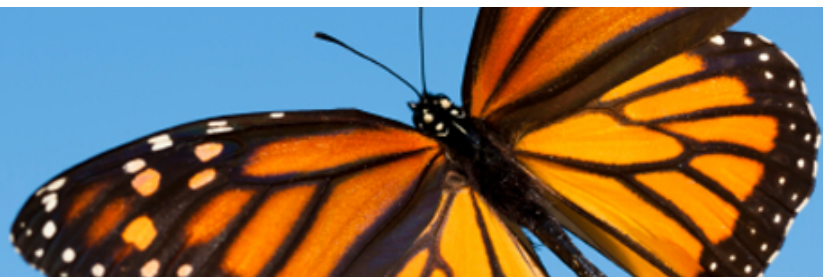


CRIMINAL JUSTICE SABBATH 2018

RESOURCE GUIDE

HEARING THE CRIES FOR JUSTICE



WHAT IS A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SABBATH?

A Criminal Justice Sabbath is a day in the life of your faith community dedicated to concern and compassion for persons impacted by the criminal justice system: offenders, victims of crime, legal and corrections staff, law enforcement, and the families of all these people.

We invite you to make space for people impacted by the criminal justice system - in your hearts and in your schedule. Dedicate a day of your community's life together to think about, pray about, learn about, and act for the people with lived experience of our justice system.

This resource guide will provide ideas for worship, preaching, adult education, and action. Faith leaders, Spiritual Directors, Outreach or Mission committees, teachers, education groups, and individuals: please read and use this guide in your community, to learn and act for justice.

This guide is also available online for sharing at www.CoSAOregon.org

WHEN IS CJ SABBATH IN 2018?

Join communities across Oregon in recognizing Criminal Justice Sabbath during the weekend of **July 6-8, 2018**. Your faith congregation or community can join others remembering the ways we are connected through - and in spite of - our justice system: to those in prison, those who carry criminal records, those who work and serve in prisons and courts and supervision, those who have survived crime, those who have been lost to violence, and to all those with loved ones involved. When we remember, we are also connected to one another.

If you cannot hold your CJ Sabbath during that time, choose any other date. And if you are not part of a group able to recognize a CJ Sabbath, then commit to spend a day learning and taking action - for example, invite a friend over to watch the documentary *Thirteenth*, talk about how it impacts you, and then write letters to your representatives in Salem.

WHY HOLD A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SABBATH?

Not everyone has been to prison. Not everyone even knows someone who's been to prison. But a lot more of us do know and love people who have been to prison than we might think. And it's a good bet that your faith community might already have members with criminal records or who have loved ones who are incarcerated - even if they might not feel comfortable sharing that fact.

While it feels like the criminal justice system operates on the margins of society, a large number of people are in fact impacted by it: persons in jails and prisons and on probation; staff in correctional facilities, law enforcement, and the judicial system; victims of crime and violence; communities impacted by crime and by disproportionate incarceration; family members with loved ones in prison.

Further, recent political events nationwide make clear that even if only a minority of the US population sees the inside of a correctional facility, the entire social order - including race and economic status - exists and functions through its use of its criminal justice system. **Every taxpayer and voter is taking part in shaping a society that decides which actions are deemed right or wrong, and which groups of people are treated as criminals** (and which others are deemed "too big" to fail/jail). These days, leaders like to blame social problems on particular populations - whether gang members, immigrants, racial or religious or gender minorities, persons addicted to drugs, protesters, Wall Street bankers, corporate elites, or corrupt politicians. Whenever they do, their proposed solutions often rely on their beliefs about how the criminal justice system should be used to change society or to restore order.

Holding a Criminal Justice Sabbath in your community means calling attention to the deep-seated issues of justice in society. It can move your community from concern to compassion for the individuals who work, serve, live, and die within prison walls.

WHY IS CRIMINAL JUSTICE A FAITH ISSUE?

Justice matters to people of all religious backgrounds. Think of all the themes that connect criminal justice issues to the values and stories we tell as people of faith. Whenever you are teaching or preaching or pondering these values, consider making a connection to criminal justice issues. The justice system offers an abundance of new stories and examples to make theological principles relevant in your community's lived experience!

- Morality
- Mercy vs. Justice
- Redemption
- Forgiveness
- Boundaries
- Judgment and Humility
- Impermanence
- Suffering
- Trauma-informed care
- Hope and Fear
- Transformation
- Hospitality
- Healing
- Telling one's story
- Shadow sides
- Scapegoating
- Freedom

HOW CAN I MAKE A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SABBATH HAPPEN?

1. Talk with your faith community and find an appropriate way to recognize Criminal Justice Sabbath.
2. Tell EMO you're holding a CJ Sabbath by emailing cosa@emoregon.org. If you can't join us on July 6-8, 2018, pick another date that works for your group and let us know when that is.
3. Read this guide and start planning. Past years' CJ Sabbath Resource Guides are also available at our website: www.CoSAOregon.org.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL—RESCUING THE VISION

THE REV. DEACON TOM ENGLISH

Each December 7th Americans observe Pearl Harbor Day commemorating the day of infamy when this country sustained 3,581 casualties in a sneak attack on Hawaii. In response, the United States mobilized all its resources - people, talent and treasure - to defeat the enemies of our people and our way of life.

Today we took 7,000 casualties. Yesterday we took 7,000 casualties. Tomorrow we will take 7,000 casualties. Every day of the school year 7,000 young people drop out or have been pushed out of the school system and most of those 7,000 young people are truly casualties. Every year, over 1.2 million students drop out of high school in the United States. That's a student every 26 seconds. Many will lose their lives...and those who don't will be permanently debilitated by it. Too many will join the school-to-prison pipeline adding to the brutality of mass incarceration.

