

Hello, to all of you who are gathered here on tonight. Let's thank one more time, our spoken word artists.

[Audience applauding.]

I want to ask before I say anything else if there's any way for the light people – I'm an old Southern preacher, and there's a lot of shadows in here, and I like to see people. So if there's any way of bringing some of the house lights up, it would be extraordinarily helpful for my eyes that have begun to get older, and I will not buy glasses because I'm too vain but some of you all know. So let's bring them up some now.

I am so thankful to be here today, Brother Johnson, and thankful that all of us have a great role in working on the heart of America and the heart of the world. I am joined today by Ms. Charmaine Fletcher who is an Executive Assistant.

We've just come off of a 22-state moral revival tour that concluded just a few days before the election with Sister Simone, Dr. James Forbes and Tracy Blackman. Quakers, Universalists, Muslims, Jews and indigenous persons; so many and activists, because I am fully convinced that we must recover the moral center in this country, and I am more convinced of it now after Tuesday than ever.

Tonight, and I want to thank Sister Johnson for sharing your children with us. I have this strange way of judging people. Maybe preachers shouldn't judge but if people who are doing work and are standing strong are willing to bring their children – my father always brought my family with him, and wherever he would be somewhere, whether it was the White House or the Congress, or some church event, and they would say Len, well you know, we don't have children.

If he was the keynote speaker, he would walk out because he would say if what you're doing is not for the children, then really what are you doing? So I'm so thankful, Sister Henderson, my home girl is here today.

The voice you heard is Ms. Yara Allen. That song was written as a part of the revival. She is a theomusicologist, is walking in the lineage of Bernice Regan. So tonight, I want to simply talk about in this moment.

I want to be honest with you. I'm musing, I'm thinking out loud, part speech, part lecture. If I close my eyes at some point, it's because I'm wrestling too. I'm wrestling too with where we are and I know that there are some professors here who have made some of your students wrestle. Any professors here? Some of you have probably made some of your students pray as well, and a lot of different things you've made your students do, but these are serious moments.

Why we can't wait. I thought about that the other day. I went back and picked that book up in this moment on Tuesday night. When King wrote that book and wrote those words

he was looking at the historic denial exploitation and humiliation of the negro and poor whites down through the centuries, and he said 1966-67, some form of payment needed to be made. 50 years ago, Dr. King proposed that America launch a broad-base, gigantic bill of rights for the disadvantaged and a Marshall Plan for the poor and the hurting.

He was talking about stimulus before stimulus became popular. He said if we were willing to rebuild Europe after World War II then America should be willing to rebuild Appalachia where poor whites were, the inner cities of Detroit and Chicago, and the Deltas of Mississippi and Alabama.

In fact, some people misread Dr. King and think that he only started talking about economics after the Voting Rights Act. Actually, in a sermon entitled Paul's letter to American Christians that he preached in the pulpit of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church during the Montgomery bus boycott.

Dr. King, not Occupy, talked about how the 99 percent were being overrun by the one percent. He said in that book, *Why Can't We Wait*, while negroes form the vast majority of America's disadvantaged there are millions of poor whites who would also benefit from this kind of massive bottom-up stimulus.

He said the moral justification for the special measures for the negro is rooted in the robberies of the institution of slavery, but he hastened to say, many poor whites were the derivatives of the victims of slavery. As long as labor was cheapened by involuntary servitude of the black man, the freedom of white labor, especially in the South was little more than a myth.

And many people, if they would understand what King said then, they would understand how the fight against immigration reform is really a fight against higher wages, because as long as you can keep one group of people in almost a permanent place of wage disparity, you can spread that out through the rest of the nation.

King went on to say we must develop a Federal program of public works. He knew that the government was a major part in creating property and disadvantage, and the government could not suddenly back away.

He said we must retain jobs for all so that white or black will have cause, no cause to feel threatened. He said at the present time, this is in the '60s now, at the present time, thousands of jobs a week are being lost; what we need is a bottom-up approach, not a banker now approach.

Dr. King understood that saving communities should be first over saving corporations, that we should not treat corporation like people and people like things.

If we had only listened to our prophet and not shot him through the neck on a balcony in Memphis then in many ways we might not be in the trouble we're in even now. He understood that Wall Street can't drive a just society and capitalism can't be driven crazy

by greed. If you ignore the poor, if you ignore those on the bottom, then eventually there will be an implosion.

I remember when the Great Recession first began to hit and it began to move throughout the country 2007, 2008, and one of the big challenges of during that time was that people were saying oh, we're in the middle of a great recession.

Well the fact of the matter is what really happened was a solid depression caught up with us. A political economist, I don't know if they happened to be in this room, from the University of Maryland said what we're really beginning to experience, in an article called *America Beyond Capitalism*, is the process of slow decay, punctuated by a recurring economic crisis.

One in which reforms achieve sporadic gains but the long-term trends of growing inequality, economic dislocation, failing democratic accountability, deepening poverty, ecological degradation, greater invasions of liberty and growing imprisonment especially of minorities continues to slowly and quietly challenge the belief in the capacities and moral integrity of the overall system and its governing elites.

I was in a course at MIT for a couple of summers during a fellowship and I met Otto Scharmer, and what was interesting when he came in our class one day, he said something and I asked him, I said now I didn't expect to hear theology at MIT. Of all the things, I didn't expect to hear theology at MIT.

