

TOOL KIT

flocc

faith|policy|vision

**The Truth About the American Death  
Penalty System, Race & Faith.**



The Faith Leaders of Color Coalition (flocc) is a multifaith Black and Indigenous community dedicated to learning and supporting advocacy, legislation, and litigation challenging the use of the American Death Penalty system on a state and federal level.

The Faith Leaders of Color Coalition or (flocc) allows space for Black and Indigenous faith leaders to build community, ask questions, take action, and collaborate with movement leaders working to end the death penalty in America.

The Faith Leaders of Color Coalition (flocc) was born out of a collaborative initiative when policy leaders, advocates, activists, lawyers, academics, and faith leaders desired to extend access of policy and execution information directly to Black and Indigenous pastors/clergy.

flocc honors the work, influence, and progress of Black/Indigenous pastors and faith leaders who were often on the frontlines of human rights movements- challenging systems of segregation, violence, oppression, and discrimination from the early 1600s to the early 1900s.

-

**flocc is not:**

- a C4 organization
- a Political Organization
- a Church
- a For Profit Organization
- a Law Firm



The American capital punishment system has long been a topic of intense debate and scrutiny, marred by systemic biases, racial disparities, and the risk of executing innocent individuals. flocc will play a critical role in the urgent need for reform within the criminal justice system; focusing on death penalty abolition.

**flocc's mission is to:**

**1. Advocate for Policies to Eliminate the use of the capital punishment system:**

The coalition will tirelessly work to eliminate the capital punishment system, addressing racial disparities, wrongful convictions, innocence claims and inhumane conditions on death row.

**2. Empower Faith Leaders:**

flocc will empower Black and Indigenous clergy to use their moral authority and spiritual teachings to advocate for an end to state-sanctioned death in their communities and nationwide.

**3. Cast Vision:**

The coalition aims to educate the public about the injustices and uneven applications when death sentences are applied, particularly with white victims. Introduce ways to hold district attorneys and municipalities accountable for true public safety.