If you don't believe me, just look on the streets across our state. These youth will be unable to join our society as productive members and informed citizens. That's a tragedy for them and a threat to our nation - such a threat, that if we don't change what we are doing, our communities will not be peaceful and prosperous and this nation will lose many of its cherished democratic values. We will be the generation that allows fear - fear for our

families and property - to shatter the vision that 200 years of Americans have built toward.

You can be proud here in Oregon because we propose to do something about saving this seminal vision--to be proactive rather than reactive. The research has been clear since 1977 when Alden Miller, Lloyd Olin and Robert Coats published their study which found that crime is essentially a community issue. It cannot be solved by state or federal governments. Its causes and solutions can only be found in warp and woof that make up the fabric of each community. Churches, synagogues, mosques and other community-based faith organizations have the potential to mobilize their communities in engaging with the vision. Everyone has a role to play in addressing the risks and blessing the lives of our citizens

What is that vision that American have built towards for 200 years? You may know it. It is the fourth stanza of [America the Beautiful](#):

*O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!*

The Rev. Tom English is an ordained Deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon, co-chairs the Diocesan Prison Ministry Commission and has been a volunteer chaplain at the Lane County Jail for 20 years. He is a member of the Lane County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) and previously served as a consultant to the U.S. Dept. of Justice.

BY RABBI DEBRA KOLODNY

Reader: Leviticus 19:15 teaches: Do not pervert justice, do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

Response: Know fairness, know justice. No fairness, no justice.

Reader: Isaiah 30:18-19 teaches: Yet G*d longs to be gracious to you; therefore all will rise up to show you compassion. For ours is a G*d of justice. Blessed are all who wait for G*d! People of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious G*d will be when you cry for help! As soon as G*d hears, G*d will answer you.

Response: Know compassion, know justice. No compassion, no justice. Know grace, know justice. No grace, no justice.

Reader: Micah: 6:8 teaches: G*d has shown you what is good. And what does G*d require of you? To act justly and love mercy and walk humbly with your G*d.

Response: Know mercy, know justice. No mercy, no justice. Know humility, know justice. No humility no justice.

Reader: Psalm 33:5 teaches: G*d loves righteousness and justice, the earth is full of her unfailing love.

Response: Know justice, know love. No justice no love.

Reader: Psalm 72 verses 2-3 teaches: That G*d may judge Your people with righteousness, and Your poor with justice. Let the mountains bear peace to the people, and the hills, through righteousness.

Response: Know righteousness, know justice. No righteousness, no justice. Know justice, know peace. No justice, no peace.

Rabbi Debra Kolodny (Rabbah D'vorah) has been bringing a spiritual perspective and activist passion to worker's rights, racial and economic justice, women's, environmental, peace and LGBTQ causes since 1980. She facilitated the National Religious Leadership Roundtable for six years and served as Executive Director for ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal as well as Nehirim, a national Jewish LGBTQ organization and Resolutions Northwest. She is the founding rabbi of Portland's UnShul, a Jewish community that prioritizes showing up for racial, economic and immigrant justice.

THIS ARTICLE BY THE REV. JIM MOSIER WRITTEN FOR THE ARGUS OBSERVER NEWSPAPER IN NOVEMBER 2017.

“When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” - *Matthew 22.*

We have a prison in our community. Most of us are aware of that. We become aware when we see the work crews working in the cemetery or the parks. We are aware when inmates contribute to *Help Them to Hope*. We see them working our food distribution programs at the First Christian Church and St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church. The Snake River Correctional Institution, (SRCI), is the largest correctional facility in the state of Oregon.

The above cited scripture was the subject of our worship service on October 25 as it was for other denominations that follow a common lectionary in their liturgy. A member of St. Matthew’s always asks me this question when this scripture comes up: “So just who is my neighbor? Who do I include as neighbor and who is not my neighbor?” It is a hard question for most of us. We want to claim those we like as our neighbor for sure. But there are those who we don’t like. It is often for good reason (at least to us), that we don’t like them. Are they our neighbor too? Of course, we know the answer to that question. We are directed by our Lord to Love even our enemy. Really? We would often rather not.

As I have been going out to SRCI to conduct Eucharistic worship I have come to know some of the stories of the inmates. Some have done some really bad

things. Some have done some really stupid things. All have been put away from the mainstream of society as though they were not our neighbor. It is as though we could put people away and not pay any attention to the fact that they will be coming home someday. Where would that home be? The majority of the inmates at SRCI come from the more populated areas of the state of Oregon. It would seem like the State of Oregon is banishing these people from their neighbors. We are in Ontario, Oregon, which is all the way to the other end of the state. They are separated from the significant others in their lives. Yet, they will return to their neighborhoods. Who and/or what will they return to?

A new Episcopal congregation is being developed within the walls of SCRI. It will be a congregation that will have full standing within the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon. As such, the memberships of that congregation can be transferred to any other Episcopal congregation when they are released. Those congregations may be in Portland, Salem, Eugene, Roseburg, Medford or any other community. In other words, they will continue to be our neighbors. The difference, hopefully, will be that they will have a community of faith that will help them to be the neighbors we and they are called to be.

The Rev. Jim Mosier is a priest of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon. He is retired as the rector of St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church in Ontario, Oregon, and serves as a religious services volunteer at the Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario.

