

**North Texas Conference Journey Toward Racial Justice (NTC-JTRJ)
Study Materials on Hate Crimes and Gun Violence**

In 2022, the Clergy of the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church approved a Resolution on Hate Crimes. The Laity of the North Texas Conference approved a Resolution on Gun Violence.

To honor and fulfill the vision of these important resolutions, the Journey Toward Racial Justice Study Materials Committee has written and compiled study materials consisting of theological insights, liturgy, teachings, sermon notes, and practical applications.

The purpose of these study materials is to (1) equip clergy and laity with biblical and theological foundations around the issues of hate crimes and gun violence, and (2) to offer opportunities for Wesleyan formation and Christian responses with respect to these issues.

We are grateful for the Study Materials Committee led by Rev. Danielle Buwon Kim and Committee members Rev. Jessica Wright, Rev. Emma Williams, Chris Stillwell, Sharon Spratt, Rev. Rosalyn Hilburn, and Rev. Dr. Frank Drenner. Thank you for sharing your expertise and time in bringing these study materials to life.

Grace and Peace in Christ,
NTC Journey Toward Racial Justice Coordinating Team

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Gun Violence study material is written by Rev. Jessica Wright.

The Hate Crime study material is written by Rev. Emma Williams.

The resources and next steps are discerned and organized by the study material committee: Rev. Emma Williams, Rev. Jessica Wright, Chris Stillwell, Rev. Sharon Spratt, Rev. Rosalyn Hilburn, Rev. Dr. Frank Drenner, and Rev. Danielle Buwon Kim

The sermon points are written by Rev. Dr. Frank Drenner.



Leaders, feel free to modify the lesson sequences to meet the needs of your context. Resources needed include: A/V to show a video clip, a dry erase or chalk board, Bibles for participants. Optional items that may be helpful: hymnals for participants, labels for the Christian Response reflection activity (world, social life, family, church)

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GATHERING, INTRODUCTIONS, AND PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Introductions *(if needed - if using for an established group, this might not be necessary)*

Leader: We are going to go around the room and introduce ourselves. Please share your name, where you live and one interesting fact about the town you grew up in.

Gathering with intention - Touchstones for Creating Trustworthy Space

Leader: We are here to dive into an important topic that is literally life or death from some in our community. I hope the conversations we have today will be intentional, vulnerable, and supportive. To that end, I would like for us to acknowledge some things that will help set the stage for honest and meaningful time together. You all have a copy of the Touchstones for Creating Trustworthy Space, developed by Parker Palmer. We are going to read these together, one at a time, and try to absorb the wisdom and guidance found in these guidelines.

You can either go around the circle and have each person read one (one after the other), or offer a “popcorn” style reading where the leader starts with one and leaves space for anyone to read the next one.



Prayer - *Invitation to Brave Space* - written by Micky ScottBey Jones based on Beth Strano's original work

Leader: Let us pray together out loud this Invitation to Brave Space:
Together we will create brave space.
Because there is no such thing as a "safe space" —
We exist in the real world.
We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.
In this space
We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,
We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,
We call each other to more truth and love.
We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.
We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.
We will not be perfect.
This space will not be perfect.
It will not always be what we wish it to be.
But it will be our brave space together,
And we will work on it side by side.

AWARENESS (15 MINUTES)

Our call to the work – As the leader of this group, read the following resolution passed at Annual Conference 2022 before your time with the group. We are called to this difficult, necessary work of confronting and undoing our communal and personal sin because we believe God loves justice, kindness, and mercy. We are committed to this work because as a connection, we know that when one of us experiences oppression, we are all impacted. Read the following excerpt from the Resolution on Hate Crimes to open the group's discussion.

Leader: If you are here, you have some interest in learning more about hate crimes or how as Christians we should respond to hate crimes. At our Annual Conference (which is a gathering of all the UMC churches in the North Texas Conference) in 2022, a resolution was passed in response to the rise in visibility of hate crimes in our area. I'll read part of that legislation so you can have a feel for where we are as a conference.



