



**The Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation (RHJR) Ministry Network
of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (ECCT) offers**

Free Programming to ECCT Parishes

*HOW ARE YOU AND YOUR CONGREGATION INVOLVED IN THE
SEASON OF RACIAL HEALING, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION?*

August 26, 2019 by the Rev. Don Hamer for the RHJR Ministry Network Speakers' Bureau

This past weekend, our nation observed the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved African people on the shores of the British colony of Virginia in 1619. Many churches tolled their church bells for four minutes – one minute for each century – to mark the occasion. The bells also called attention to the fact that this is not just part of the fabric of African American history: This is part of the fabric of the history of the United States of America, etched into the bedrock of our government (Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution) and leaving a sinful and devastating legacy to this very day.

In recognition of our country's – and our Church's -- history of racial injustice, the 2018 ECCT Convention established a minimum two-year "Season of Racial Healing, Justice and Reconciliation" which began on Sunday February 10, 2019. In order to assist congregations to meaningfully engage in this season, the RHJR Ministry Network is offering congregations or groups of congregations a series of programming opportunities. We provide the materials, the trained facilitators – ALL YOU NEED TO PROVIDE IS THE DATE AND THE VENUE!

We have an amazing array of feature-length movies; briefer, thought provoking videos; and all sorts of articles and books to suggest as points of departure for an engaging discussion about a sensitive and complex topic.

While we will customize any presentation to meet the needs of your specific congregation or group, the following are some examples of possibilities to get you started in your planning:

Sunday Morning Forums: We will provide a preacher for your principal service (if desired) and follow up with a program following the service. Because it is not realistic to meaningfully engage the subject matter in one hour, we recommend either a series of one-hour programs or a longer program to include hearty snacks or a meal. Examples of successful Sunday morning programs include:

- Brief videos followed by facilitated discussion.
- "Town Hall" style forums, in which facilitators and participants openly share their own interracial experiences along with their questions, concerns or unresolved feelings.
- Facilitated discussion around a specific race-related issue or event facing your region or local community.

Book Studies: We will provide a trained facilitator to lead discussion of one of the many books in our resource materials. Let us know the nature of what your congregation would like to read and we will suggest several books from which you can choose.

An Evening or Weekend Series: Consider a 3-week or more series featuring movies such as *Traces of the Trade* (2008), *Blindspotting* (2018), and Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* (1989), followed by facilitated discussion.

For more information or to organize a program, contact The Rev. Don Hamer, Convener of the RHJR Speakers Bureau, at 860-614-1360 or dlhquadzilla2@yahoo.com.