BY DR. MARY ZINKIN

When a crime is committed someone is harmed and someone is responsible. The parties involved are from that moment forward inextricably linked in an involuntary relationship, one that in general is not well recognized. The criminal justice system is designed to meet the needs of the accused (protection of rights to be innocent until proven guilty) and of what is required to establish accountability for the State Law that has been broken (apprehend, prosecute, sentence, institutionalize, monitor, release). **The only role for the victim traditionally has been to serve as a witness for the case of the prosecution.**

Susan Miller, author of After the Crime: The Power of Restorative Justice Dialogues between Victims and Violent Offenders (2011, p. 22) captures the experience of many survivors:

Consequently, after a victim comes forward to tell the police that a crime has occurred, all efforts switch to apprehending, charging, prosecuting, convicting, and punishing the offender. Victims report being ignored, having their needs trivialized, and being blamed for contributing to or causing their victimization. They often see the criminal justice system as exacerbating their original harm through its standard operating procedures.

At the Center for Trauma Support Services we hear these stories which strengthens our commitment to focus on the needs of crime survivors, first and foremost. We adhere to the principles of Common Justice, that in order to account for violence we need a system of justice that is 1) victim/survivor centered, 2) accountability focused, 3) safety driven, and 4) racially equitable.

What would it be like if once a person is harmed (regardless of whether it is reported or prosecuted), there is a system that revolves around their needs.... to connect them with resources, monitor the legal case (if there is one), address any needs for safety and protection, and ensure healing and recovery?

And what would it look like if we had a system for true accountability...one that requires the person responsible for the harm to:

- 1) acknowledge the harm
- 2) fully own it
- 3) express remorse
- 4) repair the harm with the victim/survivor
- 5) commit to never do it again

I encourage you to explore these questions...listen to the voices of victims and survivors...and discover what you can do to bring reform to our current systems of justice that focus primarily on the needs of the offender.

Mary Zinkin, Ph.D. is a Buddhist Chaplain and Executive Director of Center for Trauma Support Services, a newly founded nonprofit providing trauma support coaching, training, and Facilitated Dialogue. You can learn more at www.thectss.org.

SELECTED WORDS FROM A REFLECTION BY BOBBIN SINGH

For too long, the politics of fear and anger have bred a culture that is pro-incarceration, diminishing the dignity and worth of significant segments of our society.

Fear and anger are behind the War on Drugs and mandatory minimum sentencing. They put barriers in the way of people leaving our prisons and jails, preventing them from successfully reintegrating into our communities. They prop up our ineffective, arbitrary, and costly death penalty system. They contributed to more than 2,000 people being wrongfully convicted nationwide, including 161 who were on death row. They have tripled the number of Oregonians behind bars and shifted tax dollars away from proven approaches to crime prevention such as mental health services, reentry programs, and education

I believe that those who trade in fear and anger are out of step with the pulse of the nation and our state. So-called "tough on crime" policies are now recognized as clumsily harsh and ultimately ineffective by many on both sides of the political divide. There is a broad awakening and soul-searching happening in this country to criminal and racial justice issues. And, the question is no longer an issue of left vs right, but it is those who want more punishment versus those who want better solutions. It is those who recklessly and excessively react to societal problems by oversimplification and stereotypes versus those who embrace science and evidence-based practices to confront society's complex challenges.

Moving beyond the politics of fear and anger will take courage. But the present climate offers a historic opportunity for reform. Smarter approaches to public safety that use tax dollars more effectively and support all of our communities are achievable. Momentum is growing in support of reexamining our priorities to come up with effective alternatives to criminalization and incarceration.

In this moment and time, we must unapologetically lead with creativity and innovation, openly acknowledge the failures of our criminal legal system and act with urgency on that awareness, and discard our adherence to incrementalism, embracing a radical transformation rooted in dignity, compassion, and respect. **We must reject the oversimplification of complex societal problems and more importantly, reject the oversimplification of people.** We are all complex; we are all more than the worst thing we have ever done. And, it is time for our justice system to reflect this basic truth.

Bobbin Singh is the Executive Director of Oregon Justice Resource Center, a non-profit promoting civil rights and representation for persons from historically underserved populations. In addition to services to women in prison and Oregon's Innocence Project, OJRC has recently launched a project focussed on immigrant rights.

INSPIRATION

Inspired words from church historian Diana Butler-Bass, in her book, *Christianity After Religion*.

Strange as it may seem in this time of cultural anxiety, economy near collapse, terrorist fear, political violence, environmental crisis, and partisan anger, I believe that the United States (and not only the United States) is caught up in the throes of a spiritual awakening, a period of sustained religious and political transformation during which our ways of seeing the world, understanding ourselves, and expressing faith are being, to borrow a phrase, “born again.” Indeed, the shifts around religion contribute to the anxiety, even as anxiety gives rise to new sorts of understandings of God and the spiritual life. Fear and confusion signal change. **This transformation is what some hope will be a “Great Turning” toward a global community** based on shared human connection, dedicated to the care of our planet, committed to justice and equality, that seeks to raise hundreds of millions from poverty, violence, and oppression. . . .

Exponential change creates exponential fear along with exponential hope. Massive transformation creates the double-edged cultural sword of decline and renewal. Exponential change ends those things that people once assumed and trusted to be true. **At the same time, upheaval opens new pathways to the future.** Change is about endings and beginnings and the necessary interrelationship between the two.

How will you and your community help move us through this Great Turning, toward new pathways of justice, mercy, and healing?