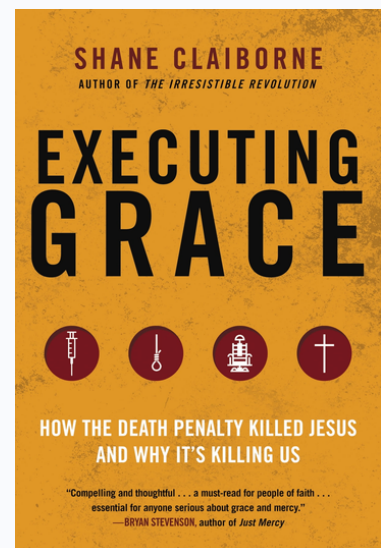
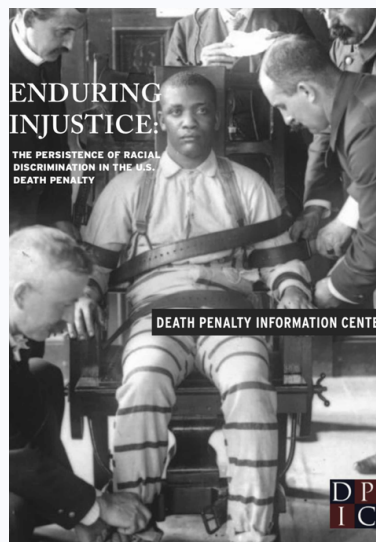
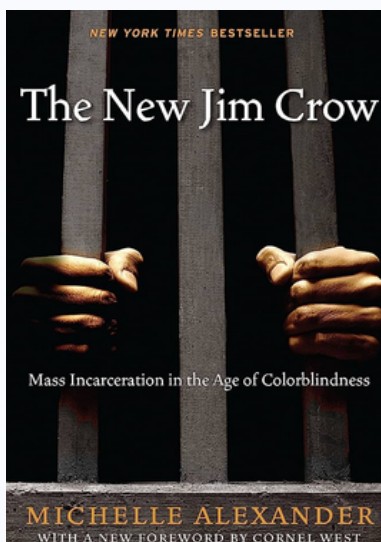
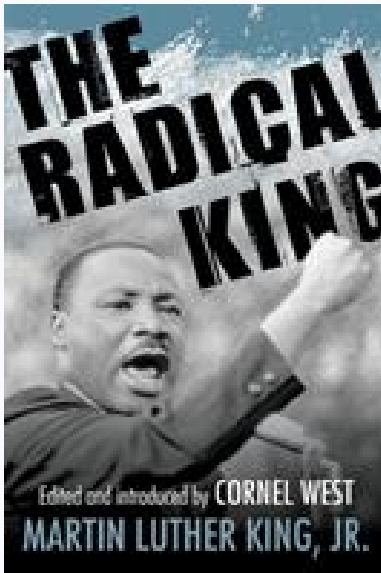
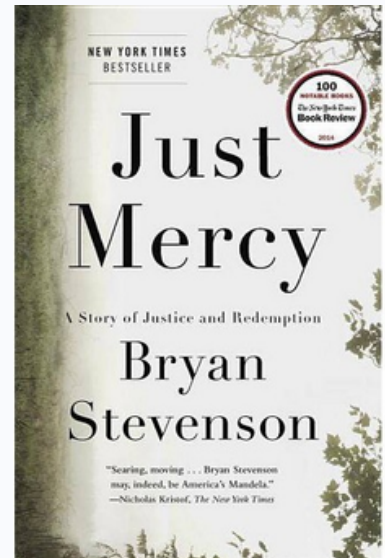
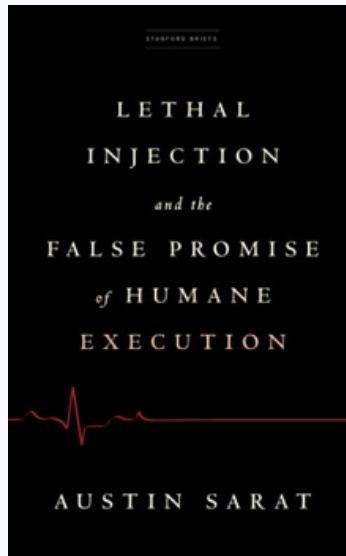
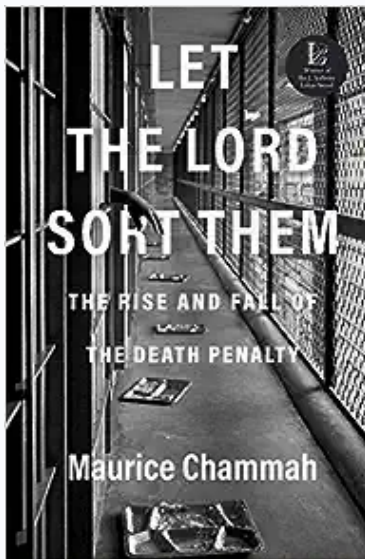
**4. Promote Healing:**

flocc recognizes the profound trauma inflicted by the death penalty on both victims' families and those involved in the system. The coalition will work toward healing, reconciliation and restoration.

