



Talks at the Desk

Resource Guide

To create the social media stories for the #TalksAtTheDesk project, African Descent Ministries staff communicated with 24 Black Lutherans from across the United States. We featured young adults, students, a deacon, seminarians, lay leaders, synod staff, out ordained ministers, Afro-Latinos, musicians and community organizers. We wanted to hear from a diverse array of Lutherans in the African-descent community that continues to make this church so special. All participants were asked to recommend helpful resources that the community could dive into this year. We share these suggestions with overwhelming gratitude for the people who shared them with us. The notes in italics beneath some resources come from people who recommended them; the titles in bold were recommended by multiple people.

These are not all theological resources. A great majority of them can be used for leisure book reading, church small groups, additions to community and congregational libraries, and personal entertainment. When making any purchases, consider ordering from [Black-owned bookstores](#).

Books

Have you read the works of Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Zora Neale Hurston or Toni Morrison? These are a few of the most acclaimed Black writers in the past century. Any work by Mariame Kaba and Project NIA — created while she worked in Chicago — would be a great addition. If you seek enrichment through culture and literary excellence, this is your starting point.

Womanist Collection

- **Armas, Kat.** *Abuelita Faith: What Women on the Margins Teach Us About Wisdom, Persistence, and Strength*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2021.
 - “[Armas] writes about the impact of the stories of the lived theology of our ancestors, women of color, ‘women on the margins,’ on faith formation and future generations. She uses this lens while providing a practical take on the stories of women on the margins in Scripture, and what these women are saying to us today.”
- **Benbow, Candice Marie.** *Red Lip Theology: For Church Girls Who’ve Considered Tithing to the Beauty Supply Store When Sunday Morning Isn’t Enough*. New York: Convergent Books, 2022.
- **Cannon, Katie Geneva.** *Katie’s Canon: Womanism and the Soul of the Black Community, Revised and Expanded 25th Anniversary Edition*. Chicago: Fortress Press, 2021.
 - “Within the historical context of the Black experience in America, Katie Geneva Cannon speaks of the dignity of Black women. She calls us ‘contemporary

prophets, calling other women forth so they can break away from the oppressive ideologies and belief systems that presume to define their reality.’ This is one book I will read and refer to again and again as I discover and rediscover my own reality.”

- **Gafney, Wilda C. *A Women’s Lectionary for the Whole Church*. New York: Church Publishing, 2021.**
- Menakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*. Central Recovery Press, 2017.
- Pierce, Yolanda. *In My Grandmother’s House: Black Women, Faith, and the Stories We Inherit*. Minneapolis: Broadleaf Books, 2021.
- Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: Womanist Prose*. Mariner Books, 2003.

Theology

- Byock, Ira. *Dying Well: Peace and Possibilities at the End of Life*. 1997. New York: Riverhead Books, 1998.
- Byock, Ira. *The Four Things That Matter Most: A Book About Living — 10th Anniversary Edition*. New York: Atria Books, 2014.
 - *“I find that most humans have a phobia of dying and these books are helpful toward demystifying that process.”*
- Hendricks Jr., Obery M. *The Politics of Jesus: Rediscovering the True Revolutionary Nature of Jesus’ Teachings and How They Have Been Corrupted*. 2006. Three Leaves Publishing, 2007.
- Jennings, Willie James. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.
- **Johnson, Jeff G. *Black Christians: The Untold Lutheran Story*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1991.**

Empowerment and Faithfulness

- Brown, Tabitha. *Feeding the Soul (Because It’s My Business): Finding Our Way to Joy, Love, and Freedom*. New York: William Morrow, 2021.
- Burke, Tarana, and Brené Brown. *You Are Your Best Thing: Vulnerability, Shame Resilience, and the Black Experience*. 2021. New York: Random House, 2021.
- Burke, Tarana. *Unbound: My Story of Liberation and the Birth of the Me Too Movement*. Flatiron Books, 2021.
- Fenet, Lydia. *The Most Powerful Woman in the Room Is You: Command an Audience and Sell Your Way to Success*. New York: Gallery Books, 2021.
- Orji, Yvonne. *Bamboozled by Jesus: How God Tricked Me Into the Life of My Dreams*. Franklin, TN: Worthy Books, 2021.
- Sincero, Jen. *You Are a Badass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life*. New York: Running Press, 2013.
- Todd, Michael. *Crazy Faith: It’s Only Crazy Until It Happens*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2021.

- Curtice, Kaitlin B. *Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2020.
- Tuama, Pádraig Ó. *In the Shelter: Finding a Home in the World*. 2015. Hodder & Stoughton, 28 Apr. 2015.
- Cameron, Julia. *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity, 25th Anniversary Edition*. 1992. New York: TarcherPerigee, 2016.
- Rosenberg, Marshall B. *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*. Encinitas, CA: Puddledancer Press, 2015.

Nonreligious Books With Black and Brown Voices

- Babalola, Bolu. *Love in Color: Mythical Tales From Around the World, Retold*. William Morrow, 2021.
- Butler, Octavia E. *Fledgling*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2007.
- **Jemisin, N.K. *How Long 'til Black Future Month?* New York: Orbit Publishing, 2019.**
 - “A collection of science fiction and fantasy short stories from a Black woman who’s also one of the current leading authors in the genre. If you’ve heard her name but never read any of her works, it’s a great way to dive in and get a feel for how she writes. If you’re a fan of science fiction and fantasy, you’ll love reading work that unabashedly features Black characters and experiences in a genre that has historically ignored us.”
- Pride, Christine, and Jo Piazza. *We Are Not Like Them*. New York: Atria Books, 2021.
- Larkin, Allison. *The People We Keep*. New York: Gallery Books, 2021.
- Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. New York: Penguin Books, 2019.

