

TOOL KIT

flocc

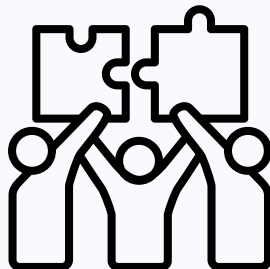
faith|policy|vision

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

culture

Black-founded and female-led, our organization is rooted in the legacy of Black faith leaders whose moral courage transformed the civic and human rights landscape. We are led by the work of Ida B. Wells, Mary McCloud Bethune, Mary Church Terrell, bell hooks, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Septima Clark, and countless other movement builders who understood that Southern movement work required community leaders, clear/strong vision and cultural enrichment. Our mission is grounded in justice, compassion, and liberation.

Our workplace culture is collaborative, self-motivated, creative, and deeply inclusive. We value innovation, shared leadership, and deep imagination. FLOCC regularly engages with partners across the legal and legislative sectors, creating a transformative environment where advocacy, policy, and faith-rooted organizing intersect.



flocc

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 justice 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 2000s.

-

flocc is not:

a C4 organization

a Political Organization

a Church

a For Profit Organization

a Law Firm

flocc

Core Values

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

flocc will work to eliminate the capital punishment system, addressing racial discrimination, intellectual disability, wrongful convictions, felony murder, innocence claims and inhumane conditions on death row.

2. Empower Faith Leaders:

flocc will empower Black and Indigenous clergy to advocate for an end to state-sanctioned death in their communities and on a federal level.

3. Cast Vision:

The coalition aims to educate the public about the injustices and uneven applications of death sentences when race, economic status, ability and other antecedents are involved.

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

If you would like a more extensive presentation, please contact us at the information below.



