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The Panhandle Presbyterian

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From General Presbyter Roy Martin

On January 17th, the nation in general and the Presbyterian Church (USA) in particular will honor The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for his diligent work in fighting racism in our country. Not everyone agreed with what he said and did then, nor does everyone agree even now.

But surely no one should disagree with the hope he presented when he said, "When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old spiritual, 'Free at last, free at last. Thanks God Almighty, we are free at last.'"

If he were still alive, if he had not been struck down by an assassin's bullet, even though he would be 93 years old on January 17th, I have no doubt that he would offer profound guidance as we still find ourselves mired in the ugly stain of racism. None of us

can look on the events of the recent past or, indeed, the daily examples of all that keeps us separated from one another, partitioned in our own prejudices, and deny that we still have a long way to go in living out Dr. King's dream.

It will not do to say that, if everyone would just stop stirring up the issue of racism, we could all get along. To say that is to reject the real feelings and daily experiences of those who suffer from the tangible effects of prejudice, bigotry, and intolerance.

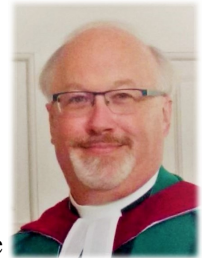
Those of us who have provided pastoral counseling to others know you never start the conversation by telling someone what they ought to do or how they ought to feel. In fact, you never say that at all! You start by listening. You listen to the hurt and the fear and the pain and the anger. You make safe space for honest expression and you offer your care and support.

As the church, can we do no less in providing such space for listening, for offering care and support? And isn't Jesus Christ our model for doing so?

But more than that, are we not called to work for that day when we all, "will be able to join hands?"

What can you do to work for that day? What can your congregation do? I hope you will spend some time this month asking those questions and I look forward to hearing what role you will play in reaching out with the love of Christ to those who may look different than you but who are equally children of God.

Roy



The Rev. Dr. Roy Martin

**Save the date!
Winter Stated
Presbytery
Meeting
Tuesday,
February 22
9 a.m. CST/
10 a.m. EST
@ Faith
Presbyterian,
Tallahassee**

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UKULELE ORCHESTRA OF ST ANDREWS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 30TH
AMANDA MATTHEWS & TOMMY COOPER

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH
THE WABI SABI'S

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH
MUSIC BY DAVID SEERING



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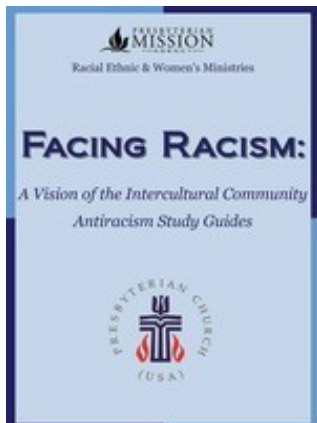
271 South Arnold (Hwy 79)
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1st, Pensacola offers on-going anti-racism discussion group

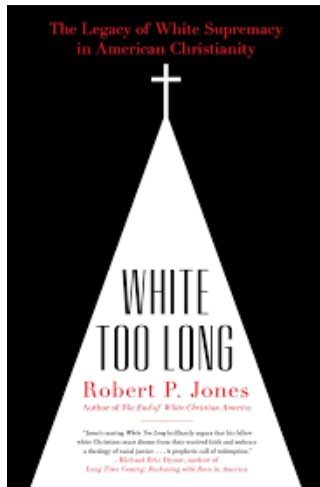
Elder Susan Byram of First Pensacola heard the cries of George Floyd and was motivated to begin learning about the impact of racism on our culture. As she learned, a desire to share what she was learning grew until in the fall of 2021, she offered to lead a discussion group on the topic of Anti-Racism.

Susan had discovered that the Presbyterian Church (U. S. A.) has an Anti-Racism Policy which has existed since 1999. Recently, it was updated, and a study guide called *Facing Racism* is offered to accompany it. This tool with six lessons seemed the obvious place to start our discussion group.

The group decided to meet via Zoom and so included not only members from First Pensacola, but also one from Faith, Tallahassee, and a non-Presbyterian! The remaining 12 or so folks brought all kinds of political, theological and cultural perspectives, guaranteeing wonderful perspectives for our discussions!