Nonreligious Race and Ethnicity Collection

- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press, 2020.
- Brown, Austin Channing. *I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness*. New York: Convergent Books, 2018.
- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *Not “A Nation of Immigrants”: Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy, and a History of Erasure and Exclusion*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2021.
- Fischbach, Michael R. *Black Power and Palestine: Transnational Countries of Color*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018.
 - “It digs deep into the Black Power ‘Revolution’ movement in the 60s and 70s in the Middle East.”
- Gibran, Kahlil. *The Prophet*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2019.
- Height, Dorothy I. *Open Wide the Freedom Gates: A Memoir*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2005.
 - “Dr. Height is one of my greatest heroes and an unsung hero of the civil rights movement.”
- Hooks, Bell. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. 2002. New York: Routledge, 2003.

- Jennings, Willie James. *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2020.
- Kendi, Ibram X. *How to Be an Antiracist*. New York: One World, 2019.
- Larsen, Nella. *Passing*. Dover Publications, 2004.
- McCaulley, Esau. *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope*. IVP Academic, 2020.
- White, Maurice. *My Life With Earth, Wind and Fire*. New York: Amistad, 2018.

Podcasts

- [Alfred Street Baptist Church](#)
- [Affirm](#)
- [Black Girl Bravado](#)
 - *“An uplifting yet funny show about two Black women keeping it real about what it means to be a Black woman in current-day America.”*
- [Black History Bootcamp](#)
- [Code Switch](#)
 - *“Produced by NPR, Code Switch (2) is hosted by POC journalists and seeks to interrogate how race impacts all aspects of society: history, policy, pop culture, etc. I’m guaranteed to come away from each episode learning something new.”*
- [Crazy Faith](#) / Pastor Michael Todd
- [End-of-Life University](#)
- [For Collard Girls](#)
 - *“They bring womanist theology, deep wisdom, great senses of humor and a fire for the gospel to the world of podcasts.”*
- [It’s Been a Minute With Sam Sanders](#)
- [On Being With Krista Tippett](#)
- [Poetry Unbound](#) / Pádraig Ó Tuama
- [Spirituality & Health](#) / Rabbi Rami
- [Stolen: The Search for Jermain](#)
 - *“This would be an important podcast for everyone to hear. The podcast centers on the story of a missing Indigenous woman, and I believe that, now more than ever, we have to be sharing the stories of these Indigenous women that go missing. It is our responsibility to be present and fight for their rights.”*
- [The Womanist Salon](#)
- [News in Slow French](#)
- [News in Slow Spanish](#)

Movies/Television

- *All American* (2018 dramatic series; Netflix)
- *13th* (2016 documentary feature by Ava DuVernay; Netflix)
- *Concrete Cowboy* (2020 dramatic feature by Ricky Staub; Netflix)
- *Grey’s Anatomy* (2005 dramatic series; ABC)
- *High on the Hog: How African American Cuisine Transformed America* (2021 documentary Series; Netflix)

- *Insecure* (2016 dramatic series, HBO Max)
- *Star Trek: Discovery* (2017 dramatic series; Paramount+)
- *Station 19* (2018 dramatic series; ABC)
- *Wu-Tang: An American Saga* (2019 dramatic series; Hulu)

Social Media

- **@thenapministry (Tricia Hersey, the “Nap Bishop”)** Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
 - *“Organizer, artist and theologian who has developed a ministry centered around the concept of rest as resistance, especially for those of us who are descendants of slaves. I highly recommend following their work on social media and also participating in workshops if at all possible — I attended one that began with an extraordinary lecture on using the groundwork laid by our Black femme ancestors to begin treating rest as resistance in our own lives, moved into small groups where we equipped and encouraged each other to do just that, and then culminated in nearly 50 Black people napping together. I was forever changed, and I highly encourage all Black church professionals to try and attend an event, either virtually or in person.”*
- @blackliturgies (writer Cole Arthur Riley) Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- @drbeitheot (Dr. Bri the OT, aka occupational therapist Briana Miller) Facebook, Instagram, YouTube
- [A Long Talk About the Uncomfortable Truth](#)

Speakers

- **Bishop Tricia Hersey @TheNapMinistry**
- Rev. Angela !Khabeb
 - *“I love following the articles by the Rev. Angela !Khabeb, which are found in [Living Lutheran]. I delight in the picture of her in [Living Lutheran]; I am touched by the spirit of her words and look forward to how God will continue to use her.”*
- Nathaniel Viets-VanLear
 - *“I think restorative justice work needs to become a core piece of work that the church does in its relationship-building internally and externally.”*
 - *“Supporting the current Chicago restorative justice hubs would also help to expand this work in institutions that do it well.”*
 - *“[NewRoot, formerly Umoja] has some amazing starter trainings, and the annual National Association of Community and Restorative Justice conference will be taking place in Chicago this coming summer. My family and I are all also trained circle keepers and would love to help in any way.”*
- The collective of progressive pastors on TikTok, many of them QTBIPOC, who are preaching the gospel to tens of thousands through music, poetry, dance, humor and much more. (Start by searching for #ProgressivePastor.)
 - *“Ask the young people in your life where they see God in action on TikTok. I bet the answers will surprise and delight you.”*