Slave Rebellions & People of Faith

1600s-1800s



Anti-Lynching Campaigns and Protests

1600s-1900s



The Civil Rights Movement and the Jim Crow South

1900s-1970s



The War on the Black Church & War on Drugs & Poverty

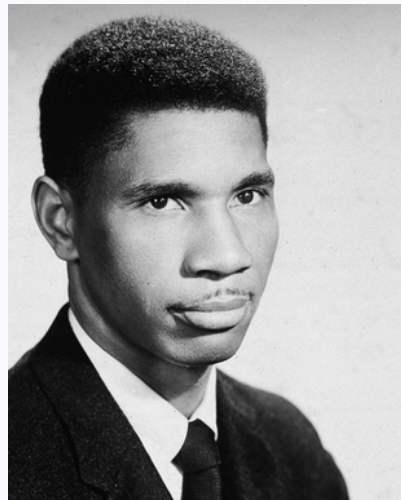
1980s-2000s



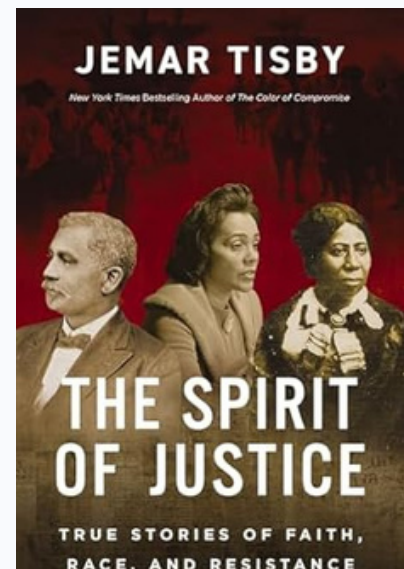
