

THE RACIAL EQUITY TORCH

Volume 30, Issue 1, Spring 2020



GROW | TRANSFORM | EMPOWER | LEAD | DEVELOP



THE RACIAL EQUITY TORCH

In this issue

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

... What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?
-- Micah 6:8

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 224th General Assembly (2020) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be held online June 19, 26 and 27.

While the agenda for the abbreviated online General Assembly is still being finalized, the Presbyterian Mission Agency had been scheduled to present the agency's Mission Work Plan for 2021-22 and ask mid councils, congregations and other groups to commit to becoming a Matthew 25 Church and work on three foci:

1. Ending structural racism and white supremacy,
2. Eradicating systemic poverty, and
3. Revitalizing vital congregations.

If Presbyterians are to be known for their unrelenting witness against racism and white supremacy in the PC(USA), Presbyterians will need to commit to:

- becoming aware of privilege and using it to end racism and white supremacy,
- building an antiracist core Christian identity, and
- engaging in fearless dialogues and courageous conversations.

While some are disappointed that the spirit of many discussions in the Church today often seem negative and conflictive, others will seek to lift up the great mission and ministry that occurs in our Church. I am one who remains hopeful, for we are people of hope, and we are not in charge of the Church. God is in charge of the Church.

I am also one who believes that there are things that we do in the Presbyterian Church better than anyone else in the world! Please be in prayer for our General Assembly.

While this is the General Assembly edition of the Racial Equity Torch, and there are items you will read about in this edition that identify business and recommendations to the 224th General Assembly (2020), please know that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Abbreviated, Virtual G.A. handling only critical items of business these recommendations may be referred to the 225th General Assembly (2022).

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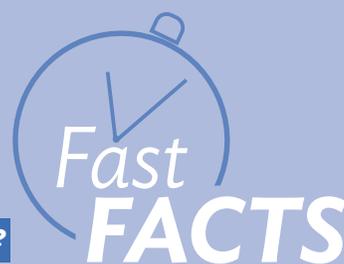
Save the Date

Be the Change!

Give Today to the Katie Cannon Scholarship Fund (E049991) for women of color to attend leadership development events. Gifts may be made online by going to pcusa.org/katiecannonscholarship. Those wishing to donate by mail may send a check made payable to the Presbyterian Mission Agency and write “in memory of Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon – E049991” on the memo line.

SAVE THE DATE

“In this time of social distancing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are continuing to suspend conferences and events in Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Also, for the first time, the 224th General Assembly (2020) will be held entirely online. The assembly will take place over three days: Friday, June 19, Friday, June 26 and Saturday, June 27. Details are still being worked out and will be announced soon. In Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries, we remember you often in our prayers, as you serve in your households, churches, and communities. We give thanks to God for you and continue to be inspired by all you do to show the love of Christ in this uncertain time.”



Did You Know?

- ❖ That many of the 1001 new worshipping communities are led by leaders of color, immigrants or women?
- ❖ That 53% of the 1001 new worshipping communities are communities of color, new immigrant or intercultural?
- ❖ That Korean American Presbyterians are the fastest growing membership group in the PC(USA)?
- ❖ That the next largest growing new immigrant group in the PC(USA) are Africans (from many different nations in Africa)?
- ❖ That staff in Racial Equity & Women’s Ministries speak 10 languages, including English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, Mandarin, Japanese, Arabic, Hausa and Igbo. And our constituents in New Immigrant Ministries represent 22 nationalities speaking 18 languages and dialects.
- ❖ That the first worshipping community of color worshipping in the PC(USA) was Native American?
- ❖ That the largest mission organization in the church is Presbyterian Women?
- ❖ That 64% of participants in new worshipping communities are under age 40.

