciliation

The invitation is to eradicate Othering and model righteous resistance and prophetic reconciliation.

Confronting racism means fear is not an option. Imagine a reconciled world. A vision of hope invites us to become reconcilers, starting movements of full inclusion, being prophetic witnesses, and journeying with people to heal, restore, and nurture humanity.

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but the spirit of power, of courage and resolution, to meet difficulties and dangers; the spirit of love which will carry us through opposition.

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)