CHILDREN'S STORIES

Available online at www.FreeStoriesForKids.com – search for stories about justice. A story about *Two Kinds of Justice* includes these words:

“I will ask your brother what was the cause of his action, and I will listen to his explanation. Then I will oblige him to protect your other ear with his life, and to make you the most beautiful helmet to cover your scar and to be your ears when you need it.”

HEARING THE CRIES FOR JUSTICE: 2018 CONVOCATION

On Tuesday, January 30, 2018, a new convocation will bring together people of faith and goodwill who want to make Oregon a more just home for all. *Hearing the Cries for Justice* is a new convocation that will offer information, inspiration, and training to engage in prison ministries and the deeper social issues behind our legal system. The specific emphasis of the convocation will be to equip and motivate faith communities to engage in the ministry of hospitality for persons impacted by the legal system - and to help heal the brokenness in society that leads us to mass incarceration.

Speakers will include clergy advocating for reform, people with lived experience of the system, and agency officials who welcome the help of congregations in connecting their clients to long-term pro-social communities. Break-out workshops will provide training on tools for action. They will also steer us toward deep conversations among stakeholders, about what sort of vision is emerging about where Oregon's faith community is called, to engage the work of justice-making in the legal system. In the workshops and keynote addresses, the convocation will bridge both *service* to individuals and *policy change* for the benefit of society.

We especially invite teams of members from a single congregation to attend together, to provide a core group committed to the work of criminal justice reform. If a team of members attend the convocation, their congregation can be designated as a member of EMO's new *Welcome Home for Good Network*, which provides official recognition of the congregation's commitment to be a welcoming place for persons returning from prison or jail, and for family members with loved ones in prison or jail.

A BODHISATTVA HEARING THE CRIES FOR JUSTICE

While the title for this new convocation comes from the inspiration of the Prison Ministry Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon, the title has resonance in diverse quarters. One of our Buddhist colleagues observed that one of the Bodhisattvas is sometimes known as "hearing the cries." *Avalokiteshvara* is the Sanskrit name for "the one who perceives the world's lamentations."



This has been translated from Sanskrit into Chinese as Guanyin, a beloved figure of mercy and compassion. S/he is sometimes depicted with thousands of arms and hands, with an eye in each palm.

THE DIOCESE OF OREGON PRISON MINISTRY COMMISSION CALL TO ACTION

By The Rev. Deacon Tom English, with Tucker Mollers

“Do Justice, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly” - these words from Micah urge the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon to *act*, walking humbly with our God. In the minds of the Prison Ministry Commission, there could be no more appropriate theme than this. The clear implication here is to ACT...do, love, walk (all verbs), and the all-embracing adjective: to accomplish this with humility.

Facing biblical teaching on justice, however, is not easy, but it is essential if our work on criminal justice it is to be focused and effective while not devaluing nor diminishing other important justice issues. To further complicate the issue, there is the language problem. Justice is one of those concepts that combine tremendous emotional potency with a great deal of semantic ambiguity. It is a self-evident reality and, at the same time, a highly disputed one.

On the one hand, we all have an intuitive sense of what justice is. Even very young children have a powerful, innate sense of justice. Think of how often children complain that something is so *unfair*. To declare some action or state of affairs to be *unfair* is to make one of the strongest moral condemnations available. And when individuals make this complaint, they usually assume that the injustice in question will be patently obvious to anyone who cares to look.

But what appears obvious to one person is not always obvious to others. Though people may

agree that justice (what is right or what is legal) is the fundamental principle to consider, they frequently disagree on how the principle translates into practice—today, often expressed as rights.

What distinguishes criminal justice reform is that currently there is a unique and broad agreement across various groups - conservative, liberal, Democrat, Republican, Baptist and Episcopalian - that the current system is so broken that it is not only not serving communities, nor victims, nor offenders... but it is this brokenness and our unsuccessful and expensive efforts to “fix it” that it is stealing resources from the very services and supports that prevent crime in the first place - such as mental healthcare and education.

We at the Prison Ministry Commission feel the urgency of this unique opportunity to act now. To that end, in partnership with EMO and the Diocese of Eastern Oregon, we will host a convocation called

“Hearing the Cries” at the end of January, 2018 to accomplish the following:

- Recruit and train leaders from throughout the state for works of mercy with inmates and their families, assisting the professional staff at Oregon prisons.
- Utilize current research and practice assist offenders through acts of hospitality to successfully return to their communities post prison.
- Develop a three-year plan to implement and evaluate initiatives identified at the convocation.

“...the current system is so broken that it is not only not serving communities, nor victims, nor offenders... but it is this brokenness and our unsuccessful and expensive efforts to “fix it” that it is stealing resources from the very services and supports that prevent crime in the first place”

Tucker Mollers is a member of the Diocese of Oregon Prison Ministry Commission. He is a person who has experienced being in prison, successfully reintegrated into our community, and continues struggling with being a convicted felon. He graduated with two bachelor degrees from the University of Oregon. He lives in Springfield, Oregon, where he works as a writer.

WELCOME HOME FOR GOOD: JOIN US!

Your community is invited to become a welcoming space for those impacted by the criminal justice system. There are people in your area who are hurting and need support for healing. You can help them find a space of belonging, which can be the lifeline they need to sustain their spirits on the journey towards positive, healthy participation in society.

If your congregation or community is already committed to being a welcoming space, please consider reaching out to EMO to let us know. As we launch the Welcome Home for Good network, we hope to connect communities with each other and with persons in need of their support.