So I asked him, I said you ever been to theological school? He said no. I said well, you know you sound like the prophets of the Old Testament. He said what do you mean? I said this quote. He said there is a blind spot in American economic theory. It's called consciousness.

Our refusal to have an economic theory that looks and sees that we are all integrated and we all really need each other. Instead, one of the great violent things we do in this culture is that of we engage in attention violence against the poor; both parties and many people.

The question becomes how can the nation's wealth ultimately be shifted institutionally to benefit the vast majority of people? Because we cannot live in isolation. Went on to say for years we were taught that what was good for Wall Street was good for your street and our street, but that no longer holds true. We can't live in isolation.

As Dr. King said in that book, why can't we wait? He then wrote a sermon called we're all in the same boat now. Martin Luther King 50 years ago said when you ignore the poor, the whole system will collapse.

But going back to the recession, before CNN and MSNBC and the cable networks announced there was a problem, there was a problem before there was a problem announced.

They didn't really start announcing the problem until it hit Wall Street but it had been on back street and back roads for a long time, ever since we ended the shortest war we've ever fought, which was the war on poverty.

In 2008, when CNN and all the networks were talking about the crisis, the crisis, the crisis, the crisis; for instance, in North Carolina the poverty rate was already 14.8 percent before the crisis. The poverty rate for whites was nine percent. For African-Americans it was 20 percent. For Latinos, it was seven percent. There was a silent depression that the media didn't report until Wall Street had a crisis.

There were 40 million poor people without healthcare before the crisis. There were 50 to 100 million people who were underinsured before the so-called recession. There was nine to 10 percent of, in some places unemployment in the nation, particularly on the African-Americans, some almost 20 percent in some places with African-Americans, before the crisis ever became public.

We talk sometimes and we say well, unemployment is at five percent. You know what five percent of 355 million is? And even if you don't use the growth, that the total number, five percent of adults in this country.

We know that 52 percent of African-Americans who qualified for stable, low rate loans were illegally steered to predatory subprime loans before the Great Recession, and in the final day, eight years – days of eight years of Bush, the system imploded; all of the trickle-down economics, all of that, and it imploded, and so we had this Great Recession that we're yet wrestling with, but it was built on top of a great, a silent silent depression.

So the first thing I did, as I think through this moment in this moment, number one, we must recognize that economic justice is a moral issue, a moral issue. It's not, well you talk about the moral thing, preacher and we're gonna talk about the economics.

It was never intended that way. In all of the greatest scriptures, it was never intended that way. As far back as the Tora with the Jews reading Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy says caring for the stranger and be just to the poor must be the hallmark of a nation.

The Psalmist said relieving the poor and the oppressed is a moral value we need in the public square. Every prophet, every prophet of the Old Testament: Jeremiah, Malachi, Ezekiel always began their criticism of Israel, their criticism of the nation with a critique of systems of poverty.

Jeremiah says taking care of children and the vulnerable and the innocent must be the call of leaders and their society, and in fact Jeremiah 22 says do not send the king an email. I'm paraphrasing but that's in essence what it says.

Back then it would have said do not send the king a messenger. Do not send the king a runner, do not send the king a smoke signal. It says go to the palace and tell the king do not hurt the poor and the widows; otherwise, this palace will become rubble.

Isaiah 10 says this, woe unto those who legislate evil and rob the poor of their rights, and make women their prey. Isaiah 58 says secure the rights of the poor; in fact, Isaiah 58, there's a scripture that actually says that the prophets and moral leaders are supposed to cry aloud and spare not, particularly around economic injustice, and we're supposed to call for the loosing of the bands of wickedness.

I came by to tell all you economists that you're all supposed to be prophets as well, that you're supposed to be right beside me in the pulpit. If you don't do anything but hand me a footnote, so I can holler right, because the Bible says loose the bands of wickedness.

You know what that means in Hebrew, loose the bands of wickedness? In Hebrew it means pay people what they deserve. Pay a living wage, because if you don't, it's not merely considered conservative ideology. In the Bible if you do not pay people a living wage it is called wicked. Wickedness.

Ezekiel says refuse to get dishonest gain, refuse to be, to give status to economic predators. In fact, in Ezekiel 22, Ezekiel describes, he says whenever the preachers and the politicians stand on the side of greed and hurt toward the least of these in the poor, whenever the morally preachers and the policy people come together to engage in bad policy that hurts the poor, Ezekiel describes them as acting like rabies-infested wolves. You wanna talk about non-politically correct language?

And Jesus, you know, that brown-skinned, Palestinian Jew that I follow that was profiled by the state never charged the leper or sick person a co-pay, always gave free healthcare, that was eventually killed by the state?

His first sermon, he said the spirit of the Lord is upon me for he hath anointed me to preach good news to the poor, and the word poor in Greek is patokos. There are three other words for poor. One has to do with somebody being lazy. The other one has to be with somebody suddenly becoming poor because they are suddenly sick.

But the other, the word patokos means people who have been made poor by economic systems of exploitation, by stratification that existed in the Roman Empire, where the one percent demanded that all the rules operate in their favor, while the 99 percent suffered.

And it was those people that when Jesus preached his sermon, first sermon, he said at the center of the attention of God, and better be the center of the attention of your community and your nation, if you plan that nation to survive the judgment of God.

