



July 5, 2020

## The Restorative Racial Justice Summer Institute

### Sacred Conversations to End Racism

#### *“Race is Not Real – Racism is Real”*

Register and become part of a listening and learning community. Commit to gathering for five sessions and learn best practices towards dismantling racism.

#### **Modules – July – August 2020**

Participants are required to participate via Zoom video conference technology. Seminar materials will include pre-assigned handouts, links to videos and documentaries, and process questions. On meeting days, groups will be assigned to break out rooms for one hour to discuss the pre-assigned work. During the last thirty-minutes groups will come back together and discuss some reflections based on internal processing. Large group participation will also offer opportunities for listening to how diverse cultures experience colonialism, internalized whiteness, and racism based on their lived experiences.



#### The Restorative Racial Justice Summer Institute Dates:

Wednesday, 6 pm – 7:30 pm Eastern Standard Time

- July 8th –15th – 22nd – 29th
- August 5th

Session 1 – July 8 HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Session 2 – July 15 THE ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Session 3 – July 22 THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MYTH OF RACE

Session 4 – July 29 DECENTERING WHITENESS

Session 5 – August 5 FINDING CURES FOR THE PANDEMIC

For more information go to:

[https://www.ucc.org/the\\_restorative\\_racial\\_justice\\_summer\\_institute\\_july\\_8th](https://www.ucc.org/the_restorative_racial_justice_summer_institute_july_8th)

## I have thought for a long time that I was free...

*“I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate...I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.” - Romans 7:15 & 18*

*“There are two ways of being a prophet. One is to tell the enslaved they can be free. It is the difficult path of Moses. The second is to tell those who think they are free that they are, in fact, enslaved. This is the even more difficult path of Jesus.” - Richard Rohr*

I have for a long time thought I was free but the more I understand how people of color cannot share freedom as I know it, the more I understand how I have been enslaved to my own white privilege. I have for a long time thought I was free but the more I understand how people of other faiths cannot share freedom as I know it, the more I understand how I have been enslaved by Christian privilege. I have for a long time thought I was free but the more I understand how people of a different sexual orientation cannot share freedom as I know it, the more I understand how I have been enslaved by my hetero privilege.

The Apostle Paul and Father Richard Rohr both testify to the simple truth that our deepest freedom rests not in our freedom to do what we want to do but rather in our freedom to know and become the person who God wills us to be.

In the United States we celebrate, especially this coming Independence weekend, the rights and freedoms we have from all manner of restraint. But we pay little attention to the fact that these liberties can only offer us as much freedom as we ourselves have earned from the inside.

If we haven't achieved the inner freedom to give love, to extend grace, to offer mercy, to do justice, we are totally dependent on the outer systems of family, culture and government which, ironically, can never fully guarantee or deliver the freedoms they promise. You cannot give what you do not have. An elected leader, for instance, who has neither the moral or ethical character upon which our form of government relies, will not be given it once elected and cannot enact or protect it (or the governed) once installed. This is true for lay leaders, pastors and parents.

I know that freedom is not a moment in time or place of being it is process of becoming. The signing of the Declaration of Independence was only a moment in the long journey toward exterior freedom. The journey continues. The death and resurrection of Jesus were moments in time in the long journey toward interior, spiritual freedom. That journey, thank God, continues. Perhaps one day when these two paths have crossed, we will know that “thy kingdom has come on earth as it is in heaven.” Only then could we claim to be ‘one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.’

- Bill, Rev .William P. Worley, PSE Conference Minister