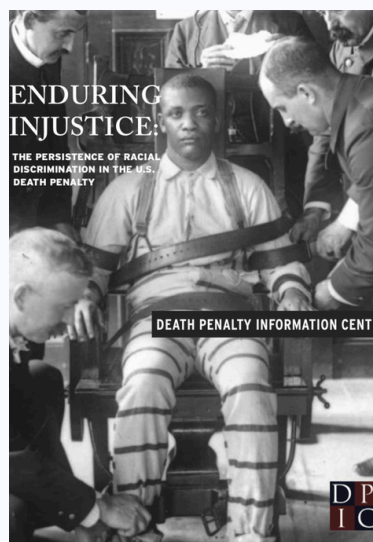
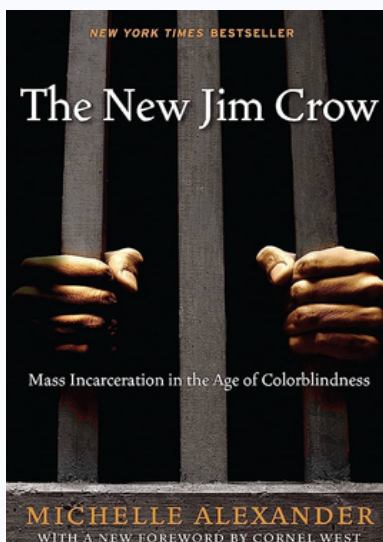
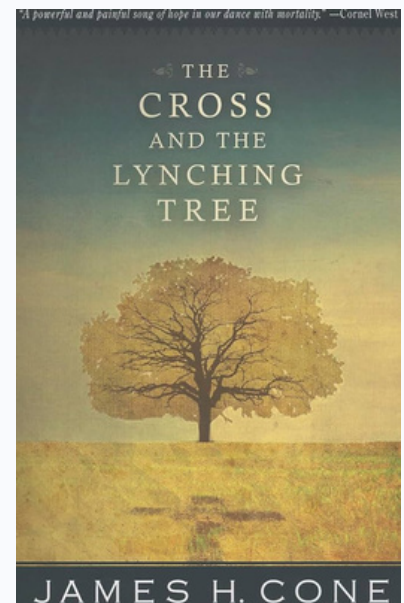
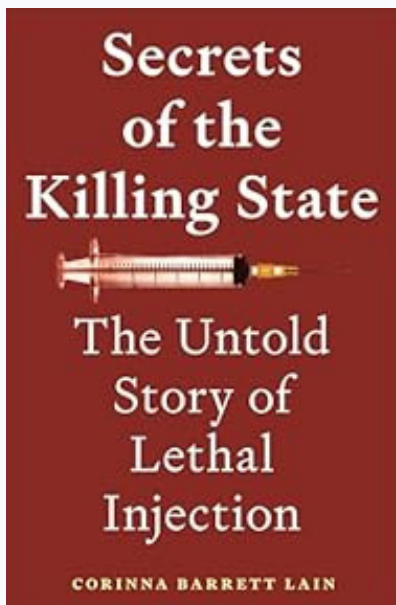
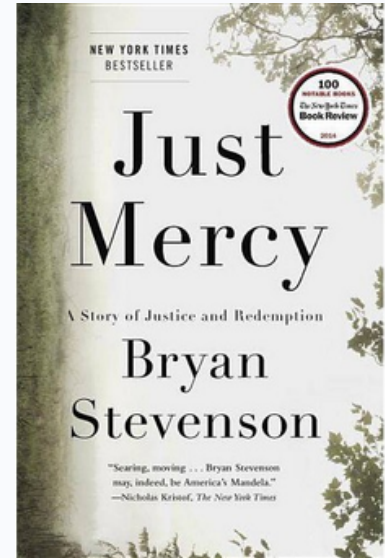
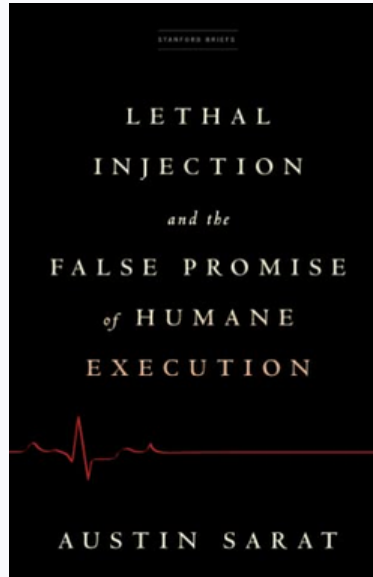
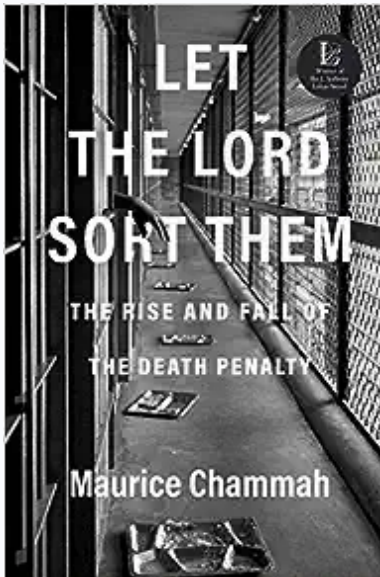
The American Capital Punishment System & Racial Equity

