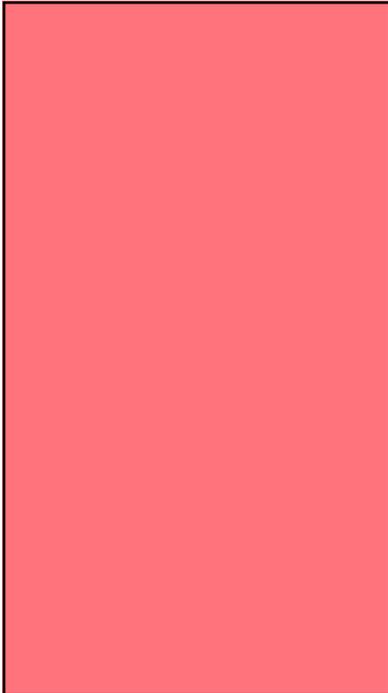


holy imagination + race

HOW THE CHURCH CAN BE A
HEALING FORCE IN AMERICA'S
RACIAL DIVIDE.

KERRY CONNELLY



Questions

- 1** Can white people be anti-racist?
- 2** Are white people in need of liberation?
- 3** What does liberation look like?

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holy imagination

self **Leading into midnight: the privilege of our racial awakening.**

team **Companioning others the journey.**

orgs **What true racial healing looks like at the institutional level.**

3

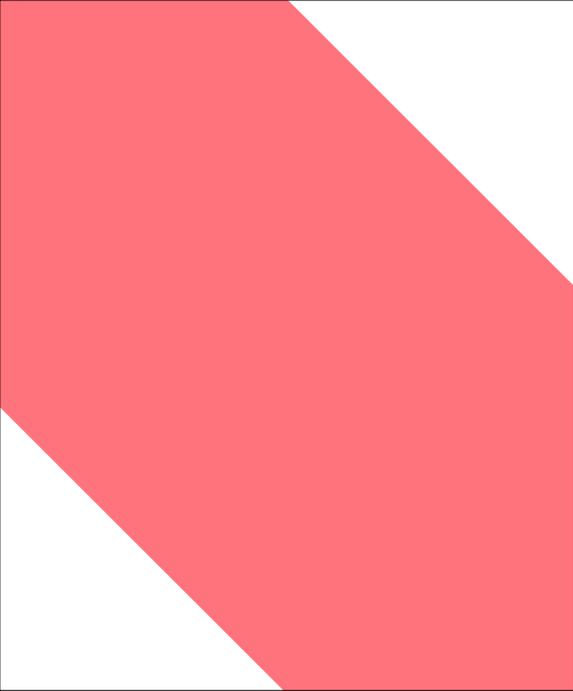
Ruby Sales

“I know we have a Black liberating theology but where is the white liberating theology?”

— Where Does It Hurt, On Being Podcast



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The difference between being born white and *WHITENESS*

Being born white is not a sin. There is nothing wrong with the way God made us.

WHITENESS on the other hand is a social construct designed to perpetuate a specific power dynamic that **empowers** some and **disempowers** all others.

This is the operative we resist.

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Unhelpful Attitudes In Racialized Contexts

<p>Guilt</p> <p>Points to areas of potential change, but often leads to defensiveness / avoidance.</p>	<p>Defensiveness</p> <p>White tactics of defensiveness perpetuate racism and do real harm to actual people.</p>	<p>Color-blindness</p> <p>Color-blindness allows white people to feel moral while maintaining the immorality of racism.</p>
<p>Awareness</p>	<p>Willingness</p>	<p>Opening</p>

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Can white people really be anti-racist?

This is a valid critique, and one I take seriously. Andre Henry once asked, "Doesn't it equate to self-annihilation?"

The answer is yes – and that's where the faith, and the holy imagination comes in.



**White leadership in anti-racism is about
companioning others in the journey.**

White leaders doing anti-racist work know that it is:

- CONTEXTUAL + PARADOXICAL**
There is no one way to be anti-racist – it will always depend on who is in the room at any given time.
- PASTORAL**
White pseudo-supremacy is a soul sickness + disfigurement that is a matter of pastoral care.
- ON-GOING**
Being anti-racist is not a destination, it's a journey – and it is life-long work.
- IMPERFECT**
Mistakes will be made – this is not a possibility. It's an accurate prediction. And it's ok.