Resolution on Hate Crimes

<https://ntcumc.org/news/resolution-on-hate-crimes-approved-at-clergy-session>

“WHEREAS Scripture teaches us that God created every human being in God’s image and that every person, regardless of race or color, is a reflection of God’s glory; therefore, racism is incompatible with Christian teaching, is sinful and evil, and denies the image of God in others and oppresses those who are the object of God’s affections, leading to the violation and denial of human rights, justice, and inherent human sacred worth.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the clergy of the North Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church publicly and swiftly condemn acts of hate violence, with special concern given to those in our geographic jurisdiction, so that the world may know that Christ’s people are opposed to such violence and so that the victims and their communities may know that we stand with them, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we implore local congregations to study and discuss the problem of hate crimes together as a community; and that the Journey Toward Racial Justice coordinating and advisory teams help provide appropriate study materials, and specifically, once resources are available, the conference help equip clergy and laity to speak directly to the rise of hate crimes in our communities by making said resources available on the conference website.”

So what we are doing with this time together is what this piece of legislation calls for every church and every member to do - we are continuing to educate ourselves around the issues that hurt our siblings in Christ so that we might speak from a place of assuredness in God’s abundant love and steadfast desire for justice.

DEFINITIONS (10 MINUTES)

Leader: The first thing we will do as we embark on the topic of hate crimes is to define what we are talking about. We want to make sure we are using a shared vocabulary not only amongst ourselves, but among the other people in our churches doing this same study. So, turn to one or two neighbors and read out loud as a group the definitions below. Note what sticks out to you or surprises you.

Give about five minutes to finish this small group discussion.

- Race/Ethnicity
 - **Race** is a social construct used to group people. Race was constructed as a hierarchal human-grouping system, generating racial classifications to identify, distinguish, and marginalize some groups across nations, regions, and the world. Race divides human populations into groups often based on physical appearance, social factors, and cultural backgrounds. Racial categorization can change over time, place, and context. Race has been used historically to establish a social hierarchy, whereby individuals are treated differently resulting in racism.
<https://www.genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Race>
 - **Ethnicity** is similar in concept to race. But while races have often been distinguished on the basis of physical characteristics, especially skin color, ethnic distinctions generally focus on such cultural characteristics as language, history, religion, and customs.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK24684/>
- Gender/Sex
 - The term **sex** should be used as a classification, generally as male or female, according to the reproductive organs and functions that derive from the chromosomal complement [generally XX for female and XY for male].
 - The term **gender** should be used to refer to a person's self-representation as male or female, or how that person is responded to by social institutions on the basis of the individual's gender presentation.
<https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/what-do-we-mean-by-sex-and-gender/>
- Gender Identity/Sexual Orientation
 - **Gender identity** refers to a person's internal sense of being male, female, or something else; gender expression refers to the way a person communicates gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, voice, or body characteristics.
 - **Sexual orientation** refers to an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions to men, women, or both sexes. Sexual orientation also refers to a person's sense of identity based on those attractions, related behaviors, and membership in a community of others who share those attractions.
<https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/sexual-orientation>
- Disability
 - The ADA defines a person with a **disability** as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. This includes people who have a record of

such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability.

<https://adata.org/faq/what-definition-disability-under-ada>

- **Bias or Hate Incident/Hate Crimes**
 - Acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage.
 - In this context “hate” means bias against people or groups with specific characteristics that are defined by the law. At the federal level, hate crime laws include crimes committed on the basis of the victim’s perceived or actual race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. Most state hate crime laws include crimes committed on the basis of race, color, and religion; many also include crimes committed on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and disability. The “crime” in hate crime is often a violent crime, such as assault, murder, arson, vandalism, or threats to commit such crimes. It may also cover conspiring or asking another person to commit such crimes, even if the crime was never carried out.

<https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes/chart>

Leader: Does anyone have anything they’d like to share that especially stood out when reviewing the definitions?

Give only two to five minutes for this group sharing time, then move on with a promise to come back to any insights when/if there is time.

STATISTICS AND STORIES ON HATE CRIMES (10 MINUTES)

Below are national and statewide statistics on hate crimes from 2020 as reported to the FBI. You can feel free to share the total number, the numbers and breakdowns, or skip to the discussion. Gauge the interest of your group.

