

From the Desk of: Rev. Crystal Moon-Boulware

Greetings,

My name is Rev. Crystal Moon-Boulware and I am the newly appointed moderator of the Anti-Racism Transformation Team affectionately called ARTT. I graduated from NBTS in 2016 with a Masters of Divinity degree.



During my tenure, it was important to me to not just get an education, but to dive in to the culture of NBTS as well as launch out into field ministry with the tools that NBTS equipped us with-- to be thinkers and agents of change transforming the world we live in to reflect the world God desires it to be. Realizing the reality of the world we live in, equality and justice are at the forefront of the issues that plague our communities. As we peel back the layers, we will find that these issues are rooted in systemic racial injustice. Echoing the statement on our webpage, "If racism is to be understood correctly, then it must be viewed as occurring within individuals as well as within institutions and the structures of society." This is where change needs to take place if holistic healing is going to transpire.

NBTS has made it an intentional task to address these issues internally and has been a beacon for other institutions to model the work we have been doing since 2007. Our team consists of students, alumni, faculty, and trustees where we all have a voice at the table to address concerns of privilege, entitlement, marginalization, and advantages/disadvantages as they pertain to racism albeit overt or subtle. We want our institution to reflect the love of God in all aspects and a community that embraces diversity, inclusion of diverse cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and denominations.

If you have completed the Anti-Racism training and are interested in being a part of ARTT, please reach out to me (revcrystalmoonboulware@gmail.com) or other members of the team for more information.

Blessings,

– Rev. Crystal Moon-Boulware, MDiv

Greetings from President Micah McCreary

As I have the pleasure and privilege of serving as the 12th President of New Brunswick Theological Seminary (NBTS), I have become keenly aware that we at NBTS have focused effectively on the issues of racism and prejudice. We can, with great satisfaction, appreciate the hard work of the seminary's Anti-Racism Transformation Team (ARTT), which has led the charge in helping shape NBTS into a community that embraces inclusivity and that has institutionalized an anti-racism agenda.



It is also trajectory-changing to have our Board of Trustees adopt and advance an anti-racism statement. For, as many of you can attest, it is very difficult to be anti-racism without a conscious focus on "being" an anti-racist! However, the experience I'll share next explains succinctly why we must pursue this goal and recognize its exemplification.

In 2015, ten years after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, I was dispatched with a team of pastors and counselors to help ministers in the city restore themselves after they had restored their churches and the community. After connecting with the pastors and helping them discover new and creative ways to accomplish personal renewal and restoration, one pastor shared a story that captures our Sankofa. He shared that right before Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, one of his church members had remodeled her home. She was so proud and happy with her renovations; but when the storm hit, a large branch from the tree in her yard fell on her house. It crashed through the roof and devastated the work she had done on her home. Soon after, the levy broke and her home began to flood. She was able to escape drowning by climbing the fallen branch up to the tree, where she sat unharmed until a rescue squad arrived!

I share this experience because it seems analogous to the anti-racism initiative at NBTS. That is, racism is a fallen tree that has injured our relationships and our soul. However, in some instances, it also has provided a means for escape and deliverance. Regarding anti-racism efforts at NBTS, I believe we are in a place to be effective and strategic in helping our students, faculty, staff, and alumni foster progress they can carry out in their ministry work.

I am excited that among our efforts is the revival and revitalization of the Anti-Racism Newsletter at NBTS. For, as we continue to wage war against racism and oppression in all their forms, I envision the need to concentrate our efforts even more on how the scriptures, our theology, our pastoral care and counseling, our teaching, our learning, and our administration undergird and support justice and equity for all, in all, and around all!

– President Micah McCreary, PhD

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Join us for our next ARTT meeting! May 9th at 5pm at the New Brunswick campus.
The meetings are held every other month.