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Are white people in need of liberation?

White people need to be liberated from the soul-disfigurement of white pseudo-supremacy. This is an urgent issue of pastoral care if we are to usher in the kin-dom of God + create the Beloved Community.

“Whatever white people do not know about Negroes reveals, precisely and inexorably, what they do not know about themselves..”

—James Baldwin, “Letter From a Region in My Mind”, 1962

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Does this human face reflect the shalom of God?

-The expression on this man’s face is one of terror, anger, + hate.

-Identities of dominance are straw houses.

-This man is in need of pastoral care.

-How many others feel this way inside?

ECONOMIC

INTELLECTUAL

JUDICIAL

VERBAL

POLITICAL

EMOTIONAL

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**“We can not get to resurrection
without going through
crucifixion.”**

—Rev. Ann Ralosky

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What does white liberation look like?

I am not here to answer this question but rather to invite you to imagine with me. This is the work we are called to do in the collective, along with our BIPOC siblings. But first, we must as white people begin to imagine who WE will be APART from pseudo-supremacy.

How do we get to Holy Imagination?

WHITE FOLK WORK	SELF
BIPOC WORK	TEAM
HUMANITY'S WORK	ORGANIZATION / CONGREGATION

The path to mutual liberation:

WHITE FOLK WORK
-Preparing hearts to listen to the BIPOC community
-Companioning along the awakening, deconstruction, + rebuilding process

BIPOC WORK
-Thriving + practicing the art of human flourishing in a world that wants to destroy them.

HUMAN WORK
-Recognizing systems of dominance and dismantling them to create something new together.

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White Folk work on the path to Holy Imagination:

<p>HONEST SELF-REFLECTION</p> <p>We need to be willing to examine truths that make us uncomfortable.</p>	<p>SKIN IN THE GAME</p> <p>We need to be willing to stay in the room, even when conversations get tough.</p>	<p>GRIEF + MOURNING</p> <p>We must be ready and welcoming to difficult emotions of grief and lament.</p>
<p>PUBLIC LAMENT + REPENTANCE</p> <p>Taking ownership of the situation is a delicate balance.</p>	<p>REPARATIONS</p> <p>Yes. Economic reparations. They matter because the physical world has been the plane of our sin.</p>	<p>CONCILIATION</p> <p>Only after all of these steps have been completed can conciliation actually occur.</p>

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The impact of one leader:

 <p>YOU</p> <p>As a leader, you must be willing to do this work yourself FIRST.</p>	 <p>YOUR TEAM</p> <p>Then, leadership teams must be on board as a unified front.</p>	 <p>YOUR ORGANIZATION</p> <p>The organization can become a beacon of hope as it changes.</p>	 <p>THE WORLD</p> <p>The church can help lead the world to God's shalom.</p>
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Internal changes the church can make:

<p>LEADERSHIP</p> <p>Who are we in conversation with theologically? Who is mentoring us + holding us accountable?</p>	<p>LITURGY</p> <p>Does our liturgy support anti-racism or does it perpetuate white pseudo-supremacy?</p>	<p>SMALL GROUPS</p> <p>Do our small groups encourage intentional anti-racist work?</p>
<p>MUSIC</p> <p>Does our music represent empire or the beloved community?</p>	<p>SERVICE PROJECTS</p> <p>Do our service projects reinforce white saviorhood?</p>	<p>PASTORAL CARE</p> <p>Does our pastoral care consider racial identity and impact?</p>

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**DIVERSITY IS
NOT ALWAYS
THE ANSWER**

SOMETIMES "DIVERSITY" IS UNHEALTHY FOR THE BIPOC COMMUNITY.

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**“The kin-dom of God is a place
where everyone has enough and
no one needs to be afraid.”**

—John Franke

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www.kerryconnelly.com/presoutlook

Sign up for my newsletter or schedule a 15-minute
info call for
coaching / consulting or speaking.

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Questions for further reflection:

- What is white work in this holy imagining?
- How can white people do better?
- How can white churches lead, pastor, and companion our congregations and the world into a true racial equity — something that actually resembles the kin-dom of God and the Beloved Community?

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