- **National**
 - 2020: 8,052 total incidents reported
 - Race/Ethnicity - 61.8%
 - Religion - 13.3%
 - Sexual Orientation - 20%
 - Gender Identity - 2.7%
 - Disability - 1.4%
 - Gender - 0.7%

<https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/hate-crime-statistics>

- Statewide
 - 2020: 411 total incidents reported
 - Race/Ethnicity - 70%
 - Religion - 7.5%
 - Sexual Orientation - 17%
 - Gender Identity - 1.7%
 - Disability - 1.5%
 - Gender - 2.2%

<https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/state-specific-information/texas>

Leader: Although we know hate crimes exist in our world, country, state, and city, the reporting and prosecution of hate crimes is statistically low. Consider this excerpt from a recent *Dallas Morning News* article:

“Following a shooting that injured three women of Korean descent at a northwest Dallas hair salon, police Chief Eddie García said the incident is being investigated as a potential hate crime and may be connected to at least two other recent shootings that targeted the city’s Asian American community. If defined as such, the shooting would be one of only nine hate crimes reported by the department this year, a figure the FBI Dallas Division said does not coincide with the “deep fear” felt by communities across the nation.” (5/17/22)

<https://www.dallasnews.com/news/crime/2022/05/17/hates-crimes-underreported-in-dallas-fbi-says/>

Leader: What do you think are the repercussions of hate crimes going unreported or unclassified?

Allow five minutes for discussion.

HISTORY (10 MINUTES)

Leader: The Department of Justice began prosecuting federal hate crimes cases after the expansion of the Civil Rights Act in 1968, which permitted federal prosecution of anyone who “willingly injures, intimidates, or interferes with another person, or attempts to do so, by force because of the other person’s race, color, religion, or national origin” because of the victim’s attempt to engage in one of six types of federally protected activities, such as attending school, patronizing a public place/facility, applying for employment, acting as a juror in a state court, or voting. Modern legislation includes laws like the Shepard Byrd Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which was the first statute allowing federal criminal prosecution of hate crimes motivated by the victim’s actual or perceived sexual

orientation or gender identity, Right to Fair Housing Act, Church Arson Prevention, and the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which directs the Department of Justice to speed up the review of hate crimes for bringing charges and improve the reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents in light of the rise in anti-Asian hate during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Texas, bias categories include race/color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender/sex, and disability. (<https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/laws-and-policies>)

Even with these laws in place, hate crimes happened and still happen in our communities.

Ask for a volunteer to read the story below:

White people began bombing homes owned by Black people in Dallas in the 1940s, but the violence culminated in nearly a dozen dynamite attacks on Black residences in 1950-51.

Severe housing shortages across America during and after World War II drove Black families and returning Black vets into all-white neighborhoods – in Chicago, Detroit, Harlem, and Dallas. This triggered white violence and the spread of ‘white flight’ suburbia. According to *The Accommodation*, what distinguished Dallas was the city’s response: The white establishment was unable to contain the racial angers of middle-class and blue-collar whites – while it also feared a possible backlash from Black people. Worse, the violence by whites endangered Dallas’ carefully mythologized, public image as a gleaming, business-minded city of opportunity, not another segregated Southern backwater. So a “blue ribbon” grand jury was appointed to investigate the bombings. Its membership was a roster of Dallas’ white business elite but also included a Black attorney and two ministers. The Dallas bombings terrorized the Black community — but no one died. So the “blue-ribbon” grand jury did not pursue homicide charges. It simply declared its work was done and asked to be disbanded — but only after the jurists also concluded “the plot reached into unbelievable places.” What places? Nothing more was divulged. Or done. Case closed.

(<https://artandseek.org/2021/09/13/six-big-things-you-can-learn-about-dallas-racial-history-in-the-accommodatio>)

Leader: Dallas has had a long and complicated history of racial bias and hate crimes. Recently, you might have heard of the increase in visibility of crimes against Asian-Americans. We’ll watch a short video from May 2022 about a string of violent attacks against Asian-Americans in the Dallas area mentioned earlier.

Dallas Police say the Koreatown salon shooting could be a hate crime - May 2022

play this short video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOZ-Nazdtro>

Leader: What are your reflections from these two stories? What surprised you? How do they connect across the decades?