Sage Library Celebrates Black History Month with Exhibit “Words Have Power” Book Collection

For Black History Month 2019, I decided to construct a book display titled, “Words Have Power”. I made a conscious decision to do this instead of using the term Black History Month. Why is it different? Let’s go back in history first. In 1976, President Ford declared the entire month, not just a week, be celebrated in honor of African Americans. Ford summarized the need, “to seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”

Presently, Americans have grown accustomed to seeing a Black History Month display during the month of February in libraries. I use the term, Words Have Power, to go beyond just celebrating the accomplishments of these historic leaders and to understand the impact of their words on our society. Words Have Power is actually a theme from the American Library Association’s Banned Books Week celebration several years ago.

Libraries celebrate the freedom to read any work and to have access to books that those in society may ban challenge or persecute individuals. This freedom to speak is the essence of the book display this year. I chose inspirational quotes made by leaders like Ida B. Wells, Nelson Mandela and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Each of these individuals understood the power of their words, of using their voice to reach people.

Words can divide, discourage, separate, disparage or harm. Words can also transform, inspire, unite, mend, heal or unify people. It is in this way that words are so much more than just words written or spoken. Words are actionable. They have a life-force of their own. They can generate energy and this energy can fuel movements and challenge long-established ideas.

For this display we honor the words, so thoughtfully articulated, by these leaders that continue to be very relevant today. The quotes featured were all chosen as ones that one could identify with presently. The visual image of the individual in black and white with the quote in bright yellow, represents the idea that the person may no longer be alive, or they may be of another era, but their message is still very much alive today. It was my hope that guests would stop by the display and remember the words spoken by one of these leaders and to, still today, connect the importance of their message to their own personal lives.

The response was very positive and caused people to stop by for a few moments to reflect on some of the quotes and books. Also included in the collection were books more currently written, such as *Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* The idea was to combine historic works with newer titles so that the reader can understand the importance of both and see how the historic writings lay the foundation for the more current titles in the collection.

–Laura Giacobbe, Public Services Librarian

ARTT Book Corner

Revive Us Again: Vision and Action in Moral Organizing

by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, Rev. Dr. Rick Lowery, et al. | Dec 4, 2018

I have become intrigued by the work of the Rev. Dr. William Barber II as he has sought to revive the Poor People’s Campaign of 1968. I have become acquainted with him through his first and second publications, *Forward Together: A Moral Message for the Nation* (2014) and *The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement* (2016). In this current volume we get to see the development of his thought through his sermons and speeches. I highly recommend this book for those who are justice seekers.

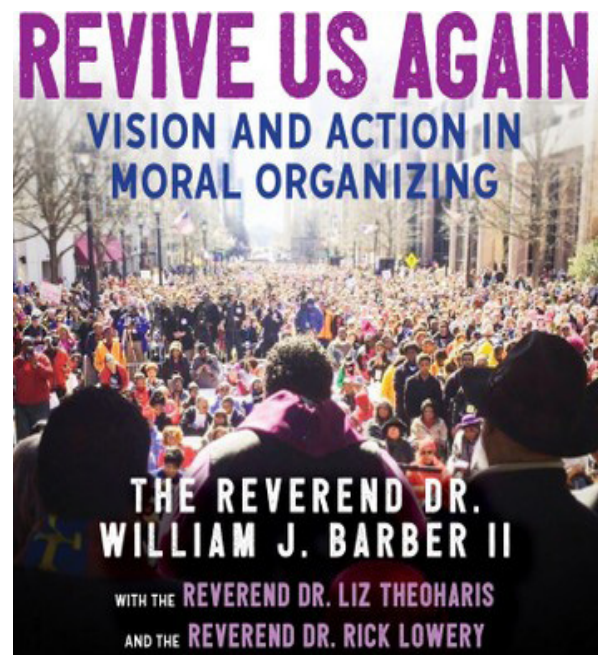
–Raynard Smith, PhD

Revive Us Again is a collection of sermons and speeches that lay out a groundbreaking vision for intersectional organizing, paired with inspirational and practical essays from activists in today’s Poor People’s Campaign

The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II has been called “the closest person we have to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in our midst” (Cornel West) and “one of the most gifted organizers and orators in the country today” (Ari Berman). In this age of political division and civic unrest, Rev. Barber’s message is more necessary than ever. This volume features Rev. Barber’s most stirring sermons and speeches, with response essays by prominent public intellectuals, activists, and faith leaders.