On the front cover of each *Racial Equity Torch*, you will see our mantra: *Grow, Transform, Empower, Lead, and Develop*. The core ministry and the purpose of our work in the Intercultural Ministries and Support for Congregations of Color office is:

- **Racial Justice and Empowerment**
- **Leadership Development**, with a focus on developing leaders of color, women and young adults
- **Church Growth**, with a focus on new worshipping communities
- **Transformation** of existing congregations

Thus, our mantra is: *Grow, Transform, Empower, Lead and Develop*. Intercultural Ministries and Support for Congregations of Color offices *equip, connect, and inspire* Communities of color and new immigrant worshipping communities and develop and empower leaders of color and new immigrant leaders. The ministry area does this through training, coaching, resource development, leadership development institutes, networking, and providing grants to congregations, schools and colleges equipping communities of color, and leaders of color and new immigrant leaders. In Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries, we engage the church in its mission to become more diverse and inclusive of racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups, and we equip women for leadership in all ministries of the church.

Mission Agency board, Committee on the Office of the General Assembly look at race and gender issues

by Rich Copley | Presbyterian News Service

Due to the Abbreviated, Virtual G.A. handling only critical items of business this recommendation may be referred to the 225th General Assembly (2022).

BALTIMORE — The second day of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) board winter meeting — which met jointly Thursday with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly — concluded with presentations from two groups addressing issues of race and gender equity within the church’s national offices and in communities across the country.

The penultimate item on the agenda was a report from the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force, which included 11 items the group is recommending for approval by the 224th General Assembly.

“There were five specific areas of concern that we identified,” Samantha Davis, a member of the task force organized by Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries (RE&WIM), said addressing the board and staff. “Simply put, it

is looking at the ways that black women and girls experienced both institutional violence, including the church as one of those institutions, as well as interpersonal violence.”

Davis led the report to the board with those five areas of concern, which are:

1. Adulthood of black girls
2. Gender equality for black women in ministry/toxic theology
3. Reproductive justice/human rights
4. LGBTQIA+ equality
5. Cash bail relief

“Adulthood,” Davis explained, is the criminalization of behavior by black girls and youth that would otherwise be considered adolescent behavior in other youth, a symptom of over-policing of black communities. She cited as an example a 7-year-old girl who is black who got in a fight with



Samantha Davis helped present the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls task force report. (Rich Copley)



The Rev. Dr. Rhashell Hunter, director of Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries, commented Thursday during the presentation of the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls task force report. (Rich Copley)

her 8-year-old brother on an Ohio school bus and was arrested. The trauma of adult arrest experienced by children can have devastating long-term effects, Davis pointed out.

Among the report’s recommendations was creating resources for congregations to learn about the perpetuation of the adulthood of black girls and criminalization of adolescent behavior.

The discussion of gender equality from black women in ministry, Davis said, flowed from the common experience of having everything from clothing to qualifications questioned when women who are black enter ministry, as well as other demeaning

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Native American Coordinating Council recommends 2020–30 as ‘Decade of Confession and Repentance’

By Gail Strange

Due to the Abbreviated, Virtual G.A. handling only critical items of business this recommendation may be referred to the 225th General Assembly (2022).

In response to a 223rd General Assembly (2018) referral, a report titled “Expanded Response to the Doctrine of Discovery,” the Presbyterian Mission Agency was directed to form a Native American Coordinating Council for the purpose of encouraging, monitoring and sharing the ongoing responses by the national church, mid councils and congregations to the call to action issued by the Stated Clerk on the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery.

The action stated that “the council will also have the purpose of making recommendations to the 224th General Assembly (2020) on how the national church, mid councils and congregations can support Native Americans in their ongoing efforts for sovereignty and fundamental human rights.”

At the February meeting of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, the Native American Coordinating Council recommended that the Board recommend the 224th General Assembly (2020) to:

- Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency to extend the mandate of the Native American Coordinating Council by four more years, until the 226th General Assembly (2024), providing financial support for meetings and providing staff from the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly in coordinating churchwide actions on the Doctrine of Discovery.
- Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the



The Rev. Irv Porter, associate for Native American Intercultural Congregational Support in the Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries, lit a candle for the worship service celebrating Native American Day at the PC(USA). (Tammy Warren)

General Assembly to create webpages on the PC(USA) website with comprehensive educational resources, guidance, news and programming about work addressing the Doctrine of Discovery, as well as an interactive space for questions and responses.