SCRIPTURE (40 MINUTES)

Small Group discussion (15 minutes)

Leader: Hate crimes were defined relatively recently in the history of our nation and our world, but the story of how we live together with one another as God created us to do, or how we fail to live out God's vision for community, is told again and again in scripture. We are going to break up into three groups and discuss three different scriptures - one from the Old Testament, one from the Gospels, and one from the Epistles. I would like each group to read your scripture together and answer these questions in reflection with your text: 1) What is our responsibility to each other? 2) What happens when we uphold that responsibility? 3) What happens when we do not? You'll have about fifteen minutes to discuss, then we'll come back to share as a group.

Break the group into three sections and assign each section one of the scriptures below. If possible, post the questions for the groups to reference.

- [Genesis 4:8-16](#) (Cain's response to God)
- [Matthew 18:23-35](#) (The unforgiving servant)
- [1 John 4:7-21](#) (God is love)

While the groups are working, divide a large board into three columns and write each question as a heading. As conversations come to a close, bring everyone back together.

Large Group Reflection (15 minutes)

Leader: Okay, now that we've had time to get into our text and answer some questions, let's share what we discussed. Each group, choose someone to read their scripture and another person to share the group's reflections on each of the three questions.

Write each group's reflections on the questions in the appropriate column. When everyone has gone, continue the discussion.

Leader: Now that we have all of the comments from our scripture reflection up for everyone to see, what do you notice? Are they similar? Are they different? Where do they overlap?

Cumulative Discussion (10 Minutes)



Leader: So, after reviewing the history and current state of hate crimes, how do these scriptures speak to 1) the origin of hate crimes AND 2) our call as people who identify as Christians in the ecosystem of hate crimes?

THEOLOGY (15 MINUTES)

Leader: When we think about how we are called to be together, not just with our own family or church or friends, but called together as a body of Christ in community with all, it is easy to recognize that being together is not always easy. In fact, it is much, much easier to stick with people we agree with or share similar experiences. It is easier to not make other people's problems our problems. And that's not always out of hate - sometimes it's out of fear, or weariness, or simply a belief that nothing will ever change. But, as Wesleyan Christians, we are called beyond ourselves on a road to perfection. John Wesley saw grace in three ways - prevenient, the grace that God offers to us before we even know we need it; justifying or saving, the grace that convicts us of our need to God and our desire to be realigned to God's vision; and sanctifying, the grace that perfects us in love to follow the Holy Spirit toward God's understanding of the world. Wesley didn't think that we would become perfect in that we would never make mistakes. But he did believe in our ability to go on to perfection as we seek to love God and love neighbor so fully that we can achieve "holiness of heart and life."

Charles Wesley, John's brother, was his partner in ministry and a prolific hymn writer. Charles often wrote his songs to accompany John's messages. These are songs we still sing in our churches, and they have a way of making John Wesley's theology more accessible and memorable. Let's look at number 385 in the UM Hymnal - Let Us Plead for Faith Alone. I'll read the stanzas aloud.

Let us plead for faith alone, faith which by our works is shown;
God it is who justifies, only faith the grace applies.

Active faith that lives within, conquers hell and death and sin,
hallows whom it first made whole, forms the Savior in the soul.

Let us for this faith content, sure salvation is the end;
heaven already is begun, everlasting life is won.

Only let us persevere, till we see our Lord appear,

never from the Rock remove, saved by faith which works by love.

Leader: How do you see the message of sanctifying grace in this hymn? How does God's sanctifying grace call us to respond in a world that holds things like hate crimes? Turn to another person or two and discuss. If possible, try and find a different small group than one you've been in before.

Allow five minutes for discussion.

Leader: Who would like to share something that stood out in their group discussion?

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE (20 MINUTES)

Leader: Will someone read James 2:14-18 (CEB) for us?

¹⁴ My brothers and sisters, what good is it if people say they have faith but do nothing to show it? Claiming to have faith can't save anyone, can it? ¹⁵ Imagine a brother or sister who is naked and never has enough food to eat. ¹⁶ What if one of you said, "Go in peace! Stay warm! Have a nice meal!"? What good is it if you don't actually give them what their body needs? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith is dead when it doesn't result in faithful activity. ¹⁸ Someone might claim, "You have faith and I have action." But how can I see your faith apart from your actions? Instead, I'll show you my faith by putting it into practice in faithful action.

