

**"Preachers don't get to stay out of politics. We are either chaplains of empire or prophets of God."  
-Rev. Dr. William J. Barber-**

## Metropolitan Association, NY UCC Newsletter

June 2022

Ministering to the Metropolitan Association Churches and Ministers.

**THIS IS PRIDE MONTH!  
CELEBRATE WITH OUR**

**LGBTQ + SIBLINGS**

**CREATIVITY, COMPASSION, COMMITMENT &  
COMMUNICATION**

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Metrouccnyc.org

### **BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

I recently received a call from a very impassioned minister who was infuriated with the murders of people of African descent at a Buffalo supermarket; horrified by the murders of budding brown skinned scholars and two of their teachers; and grieved, devastatingly so, of children re-traumatized, having to testify about their harrowing Uvalde, TX horror, just to move legislators, in bed with the NRA, to pass

sensible gun control legislation.

It is not a far stretch to say that we are on the brink of a collective breakdown. The gospel of Luke speaks of a woman so pathetically and pitifully bent over for 18 years of her life. We can sigh a collective, Ahhhhhh, or, Oh NO, at such a sight, but we continue with our daily lives — business as usual. But the real raw truth is, none of us can be whole unless she is whole.

The horrific acts of humans' inhumanity to humans must be addressed by the church

in meaningful, radical and productive ways. Joshua Lawrence Lazard, Ph.D candidate at Boston U School of Theology, writes that we "need a wake up call..." because "Tulsa, Uvalde, and Buffalo demonstrate that hitting the snooze button is not an acceptable response."

When a person's whole intent is to "shoot all blacks," and then driving for three hours looking to kill people simply for being cloaked in skin divinely kissed by the sun,

“prophets of resistance” must rise up.

The right to bear arms, once referring to weapons that could fire around three effective rounds per minute now include weapons fast enough to achieve up to 400 rounds per minute. The academic setting in Uvalde is the chilling reminder of the impact of such weapons in the hands of those with hearts hellbent on destroying the pure, the vulnerable, and the innocent. And though there were many police officers on the premise, these “good guys” failed to prevent the mass execution of brown children and their teachers. They failed to protect and defend the victims, **BUT**, they did manage to keep parents from rushing in like a mighty wind to save their children.

The colonization of our minds, comfortable and complicit with the ideology that places a hierarchy of human value based on skin color, is giving us ALL a one-way ticket to hell in the proverbial hand basket. For some, hell is already the reality.

We are in the season of Pentecost. This is a season of change. The season where the impossible really

becomes possible because there is a boldness in the body of Christ. This boldness is what led the 1st century church out into the streets, filled with the Holy Spirit, lifting up Jesus even if it meant they would secure the same fate He did. We are the descendants of that church. It is a new day and it requires a new way of thinking, being and doing — a complete 180 degree turn.

The Metropolitan Association, comprised of amazing and gifted individuals, congregations and clergy, must be on the forefront to lead the movement designed to invigorate our churches, raise up Spirit-filled leadership and turn our communities into sanctuaries of hope.

We are the people of the resurrection. We are the Acts 2 Pentecost Church. Let’s walk in Spirit-filled power as God uses us to turn this world, really, upside down!

Blessings, Rev. Ruby



## **METRO EVENTS and NEWS**

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**One hardly knows where to begin with all of the things happening in the world.**

**The Metro Association is deeply saddened by the transition of Sueli Gaewsky. The beloved wife of former Conference Minister Rev David Gawesky.**

We met Sueli in 2012, when she and David moved to Syracuse, New York. She soon was hired as the Youth Minister at Plymouth Congregational UCC in Syracuse. She incarnated her personal motto “It’s all about mission” expanding the programs to serve the low-income community in Syracuse and then returning to her passion of planning and leading youth and adult cultural immersion programs in Nicaragua. From 2015- to the time of her passing, she also

served part-time as the Administrative Assistant to the New York Conference, United Church of Christ. She loved to travel and visited numerous countries in the Americas and Europe. She frequently spoke about her deep love for Germany, and in particular for St. Mary's Protestant Church in the center of Berlin, where she worked on several occasions serving in a soup kitchen.