2000s-2020s

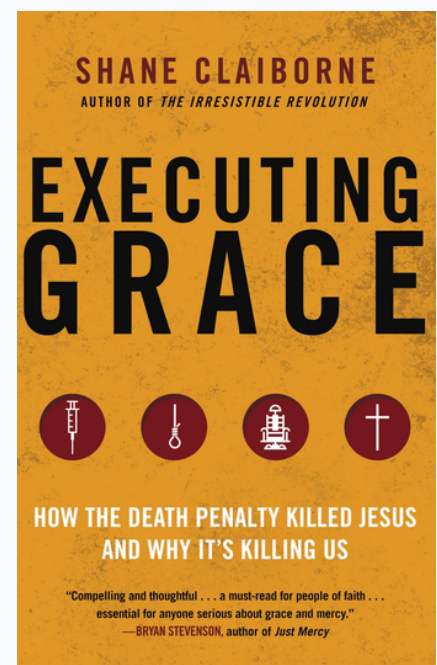
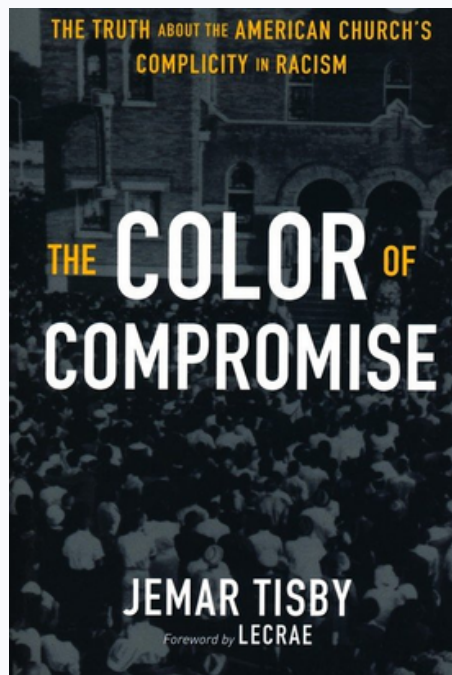
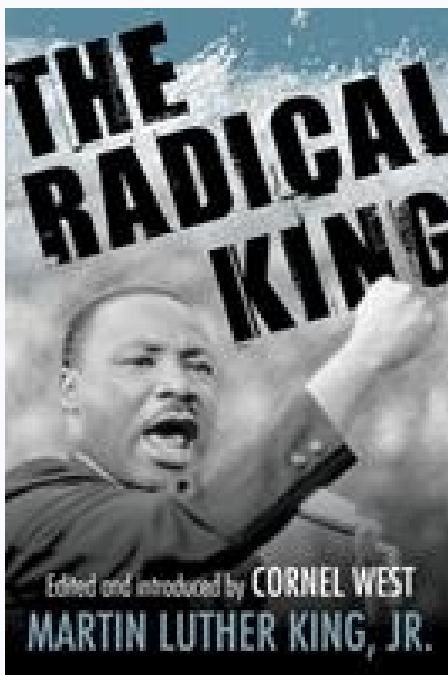
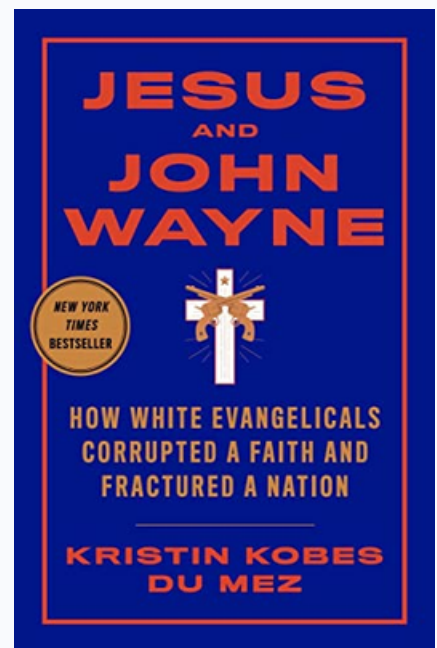
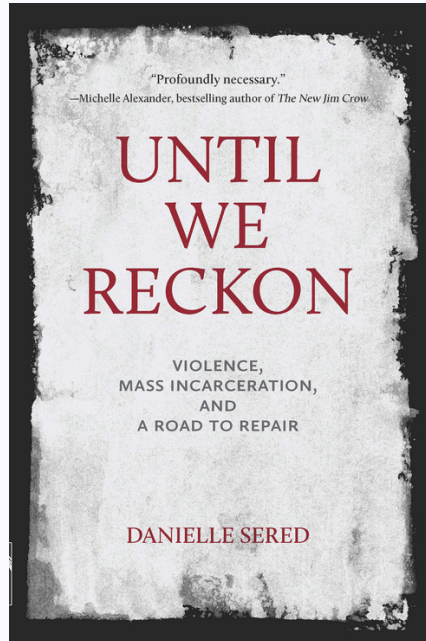
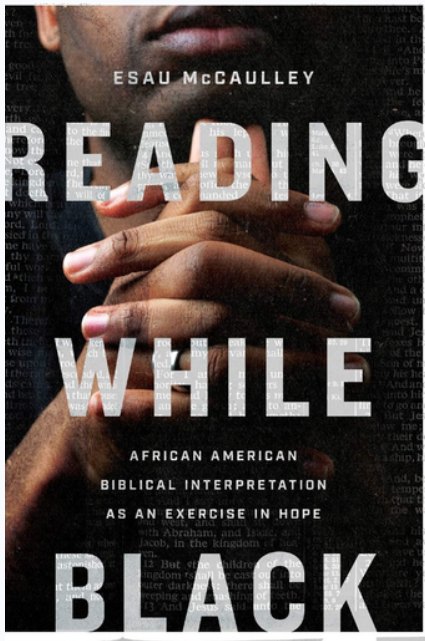
A few of our Ancestral Guides