Leader: What we have done today is examine and sharpen our faith. We've looked at our history as a community, our scripture as believers in Jesus Christ, and our tradition through the heritage of our Wesleyan Roots. We've used our own experience and reason to understand how we are called to love and serve, and running through all of our time together, whether you were aware of it or not, was the movement, strength, and comfort of the Holy Spirit. This has been a holy time. But as the author of James writes, if we stop there, what good was our time together? We are called not just to faithful thinking but faithful activity.

And so, when we look back on everything we've discussed around hate crimes, I want you to think about how we become perfect in love 1) by not doing something AND 2) by actively doing something. Here we have four areas set up around the room labeled work, social life, family, and church. I'm going to pass out some sticky notes and I'd like for you to answer these two questions for yourself, then stick your answers in the appropriate area. Once you've finished

sticking your notes up, walk around and look at the other answers people wrote down. When you are done, return to your seats and we'll talk a little more.

Just to sum up, you'll have four sticky notes that correspond to world, social life, family, and church, and on each one, you'll think about what we've discussed around hate crimes and write how you can address it in that context by 1) not doing something AND 2) by actively doing something.

Allow for about seven to 10 minutes for people to write their answers, stick them up, and read what others have written.

Leader: What was one action (either not doing something or actively doing something) that caught your attention?

PREVENTION

Leader: The Journey Toward Racial Justice team put together some resources for us to know about around other concrete actions that we might be able to take collectively and individually as a faithful response to hate crimes. You can find those in the hand out provided, but they include things like building relationships with people who are different than you at an event like Project Unity, contacting your legislators around hate crimes prevention, connecting with the North Texas Conference Board of Church and Society to find out how to join in action against hate, and listening to the Unfinished Church podcast hosted by Bishop McKee and other bishops in the UMC to learn from different perspectives.

Leader: And now as we close this time together, and go out into the world, let us pray together this prayer of lament and repentance, not to hang our heads, but to remind us that the work of God's kingdom is always before us, and God is always willing to have us join in that vision.

Prayer of Lament and Repentance (abridged) offered by Rev. Ginger E. Gaines-Cirelli

June 19, 2020, Juneteenth Observance, Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

You have told us, O Lord, what is good. You have shown us, O Lord, what to do. You have revealed to us, O Lord, our call and capacity as humans.



Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with you. Love you and love our neighbor. Live and love and heal and give and serve and forgive like our savior, Jesus Christ, proclaiming the present and future Kin-dom. You have told us, shown us, revealed to us everything we need to live in freedom and in peace.

But we have rejected you, opting instead for idols of privilege and respectability, of power and control. We have allowed fear and lies to curtail the expansive capacity for love, generosity, and mutuality you intend for human life. And we are destroying one another and destroying ourselves and destroying the whole of creation as result.

Restore us to your vision for our lives, merciful God, and guide us in the ways of mutuality, dignity, and peace with justice. Help us truly understand that no one is free until all are free.

Help us rise united... and may we love as you intend.

In the name of the God who was, who is, and who is to come. Amen.

RESOURCES

NTC Anti-Racism Resources	https://ntcumc.org/anti-racism-resources
General Commission on Religion and Race	https://www.gcorr.org/
Courageous Conversations About Race	https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/courageous-conversations-about-race
US Justice Hate Crime Examples	https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/hate-crimes-case-examples
US Justice Materials on Hate Crimes	https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes
US Justice How to Prevent Hate Crimes	https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/preventing-hate-crimes-your-community
Not In Our Town	https://www.niot.org/
FBI Hate Crimes	https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr/hate-crime



JOURNEY

TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE

NORTH TEXAS
COLLEGE OF THE UNITED METROPOLITAN AREA

HATE CRIMES CURRICULUM

Leader's Guide

Preventing Hate Crimes in Your Community	https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/preventing-hate-crimes-your-community
Northern Illinois Antiracism Taskforce	https://www.umcnic.org/antiracism
Hate Crime Summit	https://www.theiacp.org/resources/hate-crime-in-america-policy-summit
Partnering Against Hate - Interfaith Alliance	https://interfaithalliance.org/partnering-against-hate/
New York AC - My Brother's Keeper	https://www.nyac.com/files/take_action_list.pdf
Learning for Justice - learning plans for K-12	https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/learning-plans
New York AC - 10 ways to respond to hate speech	https://www.nyac.com/files/ten-ways.pdf
2016 Book of Resolutions - Speaking Out for Compassion: Transforming the Context of Hate in the United States	https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/social-principles-and-resolutions/speaking-out-for-compassion-transforming-the-context-of-hate-in-the-united-states-3422
Stop AAPI Hate	https://stopaapihate.org/
NAACP	https://naacp.org/