In fact, our Constitution doesn't even really allow us to have unjust capitalism, because the first principal of the Constitution is not freedom or laissez-faire. The first principal of the Constitution is the establishment for justice, which means any economic system or policy that is creating injustice and pain and hurt is unconstitutional. It's unconstitutional and if it's not moving us towards a more perfect union.

In fact, my pope, you know, I've got this Catholic pope now that I hang out with. That's my man, and he says Pope Francis – I don't know if you're supposed to say that about the pope, that's my man but anyway, Pope Francis says the times talk to us so much of poverty in the world, and this is a scandal. He says poverty in the world – I love the way he uses his language.

Poverty in the world is a scandal in a world where there's so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone. It is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children. Poverty today is a crime, and why do I start here with this moral argument?

But because, as a preacher I am deeply concerned and worried that America, that we have now this so-called with the microphone Evangelical Right Christian, so-called Right that's so wrong, and many people you think that that movement is about homosexuality and prayer in school and abortion. That's not where that movement began.

Read Kevin Cruse's book on the purchasing of the Christian pulpit called *One Nation Under God*, and Kevin Cruse traces the history of the so-called Evangelical Right which is, at best, a theological malpractice, at worse, heresy.

He traces it back to corporations being mad with Franklin Delano Roosevelt after the New Deal. They hated it. They hated the regulation. They hated the minimum wage requirement. They hated the union. They hated social security but they were so bad in the public sphere, their popularity was so bad, they couldn't carry the message.

They tried but public didn't hear them because you had another movement called the social gospel movement that had influenced Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt because his Labor Secretary, Francis Perkins, was a social gospeler, and she came to be Labor Secretary to bring morality into the public square, and said to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, you have to come out of this Great Depression with a New Deal and you have to start by dealing with poor people.

Now he had to make some concessions, for instance with social security, he couldn't guarantee it to everybody because a southern senator said we want to make sure that two groups, three groups cannot pay in: black people, brown people, and women, because they'll get out of hand.

So the deal was cut that you could pay into social security but you couldn't pay if you were in the agrarian culture or the domestic culture. That was farmers and domestic workers which left out most blacks, most browns and 50 percent of white women.

But the corporations, the National Chamber of Commerce, national manufacturers, some of the auto industry, yeah, I'm in Detroit; Sun Oil, they could not stand the New Deal. So they hired a guy who pastored a church out in California and they said – first of all they did a survey to find out who was the most popular in the American public and they found out at that time that preachers still carried a lot of sway.

So they put some serious money behind hiring a guy to train preachers how to preach a false form of Calvinism and it went like this; if you are good, you go to heaven, if you're bad, you go to hell. So if you're good and moral, you can pull yourself up by your own bootstraps and be wealthy. If you're bad, you can't do it, and any interference that helps people come up is a violation of the order of God.

And by 1940 they had 19,000 preachers in pulpits purchased. The roots, if you check it out, that's why what you saw in this election was what finally was exposed, that the so-called – I'm an Evangelical, that's why I'm so critical, that the so-called notion of Right, Radical Right Evangelicalism was exposed as not being about the deep moral concerns that the bible cares about, because the 2,000 scriptures in the bible, the most of anything speaks to how you treat the poor, how you treat the least of these, how you treat the hurting.

It's nothing about prayer in the schools and abortion and homosexuality, and the two or three scriptures that do talk about that are misinterpreted and none of them trump the scripture. You still have to love your neighbor as yourself and care for people and lift up the poor.

So in this election what you saw was the final pulling off of the cover when they – for money, [*singing: for the love of money*] Motown. For the love of money, these false prophets exposed but they're not really about a Christian justice ideology, but they're more committed to this heretical way of trying to use religion in the service of greed and the service of hate.

But it's not new. If you go through the Bible, all empires have false prophets. All systems of economic injustice have false prophets that attempt to find ways to consecrate economic injustice, and that is why one of the first things we have to do in this moment is recover the fact and stand on it, that economic justice is a moral issue.

And so I tell folk now when they want to call me on a different program, they say we want to call you on a program to talk about ways to end homosexuality. I say no, not comment. They said but you're a preacher. I said that's why I'm not commenting.

When you get – when you start talking about poverty and living wages, economic justice, then call me. Then when I as a preacher, I'll be dealing with it.

And those of you who are economists ought to start saying that it's where it's a moral issue. Don't be afraid of that word. Don't be afraid of it, but not only must we, in this moment understand this as a moral issue. We also must make sure it is a must issue, must. We must deal with it right now.

Richest nation on the earth, richest nation ever, we have more poor people that at any other moment in our country's history. Our poverty numbers as Mary Wright Elmer says, are shameful, shameful, 14.7 million poor children, and we know if we took two percent of the Federal government and put it in programs that actually worked, we could

immediately almost eradicate 60 percent of that.

Income inequality is documented is to be – is considered to be the highest in the advanced world. You're born poor, you're more likely to be poor, and the South where I'm from is the native home of American poverty.

Well, we have more poor people per capita and more political leaders that are utterly untroubled by it. 10 of the country's poorest 12 states are Southern. 95 of the 100 poorest counties are in so-called red states led by politicians who are the most ardent opponents of the very programs that would help the poor.

Those are strictly in his book about the cost and the price of inequality talks about and lifts that quote by Warren Buffet on how we're in a time where this is a must issue we have to deal with when the 400 wealthiest Americans took home an hourly wage of \$97,000 an hour and that was in 2009, while today we are locking people up who are simply fighting for \$15.