Drawing from the history of social movements in the US, especially the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Poor People’s Campaign, Rev. Barber and the contributors to this volume speak to the most pressing issues of our time, including Black Lives Matter, the fight for a \$15 minimum wage, the struggle to protect voting rights, the march for women’s rights, and the movement to overcome poverty and unite the dispossessed across all dividing lines. Grounded in the fundamental biblical theme of poor and oppressed people taking action together, the book suggests ways to effectively build a fusion movement to make America fair and just for everyone.

–Taken from: Amazon.com



What Has Happened Since the Inception of ARTT?

It has been twelve years since ARTT was introduced to the NBTS community. Since its inception there have been several positive changes made to our institutional culture. The changes have not been easy. It has not been an easy journey, but one filled with struggle as we have sought to eradicate racism's grip from amongst our institution. It has called for us to be honest and vulnerable, but the rewards have been worthwhile. Below are just some of the accomplishments we have made that are directly or tangentially connected to the ARTT initiative.

- Board of Trustees voted to confront racism in the seminary, church and society as part of the seminary's strategic directions (2007)
- Board revised its own process for nomination of officers to incorporate the views of persons of color (POC)
- The question "How does this benefit Whites or disadvantage Persons of Color?" was asked during the Land Use negotiating process to include the anti-racism perspective
- Staff Diversity & Multicultural Competency Policy has been instituted
- Library acquisition of works related to multiculturalism and anti-racism increased
- ARTT members collaborated with RCA on three-part Panel Discussion on the Belhar Confession and its relation to anti-racism
- NBTS was invited to participate in the Association of Theological School's Consultation on Race and Ethnicity (CORE)
- Curriculum Committee implemented a two credit course concerning anti-racism which is now a required three credit course in the revised M. Div. curriculum
- The Curriculum Committee discussed and implemented the anti-racism perspective in all courses
- Intentional multicultural worship services offered, resulting in the inclusion of the multicultural dimension in all campus services
- Discussion by the faculty lead to the taking down of many of the Library's portraits due to their mono-cultural nature and it's relationship to the schools pedagogy
- Faculty most ethnically diverse in the history of the seminary
- First African-American Academic Dean hired (2012)
- Four persons of color (POC) hired to tenure track positions in a five year span
- Several persons of color (POC) are teaching required courses
- Two faculty and 10 students participated in a Sankofa journey to Civil Rights sites in the South in September of 2012
- Issues of race, multiculturalism and power are included in faculty discussions surrounding curriculum revision (2015)
- First African American granted an honorary doctorate from NBTS (2013)
- First female to receive an honorary doctorate from NBTS (2013)
- Doctor of Ministry cohort examines the New Jim Crow: American Prison system
- Board discussion around investments of NBTS endowment in prison complex industry
- First Asian granted an honorary doctorate from NBTS (2016)
- Research in partnership with Rutgers University how the two institutions and its officers benefited from slavery result in the publication of *Scarlet and Black* (2016)
- Course "Slavery and Justice" taught by two NBTS professors.
- Talks with Payne Theological Seminary Board and Administrators about joint projects and educational collaborations initiated; AME Institute makes its home at NBTS
- NBTS Board voted to undergo ARTT training and make it a requirement for all new board members in the future (January 2015)
- First African-American President of the seminary (2017)
- Race, Class, And Gender course implemented as required course throughout M.Div., MA and D.Min. curriculum (2018)

Anti-Racism Statement from NBTS Board of Trustees

We, the Board of Trustees of New Brunswick Theological Seminary, have decided to take a stand against racism and insidious structure of privilege and power. We are committed to identifying and dismantling all such structures in this Seminary. We make this commitment in full knowledge and understanding that it will involve uncomfortable and painful self-examination, both personal and corporate, and that it will require deep and difficult changes at all levels of our beloved institution, including this board. We are humbly yet firmly convinced that in making this commitment we are being led in Spirit, we are demonstrating obedience to God's will and plan, and we are following the example of Jesus, Our Lord and Savior.