TOUCHSTONES FOR CREATING TRUSTWORTHY SPACE

Based on the Circle of Trust® approach of Parker Palmer and the Center for Courage & Renewal¹

Touchstones are our operating guidelines for holding the meaningful conversations of inner work and trust building. They are Touchstones to form strong boundaries for interactions and are designed to help us reconsider the different ways we relate to ourselves and to others.

Give and receive welcome.

People learn best in hospitable spaces. In this space we support each other's learning by giving and receiving hospitality.

Be present as fully as possible.

Be here with your doubts, fears, and failings as well as your convictions, joys, and successes, your listening as well as your speaking.

Extend invitation, not demand.

This is not a "share or die" time! Do whatever your soul calls for and know that you do it with our support. Your soul knows your needs better than we do.

Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth.

Our views of reality may differ, but speaking one's truth does not mean interpreting, correcting, or debating what others say.

Speak using "I" statements.

No fixing, saving, advising, or correcting each other. This is one of the hardest guidelines for those of us who like to "help." But it is vital to welcoming the soul, to making space for the inner teacher.

Practice asking honest, open questions.

Instead of offering counsel or corrections, asking honest, open questions helps us "hear each other into deeper speech." An honest, open question invites an answer beyond yes or no. It also does not have a "right" answer anticipated by the asker.

¹ <https://couragerenewal.org/library/courage-renewal-touchstones/>



JOURNEY

TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE

 NORTH TEXAS
COUNCIL ON THE UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND

HATE CRIMES CURRICULUM

Participant Guide

When the going gets rough, turn to wonder.

Turn from reaction and judgment to wonder and compassionate inquiry. Ask yourself, “I wonder why they feel/think this way?” or “I wonder what my reaction teaches me about myself?” Set aside judgment to listen to others - and to yourself - more deeply.

Attend to your own inner teacher.

We learn from others, of course. But as we explore stories, questions, and silence in this space, we have a special opportunity to learn from within. So pay close attention to your own reactions and responses, to your most important teacher.

Trust and learn from the silence.

Silence, or stillness, can be a gift in our noisy world, and a way of knowing in itself. Treat silence as a member of the group. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words.

Commit to and maintain deep confidentiality.

Safety is built when we can trust that our words and stories will remain with the people with whom we choose to share and are not repeated to others without our permission.

Know that it's possible...

to leave this space with whatever it was that you needed when you arrived, and that the seeds planted here can keep growing in the days ahead.



JOURNEY

TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE

 NORTH TEXAS
UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

HATE CRIMES CURRICULUM

Participant Guide

AWARENESS

Notes:

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<https://medicine.yale.edu/news-article/what-do-we-mean-by-sex-and-gender/>



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- Bias or Hate Incident/Hate Crimes
 - Acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage.
 - In this context "hate" means bias against people or groups with specific characteristics that are defined by the law. At the federal level, hate crime laws include crimes committed on the basis of the victim's perceived or actual race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. Most state hate crime laws include crimes committed on the basis of race, color, and religion; many also include crimes committed on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and disability. The "crime" in hate crime is often a violent crime, such as assault, murder, arson, vandalism, or threats to commit such crimes. It may also cover conspiring or asking another person to commit such crimes, even if the crime was never carried out.
<https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/learn-about-hate-crimes/chart>

Questions for discussion

- What do you think are the repercussions of hate crimes going unreported or unclassified?



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HATE CRIMES CURRICULUM Participant Guide

HISTORY

White people began bombing homes owned by Black people in Dallas in the 1940s, but the violence culminated in nearly a dozen dynamite attacks on Black residences in 1950-51.