And you know what rising income equality breeds more inequality in educational opportunity, and in turn that means you have wasted human talent and a less educated work force, slower economic growth.

And then that study that came out of the mailman school of public health at Columbia that says more people die from poverty and low levels of education than die from heart attacks and strokes and lung cancer.

It's a must issue that we deal with here but this is also an issue that we must look at in terms of healthcare, because we have to understand all of this intersects. You cannot separate the fight for living wage, the fight for economic justice from healthcare, from public education. Think about where we are right now.

We lead the nation in the South and in our urban centers, of those without healthcare, and interestingly enough, of the 19 states that denied Medicaid expansion centers because they don't like a black man in the White House are the very states where you have the most people hurting.

In fact, it's interesting. In my state, I was outside one day, Brother Johnson and I used to walk with a walker because I couldn't walk for 12 years without it, and I was walking with my cane and this guy comes up to me and he's on a walker. I'm on a cane and he says I can't stand you. I said why, what did I do? He says you people think you all deserve stuff free, this healthcare.

And I said it looks like you need some healthcare and his response was insightful. He said I deserve it. Inside of that, he was talking about the deserving poor and the undeserving poor, and that whole racialized narrative.

And it's so deep that in my state, do you realize 300 – we have denied 500,000 people

from Medicaid expansion but 346,000 of them are white, but when the politicians talk about it in the public square, and the code words and the dog whistles they use, you would think that they are all black, brown, not working and lazy.

Now the truth of the matter is that eight million people that were left out or denial of Medicaid expansion because the 19 states that refused to expand, and the truth is more whites are being affected in total number, but disproportionately in terms of percentages, there are more blacks because in the states that denied Medicaid expansion, that's where six out of 10 black people live.

And you know who they're talking about. You know who they're talking about, construction workers and food service workers, and cleaning and maintenance jobs and transportation jobs, and personal care, and 16,000 are in healthcare.

And since this is Veteran's Day in North Carolina, 30,000 veterans would be receiving healthcare, if we'd have expanded Medicaid.

But there's one more statistic that is why this whole economic injustice issue is not only a moral issue but it's a must issue. We must deal with it. For every 500,000 people that were denied Medicaid expansion since 2013, according to a Harvard study, 2,840 died, not because God called upon them.

I've told you we've done this revival through 22 states. I was brought to almost uncontrollable tears in Birmingham when a mother who was a part of our revival testified to the nation about how her daughter died in her arms from blood clots that could have been treated, that she would have been able to get treatment for if Medicaid expansion had been expanded in Alabama.

That means more than 30,000 human beings, fellow Americans have died untimely deaths every year since 2013 and the states have denied Medicaid expansion. This is a must issue, but not only that; in this moment we must recognize that economic justice also is a memory issue.

We have to have the right memory, because America has this strange memory, selective amnesia. You know, let us not forget that desegregation, public school, Medicaid, Medicare, expanded social security, economic opportunity, war on poverty, the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, minimum wage; all of those things grew from the same moral impetus, and the war on poverty did not fail. It was undermined.

Let us have the memory to remember the days when a president would go and talk about dealing with the poor as a moral issue, not as a Democratic issue or Republican issue. Let us have that memory when people struggled and won programs for Head Start and Medicare, expansion of social security, funding for K-12, the Pell Grants and higher education.

And what did Russell Sage teach us? He taught us that the war on poverty had three parts.

The first part was designed to boost wages through education and job training. The second was to provide income support, particularly for single mothers and the elderly, and the third was to bring a system of government healthcare to the elderly and the poor.

But there's one other piece of this that we did not know which is why your conference is so important. It is so important because many people have forgotten this linkage that the war on poverty was linked to the Civil Rights Movement in this way.

For instance, Medicaid, Medicare funds were withheld from hospitals if they didn't comply with the Civil Rights Act, which in turn meant, it meant not only the desegregation of Southern hospitals and a drop in black infant mortality, but it also meant many white people got healthcare but they got – they received that healthcare by having to let loose some of their racism.

And it was a deliberate attempt, and those who put together the war on poverty knew it had some flaws. Fan Newham talked about some of the flaws but one of the good things that they understood the linkage between economics and race.

Let us not fail to remember in 1960 when people want to get on TV and talk about the war on poverty failed, nuh-uh, let us challenge that. Before we launched the war on poverty, 35 percent of American seniors lived in wretched poverty, as did 30 percent of the nation's kids.

By 1975 as the war on poverty was ending, 15 years later, child poverty had been cut in half, and poverty among seniors was reduced by 60 percent and those – those issues were not framed, as I said as a Democrat or Republican, but as a deep moral issue, the right thing to do.

And not only in this moment, we see economic justice as a moral issue, a must issue, a memory issue, we must have a moral – an intersectional moral agenda now. I believe that agenda should sound something like this.

We must fight, all of us together to secure pro-labor, anti-labor policies that ensure economic sustainability by fighting for full employment. We need to start talking about that, full employment, not just five percent unemployment is all right. Full employment, living wages, the alleviation of disparity in unemployment.

A green economy, labor rights, affordable housing, targeted empowerment zones, strong safety nets for the poor, fair policies for immigrants, infrastructure development, and ceasing war baiting and extreme militarism that undermines our ability at home, and we must fight for a fair tax reform.