We pray that God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer will redeem our sins and guide, bless and help our creative efforts to let God do a "new thing" at New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

—Members on the Anti-Racism Transition Team

Recent Gardner Sage Library Acquisitions in Support of ARTT

Tisby, Jamar. *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity with Racism*

DiAngelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*

Sechrest, Love L., Johnny Ramirez-Johnson, and Amos Yong, eds. *Can "White" People be Saved?: Triangulating Race, Theology, and Mission*

The Golden Rule: “Do Unto Others As You Would Have Them To Do Unto You”

We commonly know it as the “The Golden Rule” which was spoken by Jesus. It is an ethic of care for the “other” found in the Christian Scriptures in Matthew 7:12 and also Luke 6:31. “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.” This ethic of care is embodied in New Brunswick Theological Seminary’s Anti-Racism Transformation Team’s initiative to eradicate racism from within the institution. NBTS’s community is comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, and students of diverse backgrounds, religious traditions, races and ethnicities. The Anti-Racism Transformation Team is a commitment of the institution that all would feel welcomed, acknowledged and affirmed as gifts from God. In celebration of our diversity we asked some from our NBTS community to share their translation of the Golden Rule in their native language. Below are just a few of the many languages and cultures that exist among the NBTS community.

James Brumm - Dutch

“Behandel de mensen zoals jullie door hen behandeld zouden willen worden. Want dat is wat de Boeken van de Wet en de Profeten bedoelen.”

Jean Milfort (Haiti)

Haitian-Creole

“Tou sa nou vle lòt moun fè pou nou, nou menm tou fè l’ pou yo. Se sa lalwa Moyiz la ak liv pwofèt yo mande nou fè.”

Matye 7 : 12

French

“Tout ce que vous voulez que les hommes fassent pour vous, faites-le de même pour eux, car c’est la loi et les prophètes.”

Matthieu 7 :12

Nkiru Menakaya (Nigeria) - Igbo

“Ya mere ihe nile, ka ha ra, bú nke unu nàchọ ka madu nème unu, nème-kwa-nu madu otú a, unu onwe-unu: n’ihi na nka bu iwu na ndi-amuma Chineke.”

Ha Cho (Republic of South Korea) - Korean

“그러므로 무엇이든지 남에게 대접을 받고자 하는 대로 너희도 남을 대접하라 이것이 율법이요 선지자니라”

FuYin Liu (China) - Mandarin

“所以无论何事, 你们愿意人怎样待你们, 你们也要怎样待人。因为这就是律法和先知的道理。”

Eunice Sarzedas (Brazil) - Portuguese

“Portanto, tudo o que vós quereis que os homens vos façam, fazei-lho também vós, porque esta é a lei e os profetas.”

Jeanette Carrillo (Dominican Republic) - Spanish

”Así que en todo traten ustedes a los demás tal y como quieren que ellos los traten a ustedes. De hecho, esto es la ley y los profetas.” Mateo 7:12 NVI

Rolando Castro (Philippines) - Tagalog is the predominant language used or spoken in the Philippines.

“Kaya nga lahat ng mga bagay na ibig ninyong sa inyo’y gawin ng mga tao, gawin naman ninyo ang gayon sa kanila: sapagka’t ito ang sa kautusan at ang mga propeta.”

Preetham Joshi (India) - Tamil, The oldest language, spoken in southern part of India

“ஆதலால், மனுஷர் உங்களுக்கு எவகைகளைச் செய்ய விரும்புகிறீர்களோ, அவகைகளை நீங்களும் அவர்களுக்குச் செய்யுங்கள்; இதுவதே நியாயப்பிரமாணமும் தீர்க்க தரிசனங்களுமாம்.” - மத்தேயோ 7:12

Ayub Yousaf (Pakistan) - Urdu

“باب لېلې اک تامی لعت ی کی وی بن روا تعیرش ی هی ه کنوی کی - یی رک هتاس راهم هو ه ه وه ته هچ م وچ وک کولس ی هی وهتاس ک سورسود ی م تاب ره هے۔” م 7:12 UGV

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