floc recommended reading

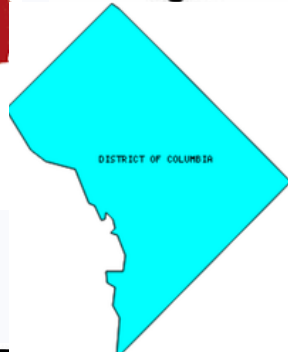
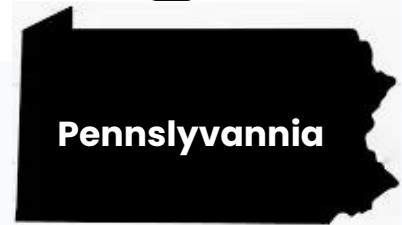


floc recommended reading



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. If your state is not represented, contact us.



flocc partners

flocc state/national partners have collaborated with flocc on state and federal campaigns. If you would like to be a partner email us: joia@floccjustice.org



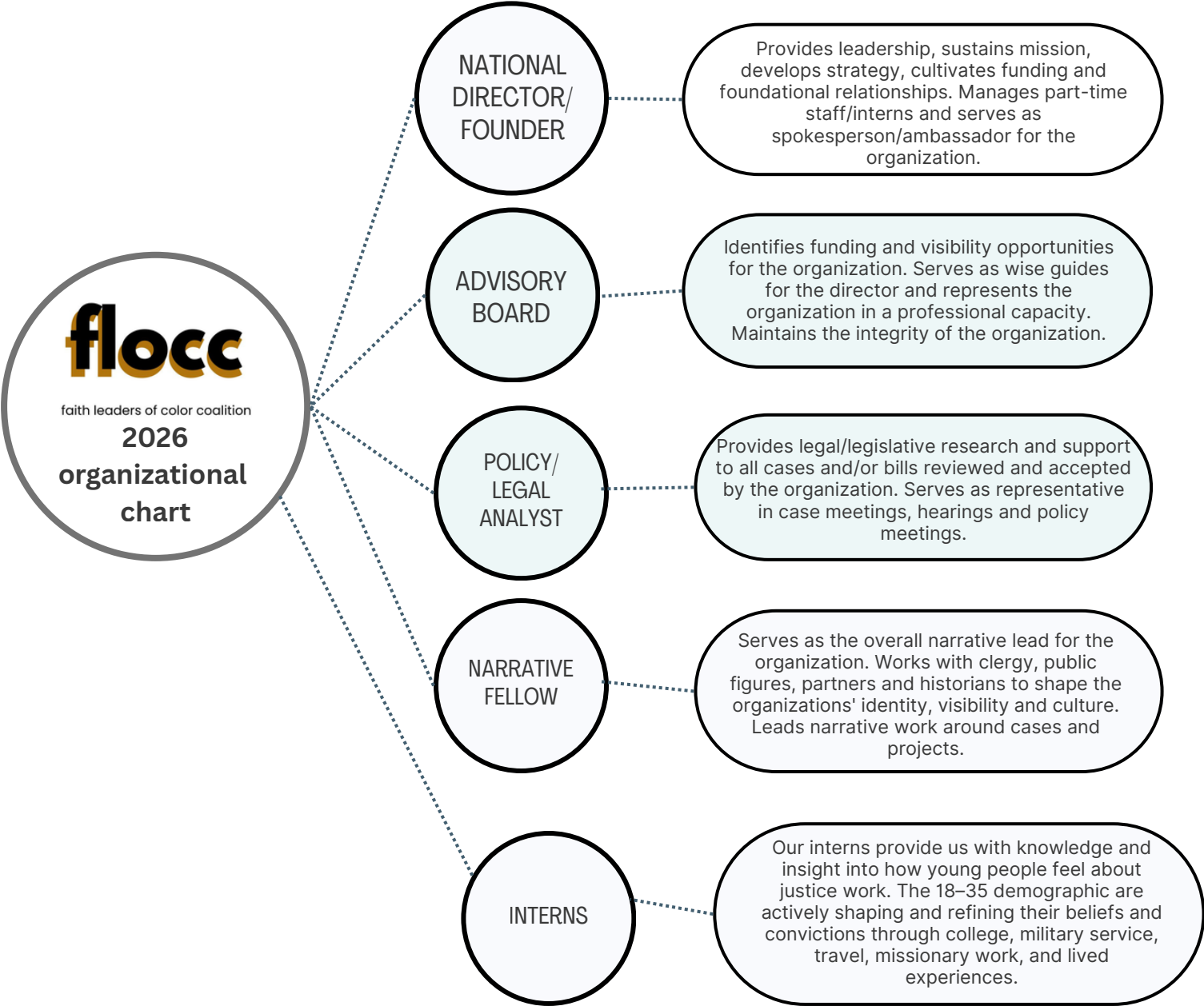
Georgians For Alternatives to the Death Penalty