- Designate 2020–30 as “the Decade of Confession and Repentance,” in which the PC(USA) “turns around and walks in the other direction” from the Doctrine of Discovery.
- Direct the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly to support the efforts of indigenous nations to gain local, state and federal recognition as sovereign nations; encourage

the return of indigenous lands and territories, including access to and protection of sacred areas through denominational property sales including research of the land’s acquisition from indigenous nations and consideration of how PC(USA) properties can be returned to indigenous tribes and return federal, state and local land management to tribal authorities (i.e., Bears Ears National Monument); encourage mid councils to disburse a portion of the proceeds to Native American ministries when buildings or property are sold, symbolic of good stewardship; and continue to support the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, supporting indigenous

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Presbyterian Mission Agency's 2021–2022 Mission Work Plan to be presented at the 224th General Assembly (2020)



MATTHEW 25

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly changed the way America is conducting business. For the first time in the history of the Church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will hold its 224th General Assembly (2020) virtually. Due to the pandemic and the abbreviated virtual G.A., only critical items of business will be addressed by this year's Assembly.

However, the Assembly will address a critical issue related to social justice: the Presbyterian Mission Agency's 2021–2022 Mission Work Plan (MWP).

The Manual of Operations of the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) Board directs that an MWP be developed for each two-year budget cycle, and that it be submitted for approval by the General Assembly.

The MWP is to include:

- Priorities for the budget cycle
- General Assembly Mission Budget for the two-year cycle

- Staffing rationale
- A mission engagement plan
- A theological framework

The Manual of Operations of the PMA states that “the primary purpose of the Presbyterian Mission Agency is to lead and coordinate the total mission program.” In fulfilling its purpose, the PMA's MWP reflects the mission directions, goals, objectives and priorities of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

In keeping with the Manual of Operations, in September 2019, the PMA Board directed the president/ executive director of the PMA to create a proposed 2021–2022 MWP. After reviewing the nature of overtures sent to the General Assembly within the past decade, and upon the advice and direction coming from mid council leaders attending a meeting called by the PMA board of directors, mission priorities were considered. The PMA recommendation to the General Assembly is that the priorities for the

2021–2022 MWP remain the same as the priorities for 2019–2020. The three priorities are:

- Dismantling structural racism
- Eradicating systemic poverty
- Building congregational vitality

Dismantling structural racism

involves breaking down the laws, policies, practices and structures that reinforce and perpetuate discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.

The PMA's work in the area of racism for 2021–2022 will focus on these four outcomes:

- Working with mid councils and congregations: Presbyterians will have antiracism training as well as cultural humility skills.
- Working with white Presbyterians: White Presbyterians will become aware of white privilege in the Church and in society and how they may advocate for a more just and peaceable world.
- Working in society:

The Matthew 25 vision is one that aligns with the three priorities of eradicating systemic poverty, dismantling structural racism and building congregational vitality. Or The Presbyterian Mission Agency will lift the vision of Matthew 25, which calls for faithful followers of Jesus to actively engage in the world, responding with compassion and justice.

Presbyterians will lead in antiracism work.

- Working within the Presbyterian Mission Agency: Staff of color can be their authentic cultural selves in every setting.

Eradicating systemic poverty refers to the elimination of the economic exploitation of impoverished people through laws, policies, practices and systems that perpetuate an impoverished state.

The PMA's work in poverty for 2021–2022 will focus on these five outcomes:

- Presbyterians understand a biblical and theological framework for dismantling poverty.
- Presbyterians have genuine, equitable and non-paternalistic relationships with and learn from people who struggle with poverty.
- Presbyterians understand the intersectional, root causes of poverty and racism.
- Presbyterians participate in advocacy toward dismantling poverty.
- Presbyterians will be generous in supporting efforts to lift communities out of poverty.

Building congregational vitality refers to the intentional and continuous faith development of pastors, ruling elders and members of a congregation that leads disciples who are members of a church to actively engage with their community and to make new disciples as a result of their witness and work.