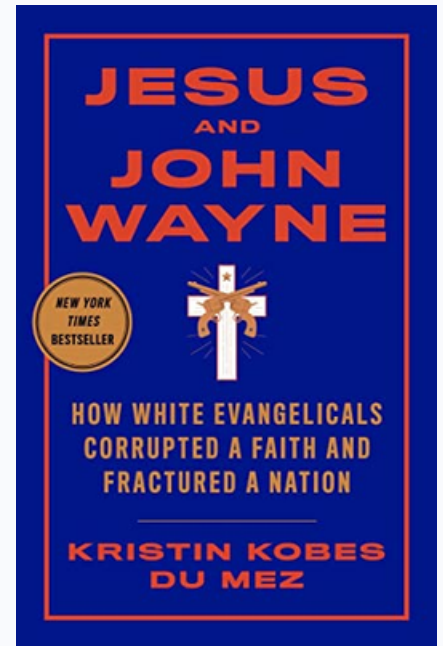
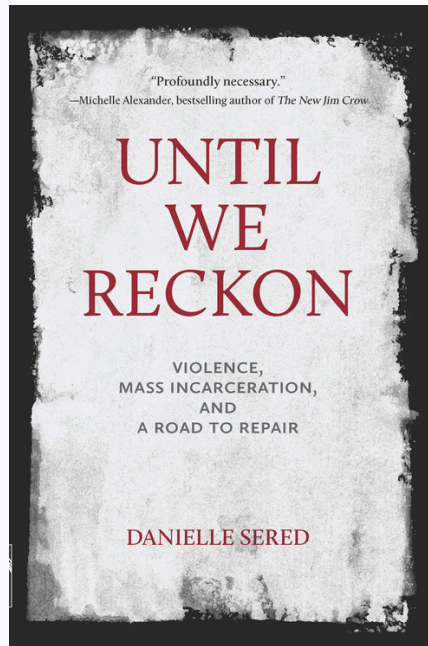
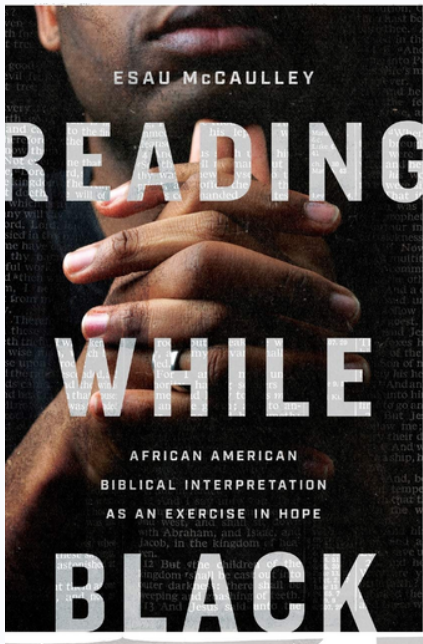
# System Disruption & the Church



# floc recommended reading



# flocc recommended reading



## partner recommended resources

### EJUSA EVANGELICAL NETWORK

- **Right Here, Right Now:** Life Stories from America's Death Row, Question Guide for Churches
- **Death Penalty Sundays** – The EJUSA Evangelical Network has developed packets of materials designed for churches interested in hosting events, services, or speakers related to faithfully reflecting on the death penalty. These can be for churches in any state, but includes state-specific materials for [Alabama](#) and [Oklahoma](#).



# flocc circles

*flocc state circles include 3 or more people involved in flocc national who meet and make decisions about anti-death penalty abolition actions supporting state advocates working on various bills, cases, and/or campaigns.*



# flocc partners

*flocc state/national partners have collaborated with flocc on state and federal campaigns.*



**Floridians for  
Alternatives to  
the Death Penalty**



**PNBC**

Georgians For Alternatives  
to the Death Penalty



**Conservatives  
Concerned**

**About the  
Death Penalty**



**ATLANTA  
JCRC**  
JEWISH COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS COUNCIL



**FROM NOOSE TO NEEDLE**  
THE RACIST HISTORY OF THE DEATH PENALTY

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**





# flocc's 8 problems with the American Death Penalty System;

- **The death penalty is not a deterrent to violent crime** – people often offend unconscious of the death penalty as a punishment for their crimes. Some states that still have the death penalty still have high violent crime rates
- **The death penalty is arbitrarily applied to people** because of their race, the race of their victim, the skill of their attorney, their county, and/or their economic status.
- **Since 1973, at least 190 people have been exonerated from death row in the U.S.**, according to the Death Penalty Information Center (DPIC). A 2014 study estimated that at least 4% of those sentenced to death are innocent.
- **Race plays an outsized role in capital cases in the South** – some Black people who were given death sentences were sentenced as a result of prosecutorial misconduct and/or Jim Crow juries
- **The torturous execution methods and the cocktail of drugs used for lethal injection are sometimes obtained illegally by states** – Big Pharma does not want to be associated with lethal injection, therefore Mom and Pop pharmacies are often the suppliers, Methods violate the 8th Amendment)
- **The death penalty contradicts the application of grace and mercy** in major religious denominations in America. Also, the death penalty challenges moral "pro-life" arguments and redemption tenets.
- **States are still executing people with intellectual disabilities after the ruling of Atkins v. Virginia** where the Supreme Court, in a 6–3 decision, ruled that executions of intellectually disabled incarcerated persons are "cruel and unusual punishments" prohibited by the Eighth Amendment.
- **The Death Penalty is fiscally irresponsible**– a 2022 study revealed that Louisiana spent more than 7.7 million dollars to sustain its death row, even though there hasn't been an execution in over 13 years. Fiscal responsibility remains a strong argument for how states could apply these resources to better social/community services.

