

**Celebrating African American authors  
in honor of  
Black History Month 2020**

(in alphabetical order)

\* = Union Presbyterian Seminary staff

**1. Michelle Alexander: The New Jim Crow**

Michelle Alexander is a highly acclaimed civil rights lawyer, advocate, legal scholar and author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* — the bestselling book that helped to transform the national debate on racial and criminal justice in the United States. Michelle Alexander is a writer, civil rights advocate, and visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary.

**2. Maya Angelou: I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings**

The first in a seven-volume series, it is a coming-of-age story that illustrates how strength of character and a love of literature can help overcome racism and trauma. Maya Angelou was an American poet, singer, memoirist, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and is credited with a list of plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years.

**3. \*Brian K. Blount: Go Preach!**

Brian K. Blount is a Presbyterian minister, New Testament scholar and current President of Union Presbyterian Seminary. He is a preacher and scholar on the Book of Revelation.

**4. \*Katie G. Cannon: Black Womanist Ethics**

Katie Geneva Cannon was an American Christian theologian and ethicist associated with womanist theology and black theology. She was the first African American woman ordained in the United Presbyterian Church, which occurred in 1974. Katie G. Cannon was the Annie Scales Rogers Professor of Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia.

**5. James H. Cone: The Cross and the Lynching Tree, Martin and Malcom and America, A Black Theology of Liberation**

James H. Cone was an American theologian, best known for his advocacy of black theology and black liberation theology. His 1969 book *Black Theology and Black Power* provided a new way to comprehensively define the distinctiveness of theology in the black church. Professor James H. Cone, known as the founder of black liberation theology, was the Bill and Judith Moyers Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary.

**6. Kelly Brown Douglas: Stand Your Ground – Black Bodies and the Justice of God, What’s Faith Got to Do with It?**

Kelly Delaine Brown Douglas is an African American Episcopal priest, womanist theologian, and the inaugural Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary. She is also the Canon Theologian at the Washington National Cathedral.

**7. Marian Wright Edelman: The Measure of Our Success**

Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president emerita of the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF), has been an advocate for disadvantaged Americans for her entire professional life. Under her leadership, CDF has become the nation’s strongest voice for children and families. The Children’s Defense Fund’s *Leave No Child Behind*<sup>®</sup> mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start*, and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

**8. Gregory C. Ellison II: Cut Dead but Still Alive**

The Rev. Dr. Gregory C. Ellison II joined the Candler faculty in 2009. His teaching draws primarily from his work with the organization he founded called Fearless Dialogues, a non-profit organization that creates unique spaces for unlikely partners to have hard, heartfelt conversations on taboo subjects like racism, classism, and community violence. Ellison’s research focuses on caring with marginalized populations, pastoral care as social activism, and 20th and 21st century mysticism. He is the author of *Cut Dead but Still Alive: Caring for African American Young Men*, and *Fearless Dialogues: A New Movement for Justice* and has one book in progress with Westminster John Knox Press—*Anchored in the Current: The Eternal Wisdom of Howard Thurman in a Changing World*.

**9. Dwight N. Hopkins: Introducing Black Theology of Liberation**

Dwight Nathaniel Hopkins is a professor of theology at the University of Chicago and an ordained American Baptist minister.

**10. Zora Neale Hurston: Their Eyes Were Watching God**

Zora Neale Hurston was an American **author**, anthropologist, and filmmaker. She portrayed racial struggles in the early-20th-century American South and published research on Hoodoo. The most popular of her four novels is *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, published in 1937.

**11. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Strength to Love**

Martin Luther King Jr. was an American Christian minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the Civil Rights Movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968.

**12. Toni Morrison: Beloved, Home**

Toni Morrison, original name Chloe Anthony Wofford, American writer noted for her examination of black experience (particularly black female experience) within the black community. She received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993.

**13. Otis Moss III: Blue Note Preaching in a Post-Soul World**

With civil rights advocacy in his DNA, Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III built his ministry on community advancement and social justice activism. As Senior Pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, Illinois, Dr. Moss spent the last two decades practicing and preaching a Black theology that unapologetically calls attention to the problems of mass incarceration, environmental justice, and economic inequality. Dr. Moss is part of a new generation of ministers committed to preaching a prophetic message of love and justice, which he believes are inseparable companions that form the foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**14. Peter J. Paris: Black Religious Leaders**

Peter J. Paris is Elmer G. Homrighausen Professor of Social Ethics at Princeton Theological Seminary.

**15. \*Dana Purdom: A Change is Coming**

Dana Purdom is a seminarian attending Union Presbyterian Seminary. She is a prophetic liberator who believes in “keeping God free for people, while keeping people free for God.”

**16. Delores Williams: Sisters in the Wilderness**

Delores Williams is an American Presbyterian theologian notable for her formative role in the development of womanist theology and best known for her book *Sisters in the Wilderness*.

**17. T & T Clark Handbook of African American Theology: edited by Antonia Michelle Daymond, Frederick L. Ware, Eric Lewis Williams**

This handbook explores the central theme of Christian faith from various disciplinary approaches and different contexts of black experience in the United States. The central unifying theme is freedom; an important concept both in American culture and Christianity.

**18. The Papers of Howard Washington Thurman**

The Papers of Howard Washington Thurman is a four-volume, chronologically arranged documentary edition spanning the long and productive career of the Reverend Howard Thurman, one of the most significant leaders in the history of intellectual and religious life in the mid-twentieth-century United States.