flocc's 8 problems with the American Death Penalty

- **Deterrence Issues** – people often offend unconscious of the death penalty as a punishment for their crimes. States that have the death penalty still have high violent crime rates. Additionally, many countries that do not have the death penalty have low crime rates. The death penalty is not an effective deterrent.
- **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. Death Sentences are not a one size fits all punishment for murder.
- **Since 1976, over 200 people have been exonerated from death row**, according to the Death Penalty Information Center (DPIC). This means 1 exoneration for every 45.9 people sentenced to death or 2.2% of the people sentenced to death. Including pre-Furman cases with post-Furman exonerations, there has been 1 exoneration for every 8.2 executions.
- **Race plays an outsized role in capital cases** – There are a few cases of Black individuals who were given death sentences that were sentenced as a result of prosecutorial misconduct, hidden DNA-related evidence, and/or “bleached juries”. Racial discrimination is almost always included in every phase of a capital case.
- **Torturous execution methods are highly controversial**– 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. There are other methods of execution in question in other states. Botched Executions also lead to states to moratoriums, reprieves and other deeper studies.
- **The death penalty contradicts the application of grace and mercy** in many major religious denominations in America. The death penalty challenges moral “pro-life” arguments and redemption tenets. More religious communities are challenging the idea of the death penalty as a human rights issue.
- **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. More states are challenging the execution of those with intellectual disabilities through policies and legal proceedings.
- **The Death Penalty is fiscally irresponsible**– many studies have shown that the death penalty is more expensive than life in prison without parole. The high costs come from lengthy trials, mandatory appeals, and the need for maximum security death row facilities. These expenses often outweigh the cost of keeping a prisoner incarcerated for life. There are some states that abolished the death penalty solely based on cost.

flocc's organizational structure



flocc's ecosystem



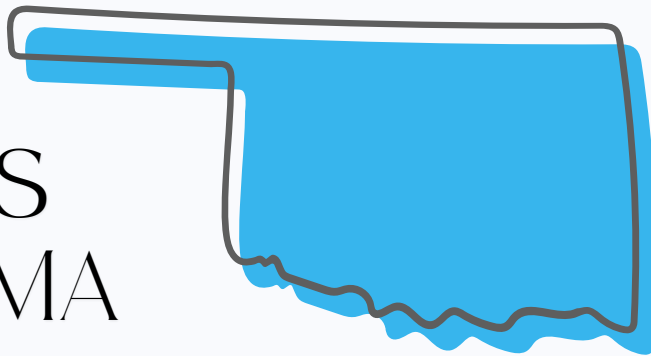
STATES THAT NEED YOUR SUPPORT



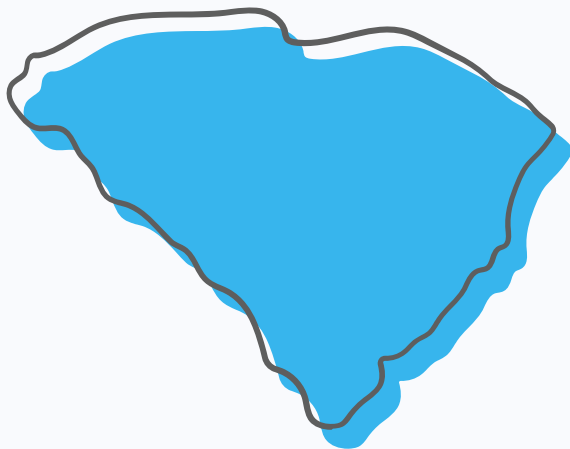
STOP
EXECUTIONS
IN LOUISIANA

[click here](#)

STOP
EXECUTIONS
IN OKLAHOMA



[click here](#)



STOP
EXECUTIONS IN
SOUTH
CAROLINA

[click here](#)

Press

More voices in Oklahoma and across the nation plead for Governor Stitt to grant clemency to death row prisoner Tremane Wood

By Patrick B. McGuigan, Editor Emeritus
Nov 11, 2025 Updated Nov 11, 2025



Oklahoma death row prisoner Tremane Wood faces execution on Thursday, unless Governor Kevin Stitt agrees with the state Pardon & Parole Board's clemency recommendation.