# Social Media Guide

## Hashtags

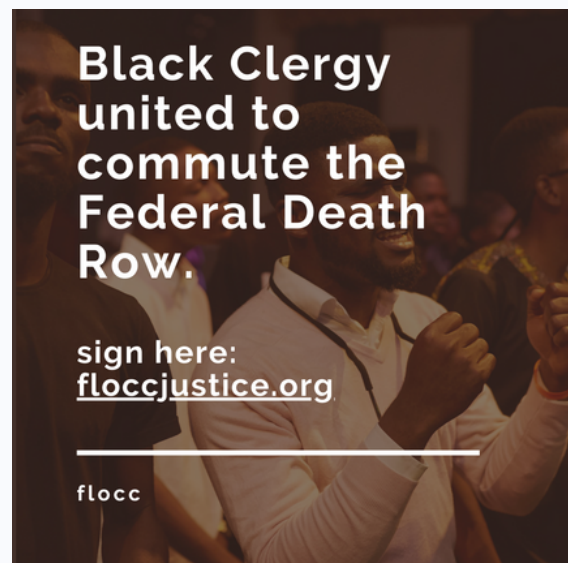
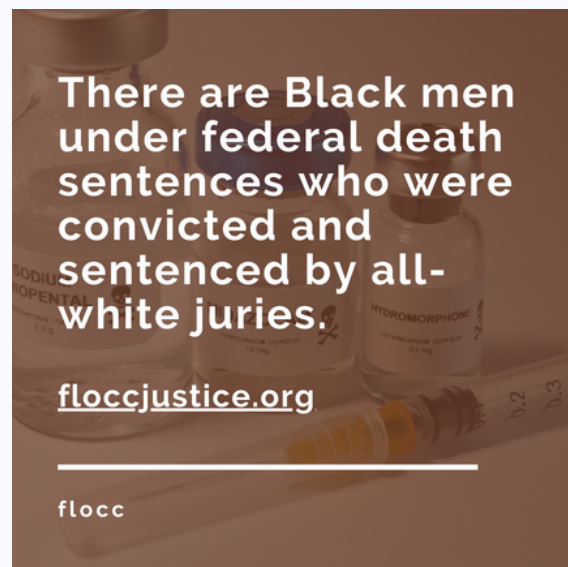
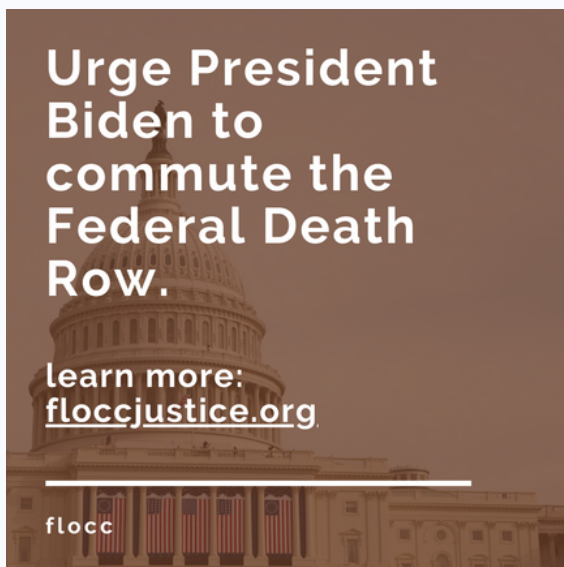
#flocjustice #BlackClergyUnitedtoCommuteTheRow #floc