The PMA's work in congregational vitality for 2021–2022 will be focused on the following outcomes:

- Loving neighbor: Congregations exhibit ministries of justice, compassion and service in witness to Jesus Christ.
- Loving God: Congregations exhibit ministries of teaching, nurture and vibrant worship that attracts new disciples or “those yet to come” to faith in Christ.
- Loving one another: Congregations engage in mutual relationship of learning and leading, accompanying partnership that demonstrates a quality of life rooted in faith.

The theological and biblical basis for the three priorities comes from the Gospel of Matthew 25:31–46. In this passage of Scripture, Jesus judges the nations by how they respond to people experiencing hunger,

thirst, nakedness, sickness and imprisonment, as well as strangers in need of welcome. The least of these are not judged for the condition; rather, the nations are judged for their refusal to respond to them.

The 222nd General Assembly (2016) called for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be “Matthew 25 people.” The Presbyterian Mission Agency will lift the vision of Matthew 25, which calls for faithful followers of Jesus to actively engage in the world, responding with compassion and justice. This response of compassion and justice toward those who are marginalized in our world is not only to be made by individuals, but the nations in which we live. Thus, the Matthew 25 vision is one that aligns with the three priorities of eradicating systemic poverty, dismantling structural racism and building congregational vitality.



A portrait of Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon, an African American woman with short, curly grey hair, wearing glasses and a patterned shawl. She is looking slightly to the left with a thoughtful expression.

"Teaching is my ministry. I love to teach. To empower. To equip. To set people free . . . to live into the graces and gifts they've been given."

Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon

Remembering a pioneer and legend

Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon, 1950-2018

The Presbyterian Mission Agency has created a scholarship fund to honor the name and legacy of the late Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon, a pioneer and legend in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Women's Ministry Fund (Eo49991) supports Presbyterian women of color, clergywomen, college women and other women with opportunities for leadership and spiritual development as well as mission opportunities in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Gifts in memory of Dr. Cannon can be made online or by mail. Those wishing to donate toward the scholarship can contribute online at presbyterianmission.org/donate/eo49991-womens-ministries. To send a check please make it payable to "The Presbyterian Mission Agency" and write "in memory of Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon – Eo49991" on the memo line.

Please mail your gift to:
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
PO Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

African American clergwomen gather for retreat

Theme is ‘Finding Rest for Your Souls’

By Gail Strange | Presbyterian News Service | Photos by Gail Strange

DAYTONA, Fla. — African American clergwomen from 24 states are gathered in Daytona, Florida, for a time of Sabbath rest, to reconnect with Christ, to deepen relationships of learning and support and to gain emotional, intellectual and spiritual support for their ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Rhashell Hunter, director of Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries, opened the three-day African American Clergwomen’s Retreat, which began Monday, Aug. 26, by reminding the participants that this event was a gift from the Church. “We’re happy to do this because we believe in you. We believe in your ministry,” said Hunter.

The theme for the 2019 retreat is “Finding Rest for Your Souls.” “As clergwomen, we are often so busy that we do not attend to our own needs, including our physical, emotional and spiritual needs,” said Hunter. “There is a time for work, and there is a time to ‘find rest for your souls,’ and that rest is found in Christ.”

The group sang a spirit-filled rendition of the hymn “What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine” to kick off the opening worship service. The preacher for the afternoon was the Rev. Dr. Diane Givens Moffett, president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Drawing from Matthew 11:28–30, Moffett’s sermon, titled “Play a Rest,” began with a story of one man challenging another in an all-day wood-chopping contest. She shared that the winner of the contest would receive \$5,000. Moffett said one



African American clergwomen join in communion service during the closing worship service of the retreat. (Photo by Gail Strange)

challenger worked hard, resting only for a brief lunch break. But the other man had a leisurely lunch and took several breaks during the day. At the end of the day, the challenger was surprised to find that the other man had chopped substantially more wood than he did. When questioned, the woodsman replied that what the other man didn’t notice is that every time he sat down, he was sharpening his axe.

African American clergwomen gathered in Daytona, Fla., for the biennial retreat.

“And like the woodcutter in our story, rest allows us the opportunity to sharpen our axe so that our ministry will be more effective,” said Moffett. “Rest, repose, recess and remission also provide opportunity

for reflection, rejuvenation, relaxation, refreshment and divestment of the demands, duties, responsibilities, restraints and complaints of daily living.”