And all of those things, reporters often ask me which one of them are important? I say all of them, because you cannot build an economic theory of justice with just one piece. But we should also understand are the part of this intersectional moral agenda must be educational equality, that every child should receive a high quality, well-funded,

Constitutional, diverse public education, as well as access to college and universities.

But we also must understand the – we must connect healthcare for all and environmental protection, and women’s health, and we must also connect fairness and the criminal justice system by addressing the continuing inequalities in the system, and standing against the proliferation of guns, and we must also refuse to ever give up on the 14th Amendment, equal protection under the law for black, brown people, gay people, straight people, women, voting rights, LGBTQ, immigrant rights.

We can never give up on equal protection under the law, and somebody says well, let’s just do the economic thing. No, you can’t do one. We must fight for the whole, all of them.

And with this moral agenda, in this moral moment, we must build a stage from which to lift the voices of every day people impacted by immoral, unjust economic policies. We need a movement that puts a face on injustice and amplifies the voice of the voices.

I’m asking every economist, whenever you do a lecture from now on, carry somebody with you that’s impacted by the policy you’re trying to change, so that not only do people hear your numbers and your theory but they see flesh and blood, real human beings.

I’ve challenged a lot of my progressive friends. We often will have these big rallies and we’ll have people speak for people. That is not what we need in this moment. We must speak with people and we must be able to platform where people can speak for themselves and they become a direct moral witness, so we can transform the country by forcing the country to see their fellow brothers and sisters.

Down in North Carolina, one of the places we’re organizers out in Jackson County, North Carolina, it’s in the mountains where it’s 99 percent white, 89 percent Republican, and when they first asked me they said Reverend Barber, will you go out there and organize?

I said hell no, I ain’t going out there and organizing. What’s wrong with you? I said why would I go to Melchor County? They ran all the black people out in 1920. I said the paramilitary groups are out there. Why would I go out there? We never thought about going out there. It’s night, you know.

And one of the old Methodist ministers said but we have to. Our moral movement has to go out there. Now we didn’t go out there as Democrats, didn’t go out there as Republicans. We went out there as a moral agent, and we went out there to talk to the people, and we went out there to show them many of them had no idea that when we denied Medicaid expansion for instance, there were about 1,000 people in that county that were being denied healthcare and they weren’t black. They couldn’t be, because no black people out there.

When we was refused to raise the living wage in North Carolina there was thousands of them, and we went out there and we put a face on the problem, and then lastly today in

this moment, we must move and discern. We must move and discern the interconnection between race and class. Could it be that we can never have a true just society until we have a grown-up conversation reality check and diagnostic exam about the recurring power of the reincarnated vestiges of the White Southern strategy that continues to hold back the South and also holds back so much of the country.

We have to recognize the centrality of race, and some will ask is the real issue race or class, and our answer should be it is. It's not race and class – race or. It's race and class. Our class divisions cannot be understood apart from a society built on white supremacy.

And white supremacy cannot be separated from our systems of economic justice. Think about the city we're in. Black people are by far the largest racial ethnic population in Detroit. I was looking at the Economic Policy Institute statement.

Have the highest percentage of black residents of any American city with a population of over 100,000. 83 percent of the city's 701,000 residents are black. Let's think about that where we are. It said in this article it said it's important to understand what's happening in this city.

The fact that nearly 1.5 million whites left Detroit over the last half century as its African-American population grew is the single biggest reason for the current distress. As the wealthier white population left Detroit, the overall population shrank, and the city's tech base shrank too, leaving Detroit less able to support public schools, public safety, and its huge geographical spread-out infrastructure.

Some want to blame it simply on corrupt mayors and antagonistic mayors but they cannot miss that the out-migration of whites that began in the 1950s and the in-migration of blacks is central if you're gonna understand the problems of this city.

Because it was the out-migration of manufacturing jobs that occurred during the in-migration of African-Americans. It began in the 1940s as the auto industry digested from Detroit. This was at the same time, as you will, that there was a great deal of racism within the union movement. Amen, lights.

The big three stopped investing in Michigan, leaving devastated cities like Flint and Pontiac in favor of the West, the South, Canada, Mexico and eventually Asia, but when the auto industry began abandoning Detroit, it had nothing to do with the union. It had nothing to do with the other countries.

It had all to do with the in-migration of African-Americans and the out-migration of white Detroiters who followed the auto industry out of the city because the good jobs moved there, because the land was plentiful in the suburbs.

Housing and schools were newly built and because they wanted to get away from their black neighbors and buy homes in the racially segregated suburbs, when over-crowding and immigration of blacks threatened the racial segregation of Detroit, neighborhood

whites picked up and left.

And remember why blacks came here, because they were running away from lynching in the South; not hanging. They were not running away from being hung. Black people were not hung. They were lynched. Lynching is a form of terror.

Government was deeply involved in this racial segregation of the Detroit metropolitan area as it was in the nation. As early as the 1930s, the Federal housing administration's underwriting manual instructed mortgage lenders to respect racial covenants, and the Federal Home Loan Bank Board sponsored the development of residential security maps that made most minority neighborhoods off limits for lending, red lining.

After World War II when the GI Bill gave subsidized mortgages to millions of veterans, the government's mortgage lending restrictions effectively included blacks. The new homes in the white suburban areas that were built by the GI Bill for whites were not built for African-Americans. You cannot understand the economic deprivation of the city without understanding the deep, deep, deep systemic racism upon which it is built.