Oregon communities in the Welcome Home for Good network will express their commitment to being welcoming spaces in their own ways. Pick 3-5 ways you will show your commitment to hospitality for persons impacted by the justice system this year. Here are a few examples:

- Attend the **Hearing the Cries for Justice convocation** to equip you in your work and connect with other communities engaged in justice issues
- Dedicate a day each year as a **Criminal Justice Sabbath**, to learn about justice issues and take action
- Welcome persons with criminal records into the community, through a mission statement, lobby display, or otherwise demonstrating your commitment to visitors and members
- Host an exhibit of visual artworks by incarcerated artists
- Educate your group about the challenges facing people as they reintegrate into society after prison
- Bring in a speaker to address your congregation, from EMO's speakers' bureau, from your county's LPSCC, or other local agency officials or non-profit leaders
- Host a book club to read *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander or *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson
- Educate your group about mass incarceration and racism, such as screening the documentary *Thirteenth*.
- Host a small group for family of those in prison, survivors of violence, or persons on parole.
- Attend Restorative Justice trainings, and use restorative disciplinary practices in classes for children and youth
- Support programs for children of the incarcerated, such as toy drives or camps
- Collect books for prisoners
- Join EMO's lobby days in Salem to advocate for reform as people of faith
- Write to local leaders and newspapers to encourage specific reform legislation, such as Justice Reinvestment
- Coordinate a group to volunteer regularly at a crisis center or hospitality ministry for human trafficking victims
- Dedicate a portion of your church budget toward ministries supporting criminal justice reform and service

EMO staff can provide support to members throughout the year, as a follow up to the Hearing the Cries for Justice convocation. Through this network, congregations and volunteers will encourage one another and share best practices. If you or your congregation is interested in learning more, please visit our website at www.CoSAOregon.org or email cosa@emoregon.org.

ADVOCATE

Join a **Lobby Day** to tell your legislators in Salem that you want to see criminal justice reform! Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon offers an Interfaith Advocacy Day in Salem each “long” session (alternate years). Partnership for Safety and Justice offers annual lobby days to advocate for criminal justice reform.

If you can’t attend an organized lobby day, write to your state representatives, and local city or county councils. They need to hear from you!

ATTEND

As part of Oregon’s Justice Reinvestment Initiative, your county has created a **Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC)**, which consists of representatives from various agencies that impact public safety, from health departments and education to the Sheriff, public defenders, and community supervision offices. This LPSCC also needs to hear from you, as members of the public they are keeping safe! Find out who is on your county’s LPSCC and attend one of their meetings. Make sure your local officials tasked with public safety are listening to the community and urge them to keep criminal justice reform initiatives on their agenda.



SPEAK OUT

Invite a member of the *Criminal Justice Sabbath* **Speakers’ Bureau** to your congregation. A team of individuals in our Speakers’ Bureau stand at the ready to come to your community and share in preaching, leading educational events, or facilitating discussion about justice issues. These individuals are ordained members of the clergy from diverse traditions, who are knowledgeable and passionate about criminal justice reform. They are also experienced supporting persons in prison and through the re-entry process. Contact EMO to learn more about our Speakers’ Bureau and invite one of us to join you!

LEARN MORE

Dive into the educational resources listed in the rest of this Resource Guide, and share them with your faith group! Adult education, youth group, special events, quotes for sermons.... there are many ways to use this information to start discussion in your congregation.

Compiled by Sandy Hart and Audrey DeCoursey

The following are tools for understanding the criminal justice system. Please send us your suggestions for future lists!

BOOKS

JUST MERCY: A STORY OF JUSTICE AND REDEMPTION

BY BRYAN STEVENSON

Bryan Stevenson's account of his decades-long career as a legal advocate for marginalized people who have been either falsely convicted or harshly sentenced. This account brings hope and inspiration into the pain and brokenness of the US legal system. This book is especially good for faith groups. Study guides available.

LOCKED IN: THE TRUE CAUSES OF MASS INCARCERATION AND HOW TO ACHIEVE REAL REFORM

BY JOHN F. PFAFF

Having spent fifteen years studying the data on imprisonment, John Pfaff takes apart the reigning consensus created by Michelle Alexander and other reformers...and urges us to look at other factors instead, including a major shift in prosecutor behavior that occurred in the mid-1990s, when prosecutors began bringing felony charges against arrestees about twice as often as they had before.

GRACE GOES TO PRISON: AN INSPIRING STORY OF HOPE AND HUMANITY

BY MELANIE G SNYDER

A woman named Marie Hamilton started visiting inmates in a Pennsylvania prison in the 1970s, and developed relationships over the decades that transformed her own vision of the system, and inspired transformation for those around her. Her service moved her toward the practice of Restorative Justice, touching thousands of lives and bringing humanity and respect to persons so often overlooked.

THE NEW JIM CROW: MASS INCARCERATION IN THE AGE OF COLORBLINDNESS

BY MICHELLE ALEXANDER

A groundbreaking look at how racial discrimination in America influenced the mass incarceration of African-Americans. (study guides available)

FROM THE WAR ON POVERTY TO THE WAR ON CRIME: THE MAKING OF MASS INCARCERATION IN AMERICA

BY ELIZABETH HINTON

This book challenges the belief that America's prison problem originated with the Reagan administration's War on Drugs, Elizabeth Hinton traces the rise of mass incarceration to an ironic source: the social welfare programs of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society at the height of the civil rights era.

ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES: THREE STORIES OF CRIME, PRISON, AND REDEMPTION

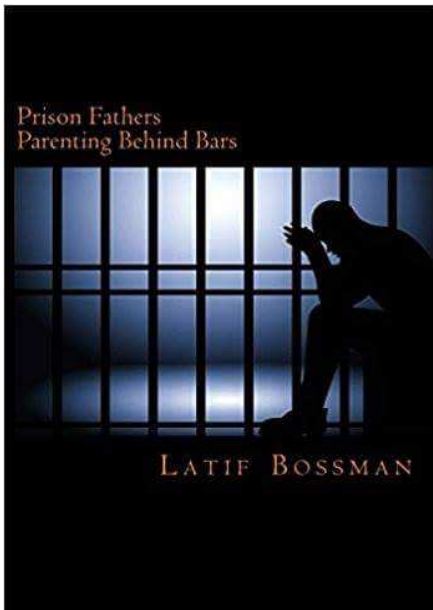
BY WALIDAH IMARISHA

Portland author, teacher, and speaker explores her own relationships with loved ones in prison - and her relationship with the justice system as a whole.

AFTER THE CRIME: THE POWER OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE DIALOGUES BETWEEN VICTIMS AND VIOLENT OFFENDERS

BY SUSAN MILLER

A fundamental text in understanding the views of victims and survivors of crime, from a Restorative Justice perspective. See page 6 for more about this book.



PRISON FATHERS: PARENTING FROM BEHIND BARS

BY LATIF BOSSMAN

Prison Fathers is a memoir charting the journey of an incarcerated African American father faced with the dilemma of parenting from prison. He copes with the loss of his freedom and struggles to find ways to continue to communicate with his children, provide for them financially, manage stress, provide emotional support, and deal with the addition of new children. Hundreds of miles away from his children, family, and friends removed from a life of so-called normalcy to one filled with so much uncertainty, he faces issues like abandonment, acceptance, and visitation and other struggles in this new world as an incarcerated father. Through all that was a struggle became a strength. With an undying love for his children, his energy was focused in continuing to fulfill his duties as a father. With the help of family, friends, community and a desire to truly be a better father,

he was able to remain a staple in the fabric of his children's lives until his release from incarceration.

PRISON FATHERS is available on Amazon and from the Oregon-based author. Email ShafiaMonroe@gmail.com to order a copy. * Author Latif Bossman is a featured speaker at the Hearing the Cries for Justice 2018 convocation.

COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DIALOGUE WITH TWO GOSPEL PARABLES ON LAW, CRIME AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

BY CHRISTOPHER D. MARSHALL. (PUBLISHED BY CASCADE BOOKS, IMPRINT OF WIPF AND STOCK PUBLISHERS, 2012)

Two parables that have become firmly lodged in popular consciousness are the parable of the Good Samaritan and the parable of the Prodigal Son. These simple but subversive tales have had a significant impact historically in shaping the spiritual, aesthetic, moral and legal traditions of Western civilization. COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE draws on the insights of restorative justice theory, legal philosophy and social psychology to offer a compelling analysis of how the priorities commended by the parables are pertinent to the criminal justice system today.

THE LITTLE BOOK OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

BY HOWARD ZEHR

Zehr is a pioneer of Restorative Justice, and this concise text lays out major themes and issues for both new and experienced RJ practitioners.

THE LITTLE BOOK OF BIBLICAL JUSTICE: A FRESH APPROACH TO THE BIBLE'S TEACHINGS ON JUSTICE

BY GOOD BOOKS (INTERCOURSE, PA 17534, 2005)

The Bible has had a profound impact on the development of Western culture. So exploring the biblical perspectives on justice can help us appreciate some of convictions and values that have helped shape Western political and judicial thought. Upfront, Marshall addresses the many complexities that surround "justice" in the Bible. Marshall's honest treatment of this subject is direct, yet almost lyrical.

BOOKS

EVICTED: POVERTY AND PROFIT IN THE AMERICAN CITY

BY MATTHEW DESMOND

Available widely in 2017 as the Multnomah County Library "Everybody Reads" title, this nonfiction account traces the lives of a diverse series of individuals and families in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who sharing one experience: eviction from their homes in the private rental market. The bulk of the book is intimate portraits of the struggles these families face as they navigate setbacks forced upon them. They are seeking shelter in a society where landlords have disproportionate power - backed by the state - to maximize profit at the expense of public health. Readers cannot help being both moved and frustrated at the struggles they face. The stories make a strong case for systemic reform of the housing market, to strengthen the hand of renters against the power of landlords. And if personal stories fail to elicit concern, the richly researched details about eviction statistics in the epilogue bring home the harm eviction does to society at large.

The experiences detailed in this book are located in Wisconsin but they translate to Oregon, as we face a crisis in affordable housing statewide, as well as legislative stubbornness to make needed changes. In 2017, the Oregon state legislature failed to pass reforms to allow rent control or to prevent the rampant no-cause evictions that create havoc and suffering for marginalized Oregonians. The power of landlord lobbies is strong here, too.

Connections between the housing crisis and criminal justice reform are worth emphasizing. The challenge of eviction might elicit the most sympathy when children are impacted, but the instability of the rental market greatly impacts anyone with criminal convictions (many of whom also have children!). One of the biggest challenges facing people after prison is housing, so when it's hard for *anyone* to find housing, it's even harder for people with records to find housing. Add on a history of sexual offenses, and the barriers to stable housing are great. In a society that expects people who've done their time to seamlessly reintegrate into society - with few formal resources to ease the transition - the barriers that anyone in poverty faces can land doubly hard on people who must continue to wear the label of felon. In addition, evictions can force individuals into the criminal justice system, leaving them scarred with a record. The issues of housing justice and criminal justice reform thus cannot be tidily separated; this is *intersectionality* at work.