Moffett says the gospel provides accounts of Jesus practicing what he preached when it came to the subject of rest. “Jesus was known to be a regular restor,” she said. “Now I know that word is not in the dictionary; I just made it up.” She added: “After teaching and preaching to the crowd, healing the sick and making the broken whole, after tutoring the disciples and nurturing them in faith, Jesus would pull away and step back from his ministry and mission in order to rest and be by himself before

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Latina/Hispanic women gather for leadership training

About 30 attending PC(USA)'s first Leadership Development Institute for Latina/Hispanic Women in Leadership

by Gail Strange | Presbyterian News Service



The Rev. Alexandra Zareth, associate for Leadership Development & Recruitment for Leaders of Color, guides leadership institute participants through an exercise during the inaugural event. (Contributed photo)

LOUISVILLE — A first-of-its-kind event, the Leadership Development Institute for Latina/Hispanic Women in Leadership, is being held in Louisville Nov. 19-22.

Sponsored jointly by the offices of Leadership Development and Recruitment for Leaders of Color and the Hispanic/Latino-a Intercultural Congregational Support of the Racial Equity & Women's Intercultural Ministries, the institute brought together about 30 Hispanic women from across the U.S. representing six different countries. The pastors, ruling elders and chaplains were all ordained by

the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

"This event is unique in that it gathers Latina women leaders to do theology," said the Rev. Alexandra Zareth, associate for Leadership Development and Recruitment for Leaders of Color. "The women are doing a type of liberation theology called Mujerista/Latina Evangélica." It makes space for voices of women whose voices are usually silenced, not heard.

"This is a space that values context and lived experiences and teaches that out of their unique context, women can study the Bible in a unique way," she said. "This is not a

space where they will be spoken to but where they will speak as experts and they are given time to stop and reflect on their experiences and realities in light of the Scripture we will study together."

The Rev. Rosa Blanca Miranda, associate for Hispanic/Latino-a Intercultural Congregational Support, said, "Latina clergywomen rarely have the opportunity to come together to network, to encourage each other or to share their experiences in ministry and learn from each other. This event provides a great opportunity for Latina women to build a network



About 30 women have gathered in Louisville for the first Leadership Development Institute for Latina/Hispanic Women in Leadership. (Contributed photo)

throughout the PC(USA).”

Zareth and Miranda say they are hoping to help participants feel their voice is valued and a space is made available for them to practice “speaking up.”

“We would love to create trusted friendships through the honest dialogue and fellowship they will have,” said Zareth.

Zareth said she believes it is important for the voices of Latina women to be heard because Jesus heard the voices of those who were marginalized.

“Matthew 25 reminds us that sometimes the most valued ones seem invisible,” she said. “These voices are the ‘least of these.’ These voices have less access than others to microphones. They are not the typical participants at events, and yet they are filled with talent and gifts that we rarely get to observe from close up and learn from.”

“These are voices that have a lot of wisdom and a lot to share from their own experiences, challenges,

and celebrations as Latina women called by God into ministry,” said Miranda.

The first session of the Institute was facilitated by the Rev. Everdith Landrau, manager of Ecumenical Networking, Education and Resource Development for the Office of the General Assembly. Her session focused on the importance of self-care. During her presentation Landrau provided participants with a self-care inventory. The inventory asked a series of questions designed to address one key concern: How well are you taking care of yourself?

Landrau, a member of the Institute Leadership Team, says it is important that self-care was discussed during the conference’s first session.

“In my experience, women clergy don’t always put their need first,” Landrau said. “In order to heal we must know what our needs are. Scripture is full of opportunities to partner with our self-care as a spiritual practice.”

As to the potential for future conferences, Zareth said, “The hope is that women experience a skill of ‘doing theology together’ that they can then do in their own spaces, cities and presbyteries.”

“It is my hope that this will be the first of many others, at the national and regional levels,” Miranda said. “I hope this event is the impetus for a national gathering of this type.”