That is why we have to understand in this moment, we can't consider racism to have shown itself when we simply catch somebody using the N-word. In fact, I get a little bit tired of people getting so riled up when somebody uses the N-word. I mean that's bad and they get all riled up about David Duke. That's bad. Yeah, that's bad, you know, but there's a book entitled racism without racism, whose conclusion must become a part of our critique.

The author knows that we've virtually run out of racists today, hopefully. Even self-proclaimed white supremacists are not being racist. They are merely extolling white pride the same way African-Americans celebrate their heritage

Today you have so many people saying there's no real racism and it's just a class issue, and some of them on a certain sly as a fox, unnamed television channel purport to be fair and balanced, but they spend hours denying systemic racism with a smile.

And yet, as one writer says, there is an abundant willful blindness to racial disparity. According to Glen Lowrie in almost every observable measure of well-being: wages, unemployment, race, income and health, wealth numbers, prison enrollment, crime victimization rate, health and mortality statistics, race is a factor.

Only the willfully deaf cannot hear the dog whistles of race. We just experienced it. The dog whistles of race. Dog whistles of race, and that's why one of the reason when Trump brought up poverty and talked about the black community, we should have pounced and said oh, you really wanna talk about poverty and race?

Instead, too many progressives started first of all backing away; wait a minute, we're – I heard some black people talking about oh no, we have middle class with that. Yeah, that's true but that's not all the truth.

Some white folk, you know, well I know some black people who have come up. No, we should have said Mr. Trump, you just told a half-truth. Now let me tell the whole truth. The whole truth is we should not have been offended.

We should have been talking about poverty and race long before him. We should have talked about the intersection between race, because here's the key. If we're gonna save the heart of this democracy, we must help people face this question. What is it that causes many poor whites – in 2013 there were 18.9 million whites that were poor. That's eight million more poor whites than poor blacks and five million more poor whites than Latinos.

What is it? What is it that cause so many of them to vote for candidates that pass policies that hurt them? What trumps common sense? What will make you vote against your own self-interest? What's so powerful in the American ethos that you will actually vote against living wage when you need it? What will make you vote against healthcare when you need it?

In fact, you're benefitting from it more. If you're benefitting the most from social security and Medicare and Medicaid, what would then make you vote against that which you are benefitting? What is so powerful? What mythology is so strong? What must be challenged? What must be unpacked? What is it that we must open people's eyes to that you're being bamboozled?

It is the mythology of racists and racism. What is it that will make you support candidates that cut public education, give public money to private schools your own white children can't go to? What is it that makes you walk away from the very people you need to be allies with?

I mean not only a few weeks ago did the New York Times do an article that says all of us are black anyway, since we all come out of Africa, but if you don't wanna believe that, that's fine. I'll tell you when we are all black. You can be poor and white, Latino and white, black and white, but if your lights go off and you can't pay your light bill, we're all black.

And what is it that will make you vote for people who will cut off your light just so you can still say I got them? Tim Weiss talks about the racialization of entitlement programs that began in the 1960s around the same time that those very programs became available to black and brown people, and a rich oligarchy knew as Kevin Philips said we can pit folk against one another, we can cause them to vote against their own self-interest, not only in the South but in the suburbs and the rural areas of the Midwest, the Rust Belt and in the North, and then we can fill our pockets with the money of tax cuts by allowing people to vote to undermine the very programs that are helping them stay alive.

And if we do not deal with the issue of race, we cannot deal with the healing of this democracy. So I conclude. There's an article out called – and I was just reading it today,

what with a snarl Trump ratifies his supporters' rage, and in that article it says for a constituent that feels misunderstood and resentful, politically silenced by critics who deemed their views racist, sexist, homophobic or simply problematic, Trump proffered dignity.

For decades, many have found this validation in the charismatic hopes of conservative talk radio and cable news analysis programming, but Trump offered it up as mainstream fare for the prime time audience.

She went on and said they feel as though they have been cheated and they want somebody to be held accountable, but instead of shaking their fist at global capital, their hostility pointed toward women, people of color and recent immigrants who they see as having taken what they have rightfully been theirs.

Which is also why if you under – you've got to understand race. When you understand the word Trump used on that first day, he didn't say Latinos. He said Mexicans. That's a dog whistle. He specifically said Mexicans, playing the race card.

And so lastly, in this moment, not only must we see it as a must moment or moral moment, a moment where our memory must remind, we must speak to this moment.

On January 20, 2017 we will bid farewell to the first African-American President; a man of integrity, dignity, who pulled us out of recession, attempted to give healthcare to millions without it, and a man of a generous spirit, not perfect, not one we did not challenge, and we will witness the inauguration of a con artist who did little to spurn endorsement by forces of xenophobia and white supremacy.

It is impossible to react to this moment with anything less than revulsion and profound anxiety. A president whose disdain for women and minorities, and civil liberties and scientific fact, to say nothing of simple decency, has been repeatedly demonstrated. Trump is vulgarity unbounded whose election strikes fear into the hearts of the vulnerable, the weak, and above all the many varied varieties of other whom he insulted: the African-American other, the Hispanic other, the female other, the Jewish and Muslim other.

Trump ran his campaign sensing the feeling of dispossession and anxiety among millions of voters, white voters in the main, and many of those voters, not all but many followed Trump because they saw that this slick performer, once a relative cypher when it came to politics was more than willing to assume their resentment, their fury, their sense of a new world that conspired against their interests.