PODCAST

"THIS AMERICAN WAR ON DRUGS," *ON THE MEDIA* EPISODE, BROADCAST BY WNYC, AUGUST 24, 2017, 50 MIN.

This episode of the popular weekly National Public Radio show covers the history of the "War on Drugs" and how political machinations created, not the drug epidemics themselves, but the highly punitive, racist societal responses to drug problems.

Featuring a diverse mix of views and voices, the podcast explains how political leaders have used mass hysteria about drug use to feed personal political agendas. It tells the story of Harry Anslinger, a man few people have heard of yet all of us have been impacted by - in that he invented and shaped the modern concept of the war on drugs. Heartbreakingly, he also had a hand in the racist forces that drove musical genius Billie Holiday to her death.

This podcast episode also argues effectively about the ways drug abuse is driven by economic forces - especially despair of the working classes - while at the same time responses to drug use often exploit racist and xenophobic tropes, to exacerbate a hierarchical socio-economic and racial social order.

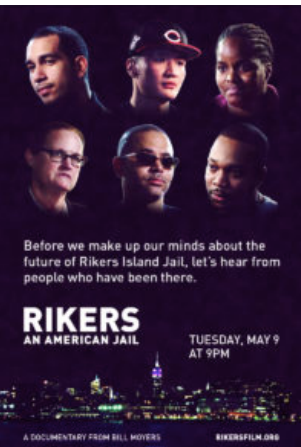
MOVIES

THIRTEENTH

DOCUMENTARY BY AVA DUVERNAY

Available on Netflix, 13th explores the "intersection of race, justice and mass incarceration in the United States;" it is titled after the [Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#), which freed the slaves and prohibited slavery ... unless as punishment for a crime. Several discussions guides are available on the internet.

RIKERS: AN AMERICAN JAIL



The U.S. is facing a crisis of mass incarceration with over 2.2 million people packed into its jails and prisons. To understand the human toll of this crisis, Rikers Island is a good place to start. Of the more than 7,500 people detained at Rikers Island on any given day, almost 80% have not yet been found

guilty or innocent of the charges they face. All are at risk in the pervasive culture of violence that forces people to come to terms with what they must do for their own survival. This new documentary from Bill Moyers brings you face to face with men and women who have endured incarceration at Rikers Island. Their stories vividly describe the cruel arc of the Rikers experience—from the shock of entry, to extortion exercised by other inmates, oppressive interactions with corrections officers, torture of solitary confinement and the many challenges of returning to the outside world. Study guides online: www.RikersFilm.org

FILMS AVAILABLE THROUGH YOUTUBE

RACISM IN OREGON'S JUSTICE SYSTEM

A short movie by Portland State University students for a class under Professor DeEtte Beghtol Waleed in 2017, detailing the impact of racism on Oregon's correctional system: <https://youtu.be/vIT16y-IH9c>

THE EXONERATED

Transcripts of court documents and interviews reveal the harrowing ordeal endured by innocent death-row inmates.

SERVING LIFE

Actor Forest Whitaker narrates the story of a group of inmate volunteers who staff their own hospice inside a maximum security prison in Louisiana where the average sentence is more than 90 years.

PRISON KIDS (JUVENILE JUSTICE IN AMERICA)

We incarcerate children at a higher rate than any other developed country. Kids make mistakes—sometimes large, sometimes small. And every day in America, they can be locked up in stark, mismanaged hellholes and marked for life.

ALSO CONSIDER TED TALKS AND YOUTUBE VIDEOS BY ADAM FOSS

TED Talk: Adam Foss, a Prosecutor's Vision for a Better Justice System

MAGAZINE : A NEW YORKER MAGAZINE DISCUSSION SERIES FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Consider the following articles from the New Yorker magazine, most available online at www.NewYorker.com or from your local library. The selected articles present personal stories that involve diverse themes relevant to criminal justice reform. We invite you to read the articles individually, then come together to discuss the stories and issues they present. Allow space for members of your group to connect with the stories both personally and as policy issues. Reading these articles may call up emotionally-charged reflections. Seek to hear from all members of your group, and be prepared for new stories to emerge from your group members.

"AMERICAN INFERNO," DANIELLE ALLEN. *NEW YORKER MAGAZINE*, JULY 24, 2017.

Dean at the University of Chicago, Allen sought to assist her young cousin as he navigated the challenges of a new life after a long prison sentence. But even with her efforts, his life ended violently. She shares deeply as she ponders whether other outcomes would have been possible, for a teenage boy with felony convictions (even one with an educated, well-connected, motivated cousin like her).

"REMEMBERING THE MURDER, YOU DIDN'T COMMIT" RACHEL AVIV. *NEW YORKER MAGAZINE*, JUNE 19, 2017.

Six defendants in Beatrice, Nebraska, confessed to a murder they remembered clearly but, according to DNA evidence, had not committed. The shocking fallibility of human memory intersects with the heavy consequences of involvement in the US legal system. Whose interests (if any) are served by the wrong people ending up in prisons?

"BUILDING A PRISON-TO-SCHOOL PIPELINE," LARISSA MACFARQUHAR. *NEW YORKER MAGAZINE*, DECEMBER 12, 2016.

Incarcerated adults are motivated to seek the opportunities they may have lacked when they were younger, and reverse the nationwide trend of the "school-to-prison pipeline." A healthy, successful life requires as much inside prison as outside: education, employment, and positive mentors.

"PRISON REVOLT," BILL KELLER. *NEW YORKER MAGAZINE*, JUNE 29, 2015.