The entire institute was conducted in Spanish, with translation services offered in English and Spanish by Administrative Services Group staff Spanish translator Stephanie Vasquez.

“This was truly a collaborative effort that brought gifts from OGA, PMA and A Corporation,” said Zareth. “Without the team, this would not have happened.”

Your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering provide leadership development opportunities and help Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color provide quality education for our future leaders.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) announces 2020 Women of Faith awardees

Recipients work to disrupt systemic poverty

by Gail Strange | Presbyterian News Service



Ruth Azar



Ana (Annie) D. Torres de Jimenez



Joyce Hamilton

BALTIMORE —Three women working to disrupt systemic poverty were named recipients of the 2020 Women of Faith Awards Friday by the board of the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) during its meeting in Baltimore.

Ana (Annie) D. Torres de Jimenez, Joyce Hamilton and Ruth Azar were approved following recommendations from the Women of Faith Selection Committee. Nominations are received from throughout the church, and a committee of representatives from women's groups from across the PC(USA) select the honorees.

The theme for the 2020 Women of Faith Awards was “Women Who Disrupt Systemic Poverty”. “We are seeking to join with Presbyterians who have moved away from charity models of mission to disrupting systems of poverty and resourcing communities, so they are economically competitive. Those in poverty often lack access to quality

education, employment, health care, dignity and freedom to participate as valued members of society and even the church,” said the Rev. Dr. Rhaskell Hunter, director of Racial Equity & Women's Intercultural Ministries.

“Many of us know women who have raised the economic level of entire families and communities, providing educational opportunities, listening to dreams and supporting others as they determine how to make their dreams reality,” Hunter said. “We honor these women who give of themselves to serve others through their witness and faith in Jesus Christ.”

The awards honor female members of the PC(USA) whose lives exemplify their Christian commitment through witness, service and leadership.

Ana (Annie) D. Torres de Jimenez (San Juan, Puerto Rico; Presbytery of San Juan; Synod of Borinquen)

De Jimenez, known as “Annie”

among her family and friends, and her late daughter co-founded and organized a program that invited children and teens from a nearby public housing project to visit her church, providing transportation and breakfast every Sunday.

This 94-year-old member of the Presbyterian Church in Hato Rey, Puerto Rico, has made it her life's mission to help children and teens encounter Christ and hopefully become lifelong Christians while instilling in them the values of good citizenship.

Each year, de Jimenez would buy school supplies and uniforms for the program's participants. Every summer, she would pay for their enrollment at the PC(USA)'s main retreat center in the Puerto Rico countryside. At the end of each semester, she would hold a big party for the program's participants to celebrate and recognize their achievements.

For more than three decades, de Jimenez has worked to disrupt

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the decision to hold an abbreviated, virtual G.A. and the PC(USA)'s travel ban and restrictions on in-person meetings, we regret that the Women of Faith Awards Breakfast has been cancelled. We will privately honor the awardees with their awards. We give thanks to God for their witness. We continue to be inspired by all they do to show the love of Christ in this uncertain time.

systemic poverty in her community by serving as a mentor, advocate and counselor to the program's participants; helping them get their high school diplomas or GEDs; and assisting them in preparing their college applications and covering related costs. Likewise, she has assisted the participants' families in finding jobs, receiving needed health care and other related services, and helping with government procedures.

By teaching the values of education, hard work and the principles of Christian life, de Jimenez has provided the program's youth with positive models that can present a way out of poverty and has tended to their spiritual needs.

Joyce Hamilton (Harlingen, Texas; Mission Presbytery; Synod of the Sun)

Hamilton is a ruling elder in her home congregation of Treasure Hills Presbyterian Church in Harlingen, Texas. She is one of the co-founders of the group Angry Tias y Abuelas (Angry Aunties and Grandmothers),

based in Brownsville, Texas. These women have single-handedly made a difference for refugees and immigrants at the Texas-Mexico border.

The organization provides basic necessities for health and safety as well as support for human dignity and justice for individuals and families seeking asylum along the U.S. border as they embark on their journeys to designated destinations in this country. Angry Tias y Abuelas also provides financial and labor support to local shelters; transportation to and from bus stations, airports and shelters; and emergency food, water, clothing, toiletries and other necessities for comfort.