Photo credit: Oklahoma Department of Corrections Photo of Tremane Wood.



In the past few weeks, Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond has [leveled allegations](#) of criminal wrongdoing against Tremane behind his lawyer denying them access to critical evidence that would support defending Tremane against those allegations. This all fits into a larger distraction from the injustice of the death sentence, which even

Faith leaders rally to stop death row inmate Tremane Wood's execution after meeting with Gov. Stitt

After Executing an Intellectually Disabled Man, Georgia Rewrote Its Death Penalty Law

Since 1988, not a single defendant had proven they were intellectually disabled. A judge will now make the determination during pretrial hearings.

By Madeline Thigpen
May 14, 2025



huffpost.com

HUFFPOST SUPPORT US Log In

The People Who Helped Save 2 Men From Execution

"God has used them before. God can use them again," Julius Jones' spiritual adviser said ahead of Tremane Wood's scheduled execution.

By Jessica Schulberg
Dec 14, 2025, 08:00 AM EST
Updated 2 hours ago

18 COMMENTS

gathered Tuesday to urge Stitt to grant clemency to death row inmate Tremane Wood ahead of his scheduled execution.



10 PM CST Nov 11, 2025
Editorial Standards

Anchor
Faith leaders gathered to urge Gov. Kevin Stitt to grant clemency to death row inmate Tremane Wood ahead of his scheduled execution.



Anti-death penalty and disability advocates have criticized how Georgia handled intellectual disability in death penalty cases, because defendants had to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that they were intellectually disabled, one of the highest standards of proof required in criminal law. (Getty Images)

Less than 2 days before scheduled execution, advocates ask Gov. Stitt to grant Tremane Wood clemency

Advocates are urging Gov. Stitt to grant clemency to Tremane Wood, citing doubts about his guilt and inadequate legal representation during his trial.



Updated: 6:10 PM CST Nov 11, 2025

Editorial Standards



Evan Onstot Anchor

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board recently voted 3-2 to recommend clemency for death row inmate Tremane Wood, urging Gov. Kevin Stitt to spare his life before his execution Thursday.



Similarly, in Tremane's case, the community that rose up around him was really a function of some really incredible advocates and community leaders, including Brett Farley at the Catholic Conference of Oklahoma, Demetrius Minor at Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty, Joia Thornton, the director of the Faith Leaders of Color Coalition, Mrs. Cindy Birdwell, Tremane's sixth-grade teacher. It was just a really wonderful process through which we learned a lot from those community leaders and advocates about what they believed the public and Oklahoma decision-makers needed to know in order to make the right and just and fair decision in his case.

WORD & WAY

Search Here

DECEMBER 5, 2025 /
AUTHOR: ADELLE M. BANKS, RNS

Faith Groups Join Other Death Penalty Opponents in New Campaign

(RNS) — More than 50 faith, civil rights, and other organizations launched a joint initiative to oppose the death penalty in the United States as the groups' leaders say they have been alarmed by increases in its use over the past year.

Laura Porter, executive director of the new initiative, the U.S. Campaign to End the Death Penalty, announced the initiative to media in a virtual event on Wednesday (Dec. 3).