“Severe housing shortages across America during and after World War II drove Black families and returning Black vets into all-white neighborhoods – in Chicago, Detroit, Harlem, and Dallas. This triggered white violence and the spread of ‘white flight’ suburbia. According to *The Accommodation*, what distinguished Dallas was the city’s response: The white establishment was unable to contain the racial angers of middle-class and blue-collar whites – while it also feared a possible backlash from Black people. Worse, the violence by whites endangered Dallas’ carefully mythologized, public image as a gleaming, business-minded city of opportunity, not another segregated Southern backwater. So a “blue ribbon” grand jury was appointed to investigate the bombings. Its membership was a roster of Dallas’ white business elite but also included a Black attorney and two ministers. The Dallas bombings terrorized the Black community — but no one died. So the “blue-ribbon” grand jury did not pursue homicide charges. It simply declared its work was done and asked to be disbanded — but only after the jurists also concluded “the plot reached into unbelievable places.” What places? Nothing more was divulged. Or done. Case closed.”

<https://artandseek.org/2021/09/13/six-big-things-you-can-learn-about-dallas-racial-history-in-the-accommodatio>

Notes:

SCRIPTURE

Notes:



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Scripture and questions for breakout group discussion

- Genesis 4:8-16 (Cain's response to God)
- Matthew 18:23-35 (The unforgiving servant)
- 1 John 4:7-21 (God is love)

- 1) What is our responsibility to each other?

- 2) What happens when we uphold that responsibility?

- 3) What happens when we do not?

Questions for large group discussion

After reviewing the history and current state of hate crimes, how do these scriptures speak to 1) the origin of hate crimes 2) our call as people who identify as Christians in the ecosystem of hate crimes?

THEOLOGY

See United Methodist Hymnal #385

Notes:



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CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

Notes:

PREVENTION

Notes:

FOUR SUGGESTED ACTION ITEMS FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. Build relationships with those who may be in different communities than yours with different experiences, perhaps those who are racially, culturally, or religiously different. One of the best ways to pursue this is to partner with Project Unity to participate in or host an event for Together We Dine.
2. Contact legislators to encourage awareness/anti-hate crime legislation. Go to the following website and click "Elected and Appointed Officials" to find out your legislators. <https://www.ballotready.org/>



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3. Connect with another organization for further action, or with your local Board of Church & Society.
 - a. www.splcenter.org/20170814/ten-ways-fight-hate-community-response-guide
 - b. www.umcjustice.org/news-and-stories/uniting-around-love-not-hate-720
 - c. www.umcjustice.org/news-and-stories/standing-in-solidarity-with-the-aapi-community-1313

4. Listen to the Unfinished Church podcast (<https://theunfinishedchurch.org>).



From Letter from a Birmingham Jail, by the Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr.:

“I’ve heard numerous Southern religious leaders admonish their worshippers to comply with a desegregation decision because it is the law, but I have longed to hear white ministers declare: ‘Follow this decree because integration is morally right and because the Negro is your brother.’ In the midst of blatant injustices inflicted upon the Negro, I have watched white Churchmen stand on the sidelines and mouth Pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities. In the midst of a mighty struggle to rid our nation of racial and economic injustice, I’ve heard many ministers say: ‘Those are social issues, with which the gospel has no real concern.’ And I have watched many churches commit themselves to a completely otherworldly religion which makes a strange, unbiblical distinction between Body and Soul between the sacred and the secular.”

2016 Book of Resolutions, #3422

So justice is driven back, / and righteousness stands at a distance; / truth has stumbled in the streets, / honesty cannot enter. / Truth is nowhere to be found, / and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. / The Lord looked and was displeased / that there was no justice. / [God] saw that there was no one, / [God] was appalled that there was no one to intervene; / so [God’s] own arm achieved salvation ... / and [God’s] own righteousness sustained him. —Isaiah 59:14-16 (NIV)

It is time to act boldly and, with God’s grace, truth will be found and we will know justice. We call for The United Methodist Church—individuals, congregations, conferences, boards and agencies, clergy, and laity—to enter into dialogue and action, speaking out for compassion and against hate. A faithful dialogue requires the courage to speak up without misusing privilege and power. This will include:

- Redefining compassion as the process of inviting and sustaining faith in full dialogue.
- Acknowledging the wholeness of the human family means willingness to stay in community with those whom we disagree, by embracing both patience and humility.
- Commitment to a lifelong journey of personal and collective discipline.
- Commitment to listen attentively, respectfully and never using dialogue as an excuse for talk and no action or to mask dishonesty.
- Encouraging United Methodists to end complicity with hate by speaking out when jokes, disparagements, and stereotypes are based on difference.
- Creating opportunities to hear from excluded groups about the reality and impact of hate and partner with them to act for justice;
- Encouraging law-enforcement personnel to maintain records on hate crimes and to bring to justice the perpetrators of such violence and intimidation.



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HATE CRIMES CURRICULUM

Sermon Notes

- Engage in efforts to enable communities to unearth the truth about past and present hate-violence, to bring perpetrators (including state actors) to justice, and to heal wounds and seek reconciliation based on justice and more equitable power relationships.
- Be active participants in civic or religious organizations that promote unity and diversity, and work to eradicate acts of hate as well as work with diverse grassroots and national organizations.

We call upon conferences, boards, and agencies to:

- Use resources in our global church to share models and strategies for faithful dialogue;
- To intentionally practice words and attitudes that will help us find common ground.

We call on all annual conferences to:

- Report on their work on undoing the culture of hate at their annual conference meeting;
- Include hate crimes in their annual conference report to the General Commission on Religion and Race;
- Work with the General Board of Church and Society, the General Board of Global Ministries, and United Women of Faith on this concern.

Preaching text: Acts 6:8-7:1, 51-8:1

Supporting text: Romans 12:9-21

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In 2019, a young white man drive all the way across Texas to shoot shoppers at an El Paso Walmart. He was motivated by racist hate. In 2022, on the same weekend, a young white man murdered 10 shoppers at a grocery store in Buffalo, NY; in Dallas, three Korean Americans were shot. Did you/Would you address these incidents from the pulpit?

- No, I didn't know about it or think about it
- No, it's not appropriate to speak to this in a sermon
- Yes, and I received negative feedback
- Yes, and I received positive feedback
- Yes, and I received no feedback from the congregation, but internally I felt _____.

FOR THE SERMON/SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

How does hate drive the action against Stephen?



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Sermon Notes

How does Saul's (unspoken) approval of the violence against Stephen perpetuate future violence? What are the connections or implications for preaching today of unspoken responses to hate violence?

What is the risk of speaking out against hate violence?

Years later, Saul (now Paul) advocates for peace among members of the body. What drove the change in the thinking?

How can our voices from the pulpit/classroom/living room "defeat evil with good?"

Look at the recommended actions from the 2016 Book of Resolutions, #3422, above. How can these actions be incorporated into preaching, and actions from the congregation and annual conference?

SUPPORTING QUOTATIONS FROM CONTEMPORARY VOICES:

"White nationalism and institutional racism are a reality in America that we must change. For this, all our efforts for justice must come together in solidarity — not just to eliminate racial injustice but also to tackle fundamental causes of socioeconomic disparity and disadvantages that often become indirect determinants of crime, including hate crimes against other racial/ethnic groups."

- The Rev. Chongho James Kim, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church, Flushing, Queens

"Because white United Methodists remain unmotivated, unwilling, or unable to confront the realities of racial injustice in our own house, they shut down, especially when the church is needed to bring the liberating work of Christ to bear. We fumble through trite prayers instead of crying out, 'No more! In the name of God, no more racist violence!' Isaiah 58:12 calls believers to be "repairers of the breach and restorers of the streets." Confronting racism is still our holy calling from God. And until and unless we who serve the God of Love are willing to confront the indifference and racism in our own individual and corporate souls, people will die. The calling is clear. We must respond now or be prepared to lose more people to evil and death."

- The Rev. Garlinda Burton, Interim General Secretary of the United Methodist General Commission on Religion and Race

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *The Prophetic Imagination*, Walter Brueggemann, 2nd edition, 2001
- *Prophetic Preaching: A Pastoral Approach*, Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, 2010
- *Preaching in the Era of Trump*, Wes Allen, 2017
- *Allow Me to Retort: A Black Guy's Guide to the Constitution*, Elie Mystal, 2022