The Anti-Racism Policy of the PC(USA) Study Guide: Facing Racism offers a biblical, theological and historical basis for the importance of anti-racism work in the church. Beginning with the Bible imperatives to Anti-Racism, the policy then builds on this with references to the Confession of 1967 and the Great Ends of the Church. God's desire for a Beloved Community and a New Creation are examined in



the light of how racism serves as an obstacle to these goals. After establishing this foundation, the document goes into some definitions of terms that are used in discussing racism and then gives a call to action that is a clear and obvious outgrowth of our faith.

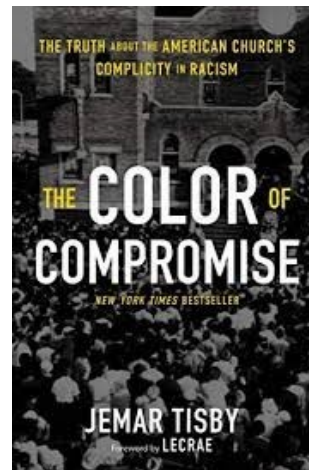
During the summer of 2020, a University of West Florida researcher discovered that a well-respected White historian and community leader, T.T. Wentworth, was also the head of the local Ku Klux Klan in Pensacola in

the 1920s. His church and many other White churches supported his work. Upon this discovery, his descendants developed a plan of action that included a public service of lament and acknowledgement.

Our group was able to attend this event as our final activity for 2021. This moving service was a powerful reminder of how God is calling us to do anti-racism work in our own communities today.

Our group has decided to continue learning together. Next up is a study of Robert P. Jones' book *White Too Long*, followed by Jemar Tisby's *The Color of Compromise*. Both these books relate to the church's role in systemic racism and our need to repent and work to change structures in our society to move closer to God's desired Beloved Community and New Creation.

We plan to continue to meet via Zoom with some special in-person events added in. So if you'd like to join us or you have questions, email Susan at susansbyram@gmail.com.



From the "I Stand with You" Task Force



By
Susan Byram,
Task Force member
and 1st, Pensacola
Elder

From the Committee on Congregational Revitalization



*By Rev. Lisa Martin,
Chair, and
1st, Lynn Haven Pastor*

CCR seeks revitalization consultants

Happy New Year from the Committee on Congregational Revitalization! CCR is blessed to offer resources of hope and vitality to the congregations of Florida Presbytery. We have a group of dedicated consultants who have undergone training to assist congregations in their revitalization efforts.

We are grateful for those who have been trained and are willing to give time and energy to helping congregations go



through the Holy Cow! assessment and MissionInsite demographic study. We couldn't do what we do without our wonderful consultants!

Because of such good response to our work with congregations, we have a nice problem: we need more consultants! We're actively looking for people who enjoy

working with others, have good interpersonal skills and good computer skills, who can think quickly and process information easily.

Does this sound like a project you'd like to be part of? Please contact Mark Broadhead, vice-chair (minister@fpc-crestview.org) or me (revlwmartin@gmail.com). We'd love to talk with you!

May God bless every congregation with health and wholeness in the new year!

YOU ARE INVITED TO

Trinity Presbyterian Women's Retreat

with Pastor Ashley Meyer, Retreat Leader;
Executive Director, United Ministries; Former Associate Editor,
Presbyterian Women Inc., Presbyterian Church (USA) presenting

Being Part of God's Story: Of Love and Grace for our World

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2022

9:00AM - 3:00PM

BOX LUNCH PROVIDED

BAYVIEW SENIOR CENTER AT BAYVIEW PARK
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Tickets: \$25.00, cash or check. Purchase at Trinity Presbyterian Church or by contacting Judy Scruggs at judyscruggs@cox.net or 850-380-5419

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In the new year, hope

Starting the new year with “hope” feels right because, for the first time, a majority of Americans felt the effects of climate change last year, and its effects are coming faster and are worse than scientists predicted. When you open your eyes and ears to our reality, you will see that our situation is dire. But no matter how bad it is, there is always hope. Hope can spring from seeing what others are doing, so here are ten things that give me hope in the fight against the climate crisis:

► More and more people are choosing climate-friendly living and rejecting the desecration of the planet. (Note that it is more than recycling.)

► Not that addressing the climate crisis depends on how many believe that it is real, but nearly 3/4 of Americans believe that climate change is happening and that we need to regulate carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas responsible for the warming. Most heartening is that 78% believe we should teach students about climate change.

► Young Presbyterian clergy understand our dire reality and are protesting in the streets and in their pulpits about the

injustices of climate change.

