

Anti-racism: Word And Life Launches Its Winter Online Forum

By **Maura Conlon-McIvor**, Special to VOICE

A COLLECTIVE WAKE-UP CALL ISSUED IN 2020, regarding unaddressed issues around race relations in our country, found the *New York Times* reporting that almost all of the bestselling books on Amazon and Barnes and Noble lists explored this issue. It also found local communities grappling to respond.

Santa Barbara-based Word and Life, an organization that supports contemplative living and learning, will begin to explore this poignant topic in its Winter series: *Confronting Racism* starting January 14th. Two books have been selected as a foundation for the program: Ibram X. Kendi's *How to be an Anti-Racist* and Howard Thurman's, *Jesus and the Disinherited*.

"Anti-Racism is a transformative concept that re-orientates and re-energizes the conversation about racism—and points us toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other," explained series co-organizer Pat McClure.

The ten-week series will be held via Zoom, Thursdays, 10:30am to 12 noon, January 14th to March 18th. The entire community is welcome to participate in the entire series. Cost is \$67.

Local leaders with expertise in the field will deliver weekly presentations to address ideas about and solutions to racial division in our own communities. The presenters include: Rev. Dr. David Moore (January 14th), Vashti

Tameka Wilson, Tracy Macuga, Matt Lowe, Leslye Colvin,

James Joyce III, Rev. Chris Brown, Jordan Killebrew, and Fr. Jim Clarke, as well as videos with the author, Ibram Kendi. The format includes speaker presentations, followed by breakout discussions, and large group reflections.

Word and Life, founded in 1977, honors cultivating awareness and emboldening action. McClure adds: "We think of Thurman's book as the 'word' and Ibram Kendi's

breakthrough book as the 'life' in our Winter course.

Putting our faith and belief into the real-time practice of

becoming aware of our habits and defenses to the restorative work of anti-racism is what Ibram Kendi's life story calls us to do." She adds Howard Thurman's book was the theological basis of much of Martin Luther King Jr.'s work for civil rights, a book that Dr. King carried in his briefcase.

One of the series featured speakers, Matt Lowe, suggests, "To imagine this new world requires deep spiritual action and practice; just as walking the path of healing through the truth and reconciliation process does."

Given the importance of the topic, VOICE follow up with further articles and reflections about AntiRacism in our community via continued discussion with presenters from the Word and Life series.

For information and to register, visit www.WordandLife.us.