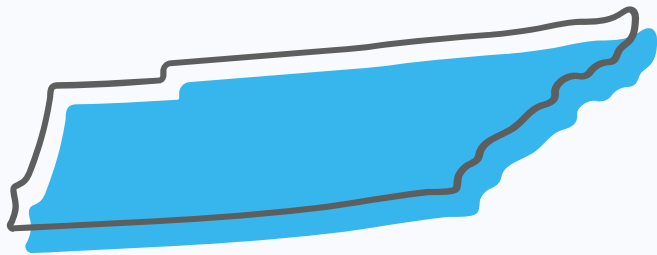
STATES THAT NEED YOUR SUPPORT



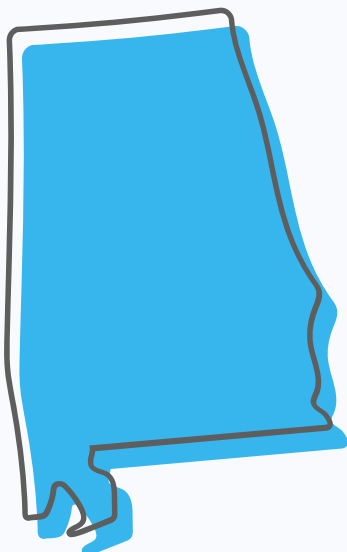
STOP
EXECUTIONS
IN TEXAS

[click here](#)

STOP
EXECUTIONS
IN TENNESSEE



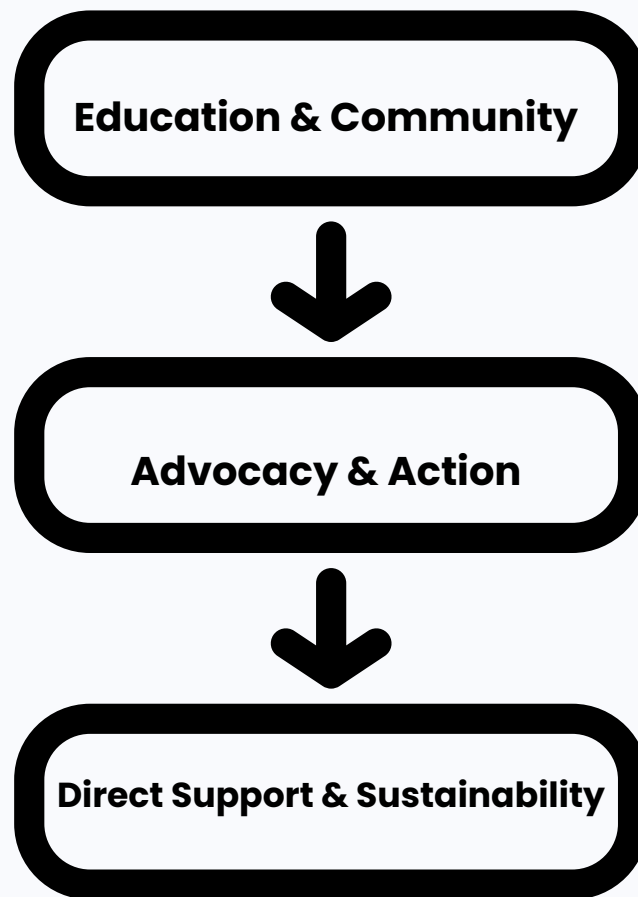
[click here](#)



STOP
EXECUTIONS IN
SOUTH
ALABAMA

[click here](#)

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 3-5 engaged partners. flocc circles usually meet 1x a month or every other month. flocc national supports all flocc circles.

flocc engagement start-up activities

**Policy & Prayer
Brunch**

Book Discussions

Storytelling Events

One on Ones

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

Founder & National Director

Joia Erin Thornton is a human rights advocate, lobbyist, and writer. Ms. Thornton has a unique hometown experience growing up in Memphis, Tennessee, and New Orleans, Louisiana- two cities on the Mississippi River with deep histories of class hierarchy, racial tension, and overall systemic challenges. Joia created the Faith Leaders of Color Coalition (flocc) to honor the work of Black & Indigenous faith leaders who have contributed to civil/ human rights movements throughout American history. Joia uses the framework of faith, humanity and race to boldly confront America's relationship with state-sanctioned death. Joia believes her abolition work mirrors that of female vanguards like Ida B. Wells, Mary Church Terrell and Diane Nash- women who led with strength and grace.

floccjustice.org

faithleadersofcolor@gmail.com

IG: @floccjustice

Twitter: @floccjustice

YT: floccjustice

FB: The Faith Leaders of Color Coalition

page left intentionally blank