Join me and other black clergy in the fight to end the racist  
#AmericanDeathPenaltySystem, go to [flocjustice.org](https://flocjustice.org)

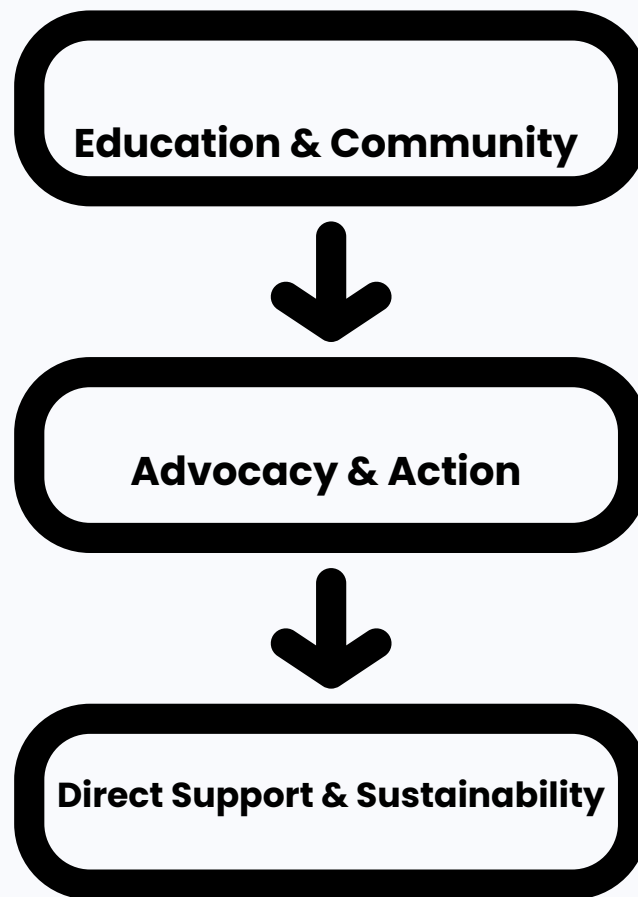
Today, 57% of those under a federal death sentence are people of color, and 40% are Black. There are Black men under federal death sentences who were convicted by all-white juries. Click Here to add your name as Black Clergy United: <https://forms.gle/xXpJMoWXthcxnPqJ8>

If you have questions about the American Capital Punishment System, follow @flocjustice