Hamilton, an educator, organizer and environmental activist, puts herself on the front line every day, meeting with those most in need to provide for their basic essentials and their dignity. Each day, Hamilton is at the international bridge between Brownsville and Matamoros, Mexico, listening to women or bringing items such as fresh

clothing and drinking water.

In her ongoing efforts to disrupt systemic poverty, Hamilton engages individuals on both sides of the border. She unapologetically works to advocate for legal change and educate the public about the situation at the border and those in need. The organization is now building a legal defense fund for refugees.

Ruth Azar (Detroit; Presbytery of Detroit; Synod of the Covenant)

Azar is a member of Grosse Pointe Memorial Church in Detroit as well as the founder and executive director of the Second Mile Center of Detroit, a Christ-centered youth outreach ministry located in one of the most violent ZIP codes in the city. The organization, founded in 2006, crosses cultural and racial boundaries, serving children from various backgrounds and circumstances.

Azar's strong hands-on leadership and her ability to be highly relational makes it possible for her to work with the organization's board of directors as well as the community partners to move the ministry forward.

In a community where options may seem few, Azar has offered an alternative through the center. The Second Mile Center works to disrupt systemic poverty by offering an invitation for growth in faith and discipleship as the youth seek to learn the ways of Jesus. Many of the participants of the center are the first in their family to go to college. As the center transforms one child at a time, the entire neighborhood is experiencing positive changes.

The 2020 Women of Faith awardees have impacted the church through their mission and ministry to the church and the world.

and traumatic experiences. There were a number of recommendations in the report to address issues faced by black clergywomen, from scholarships to professional development resources to congregational education.

While the report cited numerous advances the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has already made, including the “Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon Scholarship Fund for the purpose of scholarships specifically for women of color to pursue educational studies, including doctoral studies,” the ninth recommendation was, “Acknowledge that the work done in this area is being done by the office with the

smallest budget (Office of Gender & Racial Justice in Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries in the PMA). Direct the PMA to increase budget support and equity for the Racial Equity & Women’s Intercultural Ministries area in the PMA.”

The report was broadly praised by members of the PMA board following the presentation by Davis and the Rev. Shanea Leonard, associate for racial and gender justice in the PMA.

The Rev. Dr. Rhashell Hunter, director of RE&WIM, noted that the recommendations were

being presented to the board so its members could weigh in with suggestions for edits, additions and other changes before they are submitted to the General Assembly, and there were numerous suggestions, along with a lot of praise for the effort.

“This is a powerful report,” said the Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, a PMA board member who was elected as the 2022-24 board chair earlier in the winter meeting. “Thank you so much for this report. I have nothing but deep gratitude for this work.”

Native American Coordinating Council, continued from page 3

peoples and nations in exercising their right to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, in coordination with the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations in New York.

An additional action of the 223rd General Assembly (2018) Doctrine of Discovery Report recommended that the Presbyterian Mission Agency create a speaker’s bureau on indigenous issues and publicize

the list to the church. The listing has 23 names of Native American leaders who are available to serve as speakers, resources and leadership for the church in the geographical areas in which they reside. Issues include water rights; missing and murdered indigenous women; boarding school-era history; intergenerational trauma; the Doctrine of Discovery; Native American ministry; health concerns; stereotypes, mascots and other

mythology about Native Americans; and environmental and land issues.

The Native American Coordinating Council includes Fern Cloud (Sisseton-Wahpeton, Sioux), Ron McKinney (Choctaw), June L. Lorenzo (Laguna Pueblo/Diné), Custer Lowe (Diné/Ute), Elona Street-Stewart (Delaware Nanticoke), Anthony Trujillo (Ohkay Owingeh), and Lucy Apataki (Yupik).

African American clergywomen, continued from page 7

reentering the space of ministry the next day, because the work of ministry can be daunting.”