He articulated their fears rooted in racism and classism, offered no answers but merely said you are right to be afraid, very afraid; Obama is the boogie man of a coming diversity that will undo the world you have grown up knowing and I, and I alone can save you.

This is why Neil Irvin Painter at Princeton has written a piece Without Obama, there would be no Trump. She said here is the iconographic of a tragic, traditionally American call and response.

The call, a challenge to the status quo of white people on top. The response, outbreaks of meanness, many merely vile, embracing rhetorical weapons, many murderers taking up physical weapons. It is a call and response quite familiar in Americans history.

After President Harry Truman embraced civil rights, the call and response happened. Southern Democrats formed their own segregationist states rights, Dixiecrat party. 1948, after the Supreme Court ordered an end to segregation in Brown vs. Board of Education there was massive resistance right here in Detroit.

Some of the biggest resistance happened in Northern states, and then there was the murder of Emmet Teal in '55 that forced Rosa Parks to say I have to sit down, that we might stand up.

Today's challenge to white people on top is the most acute in history. The election and re-election a president who is black with a wife who is black and two daughters who are black, a response to this challenge began early with the vow to make Obama a one-term president.

They continued in congressional refusal to govern and birtherism. She goes on to say this is why you must understand everybody's trying to figure out what happened with the vote, what happened here?

Did we go this place? Did we go to Wisconsin? You'd have to understand without Barrack Obama there is no Donald Trump. Another article, Jamie Jamelle Bowie writes it like this. He said it's not just anger over jobs and immigration.

White voters hope Trump will restore the racial hierarchy of ending President Obama, and I was on a show one day and somebody brought up race, and they said oh, that's too simple of an analogy and I said that's the problem.

If you think racism is a simple analogy, then you really are deluded and this called to – there's nothing simple about the contortions mental and spiritual and moral that racism has and continues to make us have to adjust to.

Obama did inherit, you remember what I was talking about, a post-racial America. Bowie says he didn't inherit a post-racial America as much as he did a racialized one where many whites became hyper-aware of their racial status.

He goes on to say finally, he says Obama's election felt like inversion. Remember when people didn't wanna let their children even watch him in school on TV? Inversion, when coupled with the broad decline in incomes, when you coupled this racism with the fear over incomes and living standard caused by the Great Recession, it seemed to signal the

end of a hierarchy that had always placed white Americans at the top, delivering status even when it couldn't give material benefits.

And so in a 2011 paper, one author talks about white fragility. He said white fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of white stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves.

This is what occurred early Wednesday morning, after running a campaign that was enthusiastically endorsed even by the KKK, Donald Trump thanked his supporters for victory, promised to be president for all Americans, a shock to almost every pollster and political pundit.

His victory has been heralded as an unprecedented political upheaval but the reactionary wave that swept across America this past Tuesday is not an anomaly. It's our history. It is instead too familiar a pattern in the long struggle for American reconstruction.

Anyone who watched the election returns come in on television Tuesday night will remember the red band that stretched from my home state of North Carolina south and west across the nation, to form a Confederate state.

The solid South proved once again to be a reliable base for Trump but he joins a long list of white men who have leveraged his base to get in the White House. Like so many things in America's racial history, the solid South was born of compromise. Confederate states were readmitted to the union based on the affirmation of the reconstruction amendments which abolished slavery, gave voting rights to African-Americans and guaranteed equal protection under the law.

But it took Federal troops to require the guarantee and to ensure these rights to African-Americans and citizens, and then appealing to both racial fear and resentment against occupation, Southern politicians developed the Mississippi plan to take back their country by any means necessary and make it great again.

Through voter suppression, intimidation and violence, they swept the South in 1876. They didn't quite win the White House with the popular vote, hence, the Compromise of 1877. A Republican, Rutherford B. Hayes was appointed President, told he could be President if he would promise to remove the Federal troops from the South.

He did not win the popular vote. He was put in through the electoral college. It did not take long for the South to pass laws abridging African-Americans' rights to full citizenship. Yes, the Union won the Civil War but the Compromise of 1877 taught African-Americans that the fight for reconstruction was not done.

By 1883, six years later the Civil Rights Act of 1875 was repealed. Repealed. Deconstruction was in full gear. By 1896 you have Plessy vs. Ferguson. By 1898, the Wilmington Riots, and there was only one person who dissented. The same kind of backlash followed the legislative victories of the Civil Rights Movement.

We call it the second reconstruction, the Civil Rights Movement. You had all of the things, the Civil Rights Act, Fair Housing and a fruit of decades of struggle waged by people who knew they might never see a victory in their own lifetime.

But then the backlash against them wasn't limited to Southern segregation. Richard Nixon came out with law and order as a code word for putting the black folk and those peace advocates in their place. That was the campaign of 1968.

It was the response to the call. It was an intentional effort to win the Solid South by appealing to racial hate and fear without using racist language. His advisor, Kim Phillips told him to talk about tax cuts and states rights, enforced bussing, and then to talk about certain moral issues.

And he and Dixiecrats like Strom Thurmond and Jessie Helms took over the Republican Party and vowed to undo all the advances of the Civil Rights Movement and to play wedge issues games forever to split black and white voters; many poor who needed to be allies.