## Images



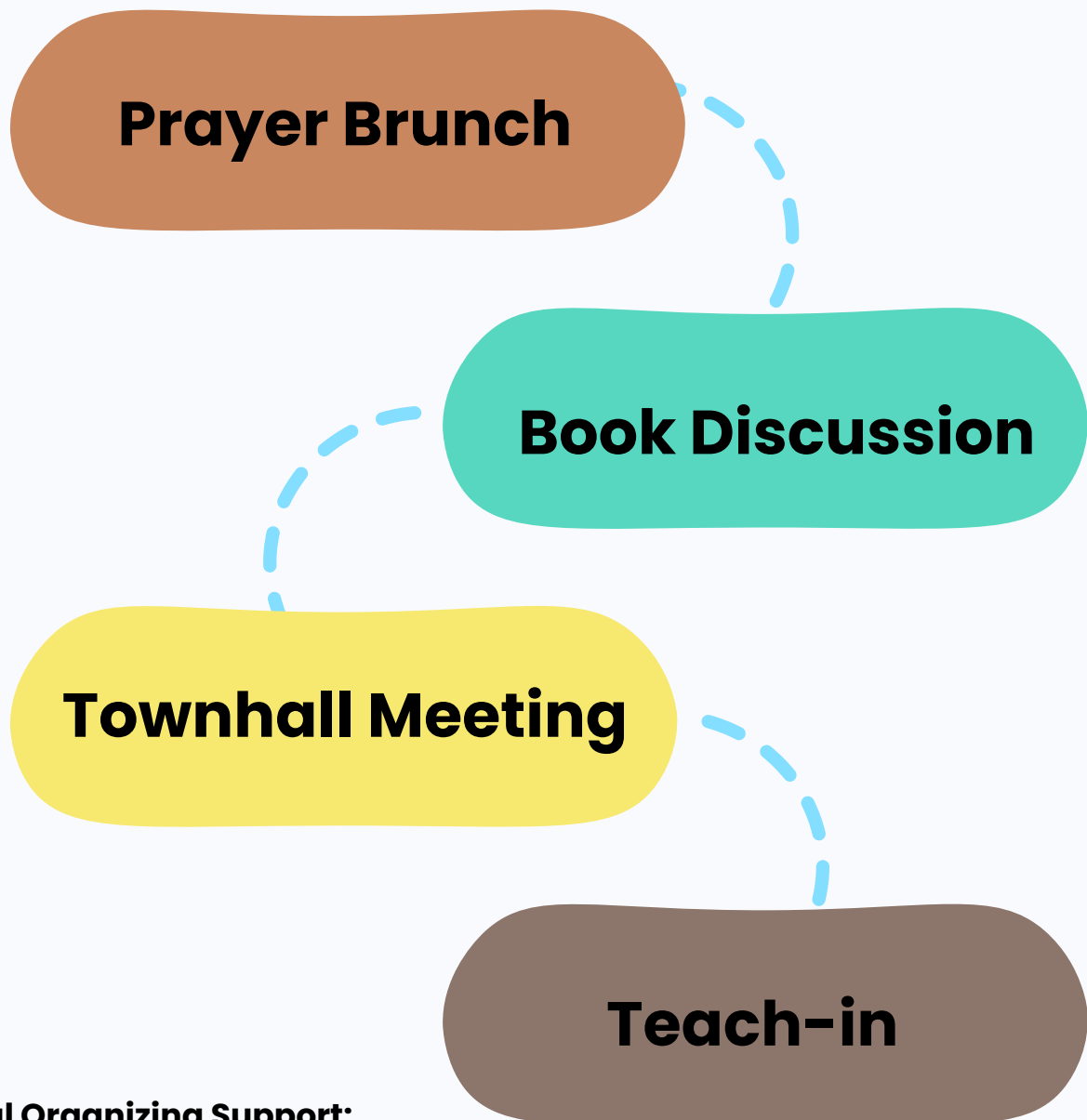
# flocc theory of change



In order to influence and affect change toward ending the American Death Penalty System on a state and federal level we believe that Black & Indigenous clergy must be included in conversations, coalitions, decisions and actions directly related to its end. We believe flocc circles will be the catalyst to raising visibility on the abolition of the American Death Penalty System.

flocc circles will directly and intentionally engage Black & Indigenous clergy and communities through education, advocacy, and actions related to ending the death penalty. flocc circles are led by 2-3 circle leaders and sustained through remaining flocc partners. In order to build a flocc circle, states must have 5-10 engaged partners. flocc circles usually meet 1x a month or every other month. flocc national supports all flocc circles.

# flocc engagement start-up activities



## **Additional Organizing Support:**

- Find out who your state representatives are
- Find out who your state senators are
- Find out who your District Attorney is
- Find out who your Attorney General is
- Court Watch in your General Sessions and Criminal Courts
- Become a Pen Pal with someone on death row

# flocc leadership



Joia Erin Thornton  
**National Director**

Joia is a Policy Strategist/Analyst, Writer, and Storyteller. She has a unique hometown experience growing up in Memphis, Tennessee, and New Orleans, Louisiana; two cities that have wrestled with class, race, economic, and overall systemic challenges. Joia formed the Faith Leaders of Color Coalition (flocc) to honor the work of Black and Indigenous faith leaders who have contributed to civil/human rights movements throughout history. Joia uses the framework of faith, race, and historical accounts from the Southern diaspora to boldly confront America's relationship with the death penalty system.

[floccjustice.org](https://floccjustice.org)  
[faithleadersofcolor@gmail.com](mailto:faithleadersofcolor@gmail.com)  
IG: @floccjustice  
Twitter: @floccjustice  
FB: The Faith Leaders of Color Coalition



page left intentionally blank