



Within and Without: *Liberation Theology at Work in Social Movements*

October 11 – 14, 2018

An Interfaith Conference exploring the meaning of spiritual practices and liberation in today's world.

The strong conviction that spiritual practices are incarnated in concrete actions toward personal and societal transformation constitutes one of the basic steps in the work that many religious communities do toward peace, justice, and dignity. We are living in a world in which poverty, violence, injustice, and inequality are just different manifestations of long and historical oppressions. It is within this context that, motivated by our spiritual practices, we encounter our history as the special scenario in which we need to exercise the praxis of liberation.

The *Within and Without Conference* will bring together an interfaith group that will explore the meaning and action of liberation in their religious and social movements. By participating on this program, you will:

- Learn about the work of faith communities in coping with structural injustice.
- Identify creative non-violence practices for social action.
- Expand your community interfaith network.
- Explore spiritual practices that nurture your work for personal and societal transformation.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11th (SEE)

3:30 – 6:00 pm Registration

4:00 – 6:00 pm A Film Screening about Bishop Oscar Romero

6:00 – 7:00 pm Dinner

7:30 – 9:00 pm Open Plenary: *Let My People Go, Let Me Go*

Led by **Ralph McCloud**

Liberation of people in poverty not only liberated the oppressed but liberates the oppressor. This lecture will seek to uncover prophets of the day, those who seek to address poverty by confronting systems that keep all people in poverty. "Stones that the builder rejected" will become the pillars of a free and liberated world.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12th (JUDGE)

- 07:30 – 08:25 am Breakfast
- 08:30 – 09:00 am Meeting for Worship
- 09:15 – 10:30 am Opening Panel: *Hearing the Cry*
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- 10:30 – 10:45 am Break
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- 10:45 – 12:00 pm Lecture/workshop: *Liberating the Word*

Led by **Will O'Brien**
We are painfully aware how the Bible has been hijacked and weaponized over the centuries to justify militarism, violence, and oppression – and that continues today. Yet history also bears witness to how the Bible is profoundly life-giving, offering a vision of justice, salvation, peace, and human dignity. The Word of God is essentially liberating. But the Word itself must be liberated from dangerous distortions, untruths, and half-truths. To open our lives to the guiding truth of the biblical revelation, we may need to unlearn much of what we've been taught about the Bible. We will explore approaches to reading the Bible that can free it from its co-optation by Empire and unleash its liberating message for our lives and for our society.
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- 12:00 – 01:00 pm Lunch
- 01:30 – 03:15 pm Lecture/workshop: *Liberation from an Ecological Perspective*

Led by **Mark Hathaway**
How can we learn to hear the cry of the Earth? And how is that cry connected to the cry of the poor? In this session, we will explore how the exploitation of nature and the oppression of humans are interconnected and seek out ways of righting our relationship with the more-than-human world. At the same time, we will consider how tapping into the wisdom of other beings and learning to work cooperatively with them may open new paths to integral liberation.
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- 03:15 – 03:30 pm Break
- 03:30 – 06:00 pm Workshop: *"Does Jewish Liberation Theology Begin and End with the Exodus and the Prophets?"*

Led by **Rabbi Mordechai Liebling**
We will explore developing a contemporary Jewish Theology of Liberation that takes into account our biblical tradition and yet cannot be limited by it. Some issues we will look at are the balance of particularism and universalism, inclusivity, balancing the Divine Nature of "I Shall Be What I Shall Be" with the Divine Nature of "This Is What Is", or differently, "There shall be no poor among you" with "There will always be poor." This will all be in the context of addressing the fierce urgency of now and will be informed by other traditions. There will be a significant experiential component.

06:00 – 07:00 pm Dinner

07:30 – 09:00 pm Plenary: *Muslima Theology and Interreligious Feminist Solidarity*
 Led by **Dr. Jerusha Tanner Rhodes**
 This talk will introduce Muslima theology (a genre of Islamic feminist theology) and argue for the value and necessity of interreligious feminist solidarity. Acknowledging real obstacles—including a lack of deep knowledge, power differentials, and a climate of Islamophobia—Dr. Rhodes will discuss the liberative and transformative possibilities of interreligious feminism solidarity. She will also introduce concrete strategies for embarking on the process of building such solidarity.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13th (ACT)

07:30 – 08:25 am Breakfast

08:30 – 09:00 am Meeting for Worship

09:15 – 10:30 am Workshop: *Love Crosses Borders*
 Led by **Anton Flores-Maisonet**
 For over a decade Anton has witnessed the power of a resilient love to overcome oppression. Through storytelling and theological reflection, he will take us on a journey with immigrants in search of the Beloved Community, that "alterna"-tive to systems of domination that relentlessly threaten migrant families and their home communities.

10:30 – 10:45 am Break

10:45 – 12:00 pm Lecture/workshop: *Mind the Body: Getting grounded in your body for racial justice*
 Led by **Dr. Amanda Kemp**
 This workshop focuses on the body. We will move it, stretch it, and listen to its deep messages. What can the body tell us during difficult conversations about racism? How can we use the body to rediscover our power when we've been knocked off center? How can the body help us to come back to our voice?

12:00 – 01:00 pm Lunch

01:30 – 03:15 pm Lecture/workshop: *A Desert Theology of Liberation*
Raj Lewis
 In this session, Raj will lead us to entering the journey of God's people as refugee, outsider, slave, and exile in the urban desert.

- 03:15 – 03:30 pm Break
- 03:30 – 06:00 pm Workshop: *Liberation from Oppression and the Liberty of Conscience*
 Led by **Nadine Hoover**
 Nadine collects stories and practices that restore and preserve cultures of peace in the most unlikely places: refugee, militant or professional communities. Activities expose our participation in intergenerational cycles of oppression rooted in childhood experience, and ways to organize societies base on discernment to experience the justice, joy and liberty of love and conscience.
- 06:00 – 07:00 pm Dinner
- 07:30 – 09:00 pm Plenary: *Caring for Souls As an Act of Love and Resistance*
 Led by **Rev. Renee McKenzie**
 In this presentation Renee McKenzie explores how an historically activist worshipping congregation respond to the contemporary challenge of living in a society that uses trauma and fragmentation as tools to dismantle whole people and whole communities.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14th (CELEBRATE)

- 07:30 – 08:25 am Breakfast
- 08:30 – 09:00 am Meeting for Worship
- 09:15 – 10:30 am *Witness to Liberation: Bishop Oscar Romero and Rev. James Cone*
 Small groups / next steps / learnings exercise
 Led by **Francisco Burgos, Jose Moreira, and Wende Marshall**
- 10:30 – 10:45 am Break
- 10:45 – 12:00 pm Closure: Commitments and Celebration
- 12:00 – 01:00 pm Lunch