

# PRESS RELEASE

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## A NEW INTERRACIAL BOOK CLUB ANNOUNCED

Racism can be a provocative topic. The word can make people angry or excited. While it is intentionally or unintentionally embedded in the most current headlines, it is a topic that has been largely swept under the rug. The newly organized Manasota Interracial Book Club hopes to pull back the rug and provide residents the opportunity to explore the topic from its inception to current forms.

The genesis of the Club came about following an inspiring presentation on Race, Racism and the Reformation by Rev. Paul Roberts, President of the Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in Atlanta Georgia. Rev. Roberts was the keynoter during First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota's Faith Focus Weekend Community Dialogue Program.

During the "Q & A" session, members of the large mixed-race audience asked the #1 question: "What can we do to be more informed and less victimized?" Janet Olshewsky, of Sarasota, a retired teacher and author suggested starting a book club. Dr. Vicki Wacksman of Lakewood Ranch and founder of the New York

based Center on Social Justice and Human Understanding, agreed to join  
Olshewsky in spearheading the Club.

The Manasota Interracial Book Club will have a non-denominational focus on  
Christian responsibility. The Club's organizers envision a diverse membership,  
monthly meetings, and plan to initially read the book list used by Rev. Roberts  
to prepare his keynote address.

The Club's organizing meeting will be held at First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota  
on Sunday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, at 2 -3 P.M. To register or for more information, contact  
Janet Olshewsky at 941-351-6912 or Vicki Wacksman at 941-355-5580.