In 2020 she left Syracuse to begin the most meaningful work in her life, providing childcare for her beloved granddaughter Hazel. Vovó was determined that Hazel would grow up bilingual. A week before her passing she participated in Hazel's baptism giving her deep, deep joy.

Always positive, always dedicating herself to serve others, always a woman of profound faith, she loved life, she loved to laugh, and she loved to dance the Samba. She took God's hand on May 27<sup>th</sup> after a very brief stay in Hospice.

A graveside committal service will take place at the Readfield Corner Cemetery for family

members only. A Memorial Service is being planned for later in the Summer at Old South United Church of Christ in Farmington, Maine. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to establish the Sueli Alves Gaewsky Cross-Cultural Experience for Youth Fund. Donations can be mailed to the New York Conference, UCC, P.O. Box 287, Syracuse, NY 13209. Checks should be made out to UCCNY and noted for the Sueli Alves Gaewsky Fund.

She was pre-deceased by her beloved sister Leonice, with whom she is now dancing the samba in heaven. She is survived by her husband of 37 years, David; their three children Emily, Lyvia, and Chase, and their partners Chris Harmon, Andy Osheroff, and MJ Franklin; and by her beloved "chi-chi" Hazel. She is survived by Alice Berry whom she considered her third daughter as well as her sisters Nilda, Teresa, and Cida, her brother José, her mother Sebastiana and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins whom she loved greatly.

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**THE METRO  
ASSOCIATION  
PARTNERS WITH  
HOLLIS AVENUE  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH AND ITS  
FOOD PANTRY TO  
FEED THOUSANDS!**



If you, a family member or congregant need help with food please contact Hollis Avenue Congregational Church, Rev. Jerry Greene, Senior Pastor 211-04 Hollis Avenue, Queens Village 11429.

**Hours of operation:  
8am-11am: The Food  
Pantry is open every  
Tuesday. If you have  
special needs or an  
immediate need  
contact James  
Thomas at 516-528-  
2422. If your church  
wants food from the  
pantry contact ED Rev.  
Kris Watson at  
[Eadmin@metrouccnyc  
.org](mailto:Eadmin@metrouccnyc.org)**

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**PLEASE NOTE: COMMENTARY  
ON THE PROPOSED BYLAWS  
MUST BE SUBMITTED IN  
WRITING NO LATER THAN  
AUGUST 1, 2022 TO**

**EADMIN@METROUCCNYC.ORG**

**THE METRO ASSOCIATION  
RAISED \$1420.00 FOR  
AFRICANS IN UKRAINE  
LAST MONTH.**

## STEWARDSHIP CORNER

**Special thanks to all who make donations to the Association! We appreciate your financial support and pledge to use your gifts to the building of the beloved community!** *Divine Love, flowing through us blesses and increases all that we give, all that we have and all that we receive.*



**SOW A SEED INTO THE METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION TODAY.**

**YOUR DONATION IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE. MAKE DONATIONS HERE:**

**[Donation \(eservicepayments.com\)](http://eservicepayments.com)**

**#METROSTRONG:** Our Association is following Christ, empowering our churches to change the world.

We are committed to be communities of justice and extravagant hospitality that are transformed by God's love.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

Metro 2022 Dues statements have been sent to all churches electronically.. Due to increased costs of EVERYTHING, the Association is compelled to raise our per capita dues this year. **The dues have been increased by \$2.00 and are now \$14.00 per JUNE 2022 ISSUE 8**

### **person to be paid by the church**

The Metro Association is no longer collecting the \$2.00 per capita dues for the New York conference assessment. Statements sent to churches later this year will reflect only the dues payable to the Metropolitan Association. Please send your per capita assessment directly to the New York Conference going forward.

**PLEASE VISIT AND LIKE OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HAPPENINGS IN THE METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION!**

Spread the news of all that Metro Association is offering to its members, churches, and ministers!

**Share this newsletter with your congregation!**

Reach out to us to see how you can get involved and volunteer your time talent and treasure!