Some conservatives are joining the movement for criminal justice reform, with their own ideas and proposed solutions. Many have faced personal experience of the justice system along the way. Is the criminal justice reform movement strengthened by bipartisan motivations - from the fiscal arguments of right-leaning reformers to the moral arguments of the left? Can it contain this diversity?

"THE FORGOTTEN ONES: QUEER AND TRANS LIVES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM," GRACE DUNHAM. *NEW YORKER MAGAZINE*, FEBRUARY 8, 2016.

Reviewing the anthology "Captive Genders," this article highlights the voices and experiences of a population who are no less marginalized within the prison system than outside it. In the starkly binary gender system of mass incarceration, the full spectrum of human life still cries out for recognition.

Use the following set of questions for each of the articles:

1. Who do you identify with in this article? Which experiences do you personally relate to?
2. Did you learn something new reading the article? What surprised you?
3. Name the people in the central character's network: family members, friends, partners, professional contacts. What power did these people have to influence their life course? What roles did they play - both positively and negatively?
4. What did you learn about the power of *community* to help or hinder someone's success during/after prison? What lessons did you draw about how you could help someone in prison? About how you could help someone reentering society after prison?
5. What *helped* the key figures in the article? What worked?
6. What *barriers* stood in their way to reaching success?
 - a. Personal/intrapersonal barriers?
 - b. Interpersonal barriers?
 - c. Structural/systemic barriers?
 - d. What or who could have changed the outcome?
7. How do criminal justice reform issues *intersect* with other social justice issues, in the lives of the people portrayed here?
8. What would true *JUSTICE* look like in this situation, in your view?
9. What questions are you left with after reading this article?



EDUCATION

ORGANIZATIONS TO LEARN MORE AND TAKE ACTION

ORGANIZATIONS IN OREGON:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Oregon's CJC provides a rich online database of facts and figures describing Oregon's prison population.

OREGON JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER

OJRC promotes civil rights and improves legal representation for communities that have often been underserved in the past: people living in poverty and people of color among them. They train future public interest lawyers, and educate our community on civil rights and current civil liberties concerns. www.ojrc.info

ACLU OF OREGON

Amongst other services, *They Report to You* is a new campaign by Oregon's ACLU to raise awareness about the impact District Attorneys have on sentencing, and mass incarceration as a whole. www.aclu-or.org

PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFETY AND JUSTICE (PSJ)

Key to advocacy for reform in Salem, PSJ has helped craft and pass groundbreaking legislation, most lately around justice reinvestment and alternative sentencing approaches for parents. www.SafetyAndJustice.org also lists resources for transition services.

OAASIS

Oregon Abuse Advocates & Survivors in Service empowers survivors of sexual violence. With a new website at www.oaasisoregon.org and a renewed mission to build a movement to prevent child sexual abuse and help healing, OAASIS is in the heart of true transformation for what justice looks like in Oregon.

FIGHT AGAINST SEX TRAFFICKING/FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY/TRAFFICKING

FAST connects groups working to end human trafficking. The FAST monthly email newsletter lists events and ways to plug into the work across Oregon.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

THE MARSHALL PROJECT

The Marshall Project is a nonpartisan nonprofit news organization that seeks to sustain a sense of national urgency about the justice system, striving to enlarge the audience of people who care about the state of criminal justice. www.themarshallproject.org

THE FAIR PUNISHMENT PROJECT

The Fair Punishment Project is helping create a fair and accountable justice system through legal action, public discourse, and educational initiatives. www.fairpunishment.org

EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Led by Bryan Stevenson, EJI works to end wrongful convictions and get justice for children in the system. A new project is creating a museum and monuments for the victims of racist lynching. www.eji.org

CATHOLIC LEGAL IMMIGRATION NETWORK, INC.

CLINIC compiles daily news and advocacy about justice for immigrants in the US, based in Catholic values of welcoming the stranger, per Biblical teachings. www.cliniclegal.org

VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

The Vera Institute of Justice's vision is to tackle the most pressing injustices of our day—the causes and consequences of mass incarceration, racial disparities, the loss of public trust in law enforcement, and the unmet needs of the vulnerable, the marginalized, and those harmed by crime and violence. www.vera.org

THE SENTENCING PROJECT

Founded in 1986, the Sentencing Project works for a fair and effective U. S. criminal justice system by promoting reforms in sentencing policy, addressing unjust racial disparities and advocating for alternatives to incarceration. www.sentencingproject.org

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SABBATH 2018

RESOURCE GUIDE: HEARING THE CRIES FOR JUSTICE

CONTACT US



PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOUR CONGREGATION OR GROUP RECOGNIZES A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SABBATH IN 2018!

We want to share the good news that people across Oregon are lifting up the stories and needs of those impacted by the justice system.

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF OREGON
PRISON MINISTRY COMMISSION

CO-CHAIR: The Rev. Tom English

Deacon, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Eugene

english@riousa.com * (541) 302-9477

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES OF OREGON
COMMUNITIES OF SUPPORT & ACCOUNTABILITY

...building a network of faith and community partners who approach the legal system with a restorative justice lens—empowering and equipping the community to help persons impacted by the criminal justice system, including offenders, victims, staff and their families.

CoSA@EMOregon.org * www.CoSAOregon.org

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES OF OREGON

IS A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS, CONGREGATIONS, ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERFAITH PARTNERS WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OREGONIANS THROUGH COMMUNITY MINISTRY PROGRAMS, ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, EARTH MINISTRY AND PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY.

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