Referring to the Negro spiritual “Jesus Knows All About our Struggles,” Moffett said, “Whatever our struggles, Jesus knows all about them. He’s aware of the labor and the load carried by those called to continue his ministry and mission in the 21st century. He knows about the injustices and suffering we are called to combat as African American clergywomen. He knows about the healing and hope we are moved to administer to our people who are impacted by racist and oppressive systems. He knows about the mass incarceration, sweeping deportation,

the elevation of a president who tweets and texts, stirring up violent and vicious hatred and division in this nation.

“He knows what we deal with when it comes to employment in this denomination. He knows that too many African American clergywomen find it hard to receive calls from churches black and white,” she said. “Even in this day and time, congregants don’t want a woman — let alone a black woman. Too many of us are in positions where we are forced to make bricks without straws. We have to occupy spaces that are dilapidated and in disrepair. We’re in situations where we are trying to build congregations with little

resources and financial support,” Moffett said.

“While we delight in seeing the Holy Spirit at work — in us, around us, among us in the church and in the world — Jesus also knows about the struggles that come with this call to serve him, and so he calls us to rest,” she said.

The retreat is offering a wide range of topics to enhance and inform the women, including Bible studies on “Reconnecting with God’s Spirit” and “Reconnecting to Your Call to Ministry,” a presentation from the Board of Pensions on benefits, and sessions on healthy lifestyles and the benefits of peer group support and mentoring.

FEATURED RESOURCES

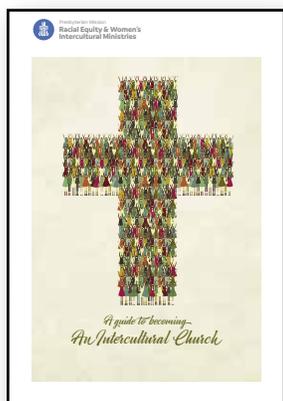


RE&WIM brochure

Racial Equity & Women's Intercultural Ministries (RE&WIM) engages with Presbyterians and partners across the U.S. to:

- end racism
- empower women
- build intercultural communities

God's Spirit created the intercultural church at Pentecost, leaving cultural and linguistic identities in place. In RE&WIM, we are blessed to see a vision of Pentecost every day. Staff in RE&WIM speak nine languages, including English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, Mandarin, Arabic, Hausa and Igbo. New immigrant constituents in our ministries represent 22 nationalities speaking 18 languages and dialects. Request a copy of this resource.



A Guide to Becoming an Intercultural Church

An intercultural church:

- respects, embraces and values different cultures and cultural identities:
- offers a positive vision of the whole community
- values the give and take of respectful relationships
- takes steps to become a multilingual community.

For more information please visit the Intercultural Ministries and Support for Congregations of Color page at pcusa.org/intercultural.

Who We are

Intercultural Ministries and Support for Congregations of Color

- African Intercultural Ministries
- African American Intercultural Congregational Support
- Asian Intercultural Congregational Support
- Hispanic/Latino-a Intercultural Congregational Support
- Korean Intercultural Congregational Support
- Middle Eastern Intercultural Ministries
- Native American Intercultural Congregational Support

Leadership Development & Recruitment for Leaders of Color

- Mission Program Grants
- Racial Equity Leadership Development & Recruitment
- Schools and Colleges Equipping communities of Color

Women's Leadership Development and Justice Ministries

- Gender and Racial Justice
- Racial and Intercultural Justice (joint office with CPJ)
- Women's Leadership Development & Young Women's Ministries

In covenant relationship with Presbyterian Women in the PC(USA), Inc.

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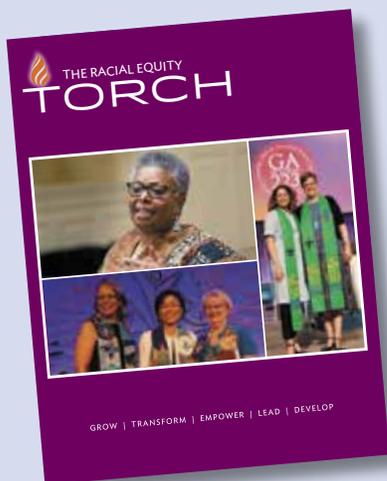


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