Do you have a bright idea or project for us to engage in? Develop the idea and share it by emailing our Executive Director at [eadmin@metronyucc.org](mailto:eadmin@metronyucc.org)

**Does your church need pulpit supply? We have a diversity of ministers willing and able to help. Please reach out to [eadmin@metronyucc.org](mailto:eadmin@metronyucc.org) or call Rev. Kris Watson on her cell at 646-523-1936.**

## HAPPENING IN OUR CHURCHES:

On Saturday, June 11, 2022, at 11:00 a.m., Riverside's Book Club meets to review *The Marrow of Tradition* by Charles Chestnut. They meet to review this book less than a month after White Supremacist Payton Gendron shot ten African Americans and wounded three others in Buffalo, New York.

Gendron's online publications indicate he was a proponent of the "Great Replacement Theory". Gendron is not the originator of this theory. It can be traced back at least as far back as the fall of Reconstruction after the Civil War. That is the period in which author Charles Chestnut wrote his novel. The Book Club meets to discuss the book less than a month following the shootings.

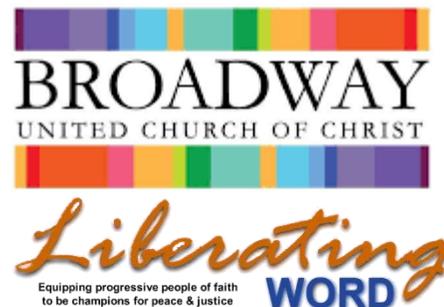
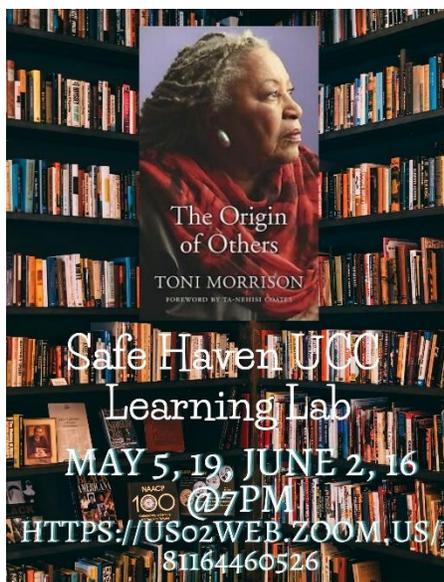
The storyline and characterizations take place in the wake of the Wilmington Massacre was November 8, 1898. Other themes to be explored are fears of miscegenation and interracial love, and the Christian/Social Justice response. Moderators are Riversiders, Dennis and Marcella Bullmaster-Day.

Dr. Marcella Bullmaster-Day She has worked as a teacher, principal, mentor, university professor, and professional development consultant in urban educational contexts. Dennis Day vocations have included entertainer, educator, human

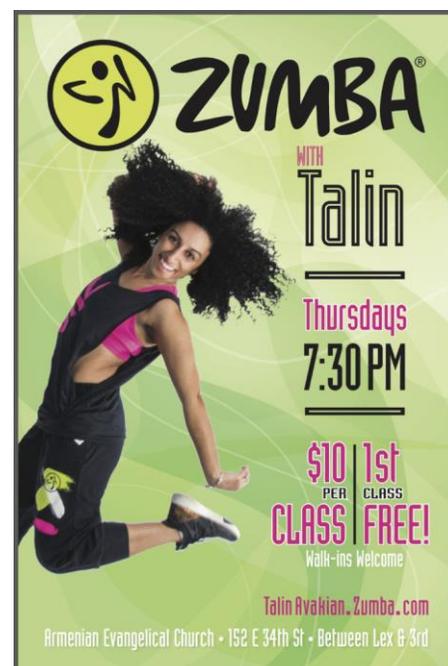
**JUNE 2022 ISSUE 8**

services leader, writer, filmmaker and founder of D-Day Media Group.

To Register Go to: [Riverside Church Riverside BookClub-June - Riverside Church \(trcnyc.org\)](https://trcnyc.org)



Subscribe to "Liberating Word," a daily dose of nourishment for progressive people of faith written by our senior pastor.



**AREMENIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH 152 EAST 34<sup>TH</sup> ST. NYC**

