

MANASOTA INTERRACIAL BOOK CLUB

SELECTED BOOK LIST

RECOMMENDED BY Rev. Paul Roberts

Organizing Meeting: March 11, 2018 - First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota (USA)

Organizers: Janet Olschewsky and Dr. M. Vicki Wacksman

Jesus and the Disinherited by Howard Thurman: In this classic theological treatise, the acclaimed theologian and religious leader Howard Thurman (1900-1981) demonstrates how the gospel may be read as a manual of resistance for the poor and disenfranchised. Jesus is a partner in the pain of the oppressed and the example of His life offers a solution to ending the descent into moral nihilism. Hatred does not empower—it decays. Only through self-love and love of one another can God's justice prevail.

"Everyone who wonders why our country is still plagued with racial inequities should read this book. Everyone that longs for a higher level of civil order, everyone who wonders who Jesus was speaking to, everyone young, in-between and old should read this book. It was published in 1949 but speaks truth that never changes."

Stamped from the Beginning by Ibram X. Kendi: SOME AMERICANS cling desperately to the myth that we are living in a post-racial society, that the election of the first Black president spelled the doom of racism. In fact, racist thought is alive and well in America - more sophisticated and more insidious than ever. And as award-winning historian Ibram X. Kendi argues in *Stamped from the Beginning*, if we have any hope of grappling with this stark reality, we must first understand how racist ideas were developed, disseminated, and enshrined in American society. And while racist ideas are easily produced and easily consumed, they can also be discredited. In shedding much-needed light on the murky history of racist ideas, *Stamped from the Beginning* offers us the tools we need to expose them—and in the process, gives us reason to hope.

The Christian Imagination - Theology and the Origins of Race by

Willing James Jennings: Why has Christianity, a religion premised upon neighborly love, failed in its attempts to heal social divisions? In this ambitious and wide-ranging work, Willie James Jennings delves deep into the late medieval soil in which the modern Christian imagination grew, to reveal how Christianity's highly refined process of socialization has inadvertently created and maintained segregated societies. Using his bold, creative, and courageous critique, Jennings charts, with great vision, new ways of imagining ourselves, our communities, and the landscapes we inhabit.

Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari: When Melinda and I went on our spring vacation, I encouraged her to pack a copy of Yuval Noah Harari's *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. I had just finished the book and I was dying to talk to her about it. It's so provocative and raises so many questions about human history that I knew it would spark

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great conversations around the dinner table. It didn't disappoint. In fact, in the weeks since we've been back from our holiday, we still talk about *Sapiens*. More fundamentally, he asks: Who are we as a species? And where are we going? Those are big questions as old as the history of our species. After you finish this book I have no doubt that, like me, you'll want to get together with some of your favorite Homo sapiens to try to answer them. By Bill Gates.

The Half has Never Been Told by Edward E. Baptist: A sweeping, authoritative history of the expansion of slavery in America, showing how forced migrations radically altered the nation's economic, political, and cultural landscape. Americans tend to cast slavery as a pre-modern institution--the nation's original sin, perhaps, but isolated in time and divorced from America's later success. But to do so robs the millions who suffered in bondage of their full legacy. As historian Edward E. Baptist reveals in *The Half Has Never Been Told*, the expansion of slavery in the first eight decades after American independence drove the evolution and modernization of the United States. In the span of a single lifetime, the South grew from a narrow coastal strip of worn-out tobacco plantations to a continental cotton empire, and the United States grew into a modern, industrial, and capitalist economy.

Waking Up White by Debby Irving "Debby Irving's powerful *Waking Up White* opens a rare window on how white Americans are socialized. Irving's focus on the mechanics of racism operating in just one life -- her own -- may lead white readers to reconsider the roots of their own perspectives -- and their role in dismantling old myths. Readers of color will no doubt find the view through Irving's window fascinating, and telling." -- *Van Jones, author, Rebuild The Dream, The Green Collar Economy: How One Solution Can Fix Our Two Biggest Problems; President, Rebuild The Dream; Co-host, CNN Crossfire*

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson: A powerful true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice—from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillan, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinksmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever. *Just Mercy* is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.

The Souls of Black Folk by W.E.B. DuBois W.E.B. Du Bois said, on the launch of his groundbreaking 1903 treatise *The Souls of Black Folk*, "for the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line"—a prescient statement. Setting out to show to the reader "the strange meaning of being black here in the dawning of the Twentieth Century," Du Bois explains the meaning of the emancipation, and its effect, and his views on the role of the leaders of his race.

For additional information, Contact: Janet Olshewsky 941-351-6912 or Vicki Wacksman 941-355-5580