► The saints in my church years ago recognized the reality of the climate crisis and took steps to address it with energy-saving retrofits and rooftop solar installation on our church. They have divested our endowment of fossil fuels with the Presbyterian Foundation, and our money has almost doubled. They also have led an effort to do energy retrofits on local charitable organizations and have cut our community’s carbon emissions by 125 metric tons annually.

► My community, the City of Tallahassee, is on course to switch us to 100% renewable energy. I can share with you that isn’t easy, but it is underway. Bravo!!!

► The price of clean energy is falling fast. Solar costs declined by 90% between 2009 and 2021.

► Our President is leading the way with a big, bold and serious plan to address the climate crisis.

► In Iceland, a new facility called Orca is pulling CO2 from the atmosphere and storing it underground. This is proof that we can remove

carbon from the atmosphere.

► Electric vehicle sales surged in 2021 with growth in all three top auto markets – China, the U. S. and Europe. President Biden has set a goal that, by 2030, half of all new vehicle sales in the U. S. will be zero-emission cars.

► The fossil fuel divestment movement has pledges totaling \$40 trillion. That is bigger than the GDP of China and the U.S. combined.

Seeing what others have done gives me hope that, after years of resisting fossil fuel divestment, our denomination will join with other denominations and enlightened institutions and CATEGORICALLY divest our pension and foundation funds of all fossil fuels at the 2022 GA.

Surely, there is no excuse consistent with our faith for our denomination to continue to make money off an industry that is destroying the livability of the planet and causing so much suffering, especially for “the least of these”.

As always, if you have any comments or questions, please contact me at pammcvety@hotmail.com.

Caring for Creation Notes



By
Pam McVety,
*Presbytery
Stewardship
of Creation
Enabler*
([pammcvety
@hotmail.com](mailto:pammcvety@hotmail.com))

*Seeing what others
have done
gives me hope ...*

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**Committee on Dogwood Acres
(CDWA)**

Rev. William "Bill" Lamont
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Committee on Nominations (CN)

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**Committee on Presbytery
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Committee on Representation (CR)

Glenn Hodges
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**Coordinating and Planning
Commission (CPC)**

Roseanna Phillips
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Save the date (or visit <http://www.presbyteryofflorida.net/events-calendars/>)

In January		Looking ahead	
<i>Saturday, January 8 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	Committee on Representation (CR)	<i>Tuesday, February 1 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)
<i>Tuesday, January 11 9:30 a.m. CST/ 10:30 a.m. EST</i>	Committee on Ministry (COM)	<i>Saturday, February 5 9 a.m. CST</i>	Trinity (Pensacola) Presbyterian Women's Retreat, Bayview Senior Center, Pensacola
<i>Wednesday, January 12 11 a.m. CST/ 12 p.m. EST</i>	Committee on Educational Resources (CER)	<i>Wednesday, February 9 11 a.m. CST/ 12 p.m. EST</i>	Committee on Educational Resources
<i>Wednesday, January 12 1 p.m. CST/ 2 p.m. EST</i>	Committee on Presbytery Administration (CPA)	<i>Wednesday, February 9 1 p.m. CST/ 2 p.m. EST</i>	Committee on Presbytery Administration
<i>Thursday, January 13 2 p.m. CST/ 3 p.m. EST</i>	Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO)	<i>Saturday, February 12 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	Committee on Representation
<i>Monday, January 17</i>	Presbytery office closed for Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday	<i>Tuesday, February 15 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	Committee on Congregational Revitalization
<i>Tuesday, January 18 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	Committee on Congregational Revitalization (CCR)	<i>Thursday, February 17</i>	Statistics entry deadline for churches
<i>Wednesday, January 26 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	"I Stand with You" Task Force	<i>Tuesday, February 22 9 a.m. CST/ 10 a.m. EST</i>	Winter Stated Presbytery Meeting, Faith Presbyterian, Tallahassee
<i>Thursday, January 27 9:30 a.m. CST/ 10:30 a.m. EST</i>	Coordinating and Planning Commission	<i>Wednesday, February 23 10 a.m. CST/ 11 a.m. EST</i>	"I Stand with You" Task Force
<i>Monday, January 31 6 p.m. CST/ 7 p.m. EST</i>	Annual Statistical Reporting Training via Zoom with Stated Clerk Jeannie Dixon		



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