They found funding from a wealthy oligarch who used this division to elect candidates. 1976, Charles Koch pulls people together four years before Reagan and says we're gonna develop a movement. We're no longer gonna focus on messiah candidates. We're gonna focus on a movement; a movement from the bottom up, a movement that can punish people if they don't do what we say.

We're not worried about a messiah candidate. We'll fix it so we can elect anybody if we have a movement. They actually stole Martin Luther King's game plan. Martin Luther King told us never go back to Washington.

He said if you're gonna go then stay with the poor people. He said go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back and build state movements from the bottom-up. We got cute. Extremists got smart. We started looking progressives and Messiah candidates. Extremists said we'll build a movement.

They built a movement and they used this division to embrace trickle-down economics underneath their race card politics so they could align their pockets with wealth while fooling working class poor white people that their real enemy was the money going to entitlement programs for black and brown people.

Donald Trump's unanticipated victory could not have been possible without the election of Barack Obama. Of course, Trump entered politics by waging a crusade against Obama's citizenship.

In this moment, you cannot be unfamiliar with the DNA of American History; the Mississippi Plan of 1876 or the Southern Strategy of 1968 because if you know this history, if you know every time a president has been elected that did not win the popular

vote and what followed in terms of racial discrimination, you can only be surprised at one thing: the ease in which Trump adapted those things for the 21st Century. Trump's attacks on immigrants, Muslims and the LGBT community were political ploys based on the fundamental racial fear at the heart of the American experience.

When he told white Americans that he was their last chance that was code language; I'm your last chance, he was talking about 2020 when Americans no longer, no one race has a majority. I'm your last chance. He was touching a wound passed down since the lost cause of the religion of racism of the Civil War in the 19th Century.

And so now my friends, America must not waste time asking ourselves how could this have happened? It happened because it is the habit written deep in our public memory, and if we are willing to see ourselves as we are and have been, we also can see hope in this moment, because we will see our potential for prophetic resistance even in times like these.

When the Prophet Samuel in the Bible, can I preach these last five minutes? When the Prophet Samuel in the Bible cries out to God, when the children of Israel choose, say they want a king, they no longer want him.

They ask – he asked the people why have they elected to follow a strong man rather than to follow God's prophet and the Lord of justice? He's crying, he's weeping, he's mourning, like many of us throughout America and God says to Samuel they have not rejected you. They have rejected me.

Those who have struggled against injustice in this country must not take the results of this election personally. You cannot simply say you did not do what you could have done. We cannot afford to blame our neighbors or demonize Mr. Trump, or try to come up with one or two things that Hillary could have done this and that, and the other.

We are together inheritors of a legacy in this country that has rejected injustice – or rejected justice over and over and over again, through the reality and the methodology of racism, but that is not all we are.

We are also the ancestors and the heirs of the great dissenters who stood for right even when they were a minority of one, who found ways to be resilient and to be revived even when rejected. When the Jim Crow Law of the Solid South was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in a case called Plessy vs. Ferguson, one justice; Justice Harlan of Kentucky, the great dissenter.

He dissented; looked like he had lost but his dissenting opinion laid the legal groundwork for Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall, when they built their case for Brown vs. Board of Education.

When Woodrow Wilson, 100 years ago to the date that we are going through this election played and showed Birth of a Nation in the White House, the first movie that ever be –

film, excuse me screened at the White House.

When he did that over a century ago, it looked bad but W.B. DuBois and Ida B. Wells, and the interracial NAACP challenged the most powerful man in America to face his racism. When three Civil Rights workers were brutally murdered in the first days of Freedom Summer, black and white students did not quit.

They chose to press on together, challenging Mississippi's brutal racism. Their mentor, Fanny Lou Hamer taught them by example. She struggled for freedom. She didn't turn back. She was merely beaten to death in a Winona County Jail.

She was in jail when Megan Evers was killed but she came out; came out of jail singing louder and fighting harder, ain't gonna let nobody turn me around and went to the convention and demanded her place.

After Tuesday's rejection of justice, which is as American as apple pie, we must apply now the moral defibrillator to our own hearts and be even more determined to stand for love and justice and mercy, less than a majority of Americans elected a moral. They did not elect a God to be our next president, and they did not unelect the foundation or principles of our Constitution.

They did not unelect our moral convictions of our faith. Fear is an ingredient in the poisonous, toxic and intoxicating brew of racism and classism. Once ingested, rationality goes out, self-destruction comes in, but we who are sober now must help the nation, and nation, and in fact the globe that's drunk with the wine of the world.

We must help them now find the wine of the spirit, of justice and love, and power and hope. Still right now, we must lift every voice and sing. Right now, we cannot forget the lessons the dark past has taught us and the faith that it has brought us.

We must forever stand true to our God. We cannot congratulate Mr. Trump but we can counsel him, because to congratulate him would be like congratulating a Christian for being hateful or congratulating your child for failure.

We can counsel him though, before you take office, Mr. Trump, before you put your hand on the Bible, repent. Repent. Repent of the problems, repent of the things you've said with the works of repent, and commit yourself not to follow the divisive agenda that you've pedaled.

Understand that there's still a creator spoken of in our scripture and in our Constitution who grants inalienable rights and no election of a president takes those inalienable rights, and there's still a spirit that says even when there are despots on the throne, justice still must roll down like water and righteousness, like a mighty stream.

He must be reminded and those who gloat need to be reminded, pride cometh before the fall. Those who want to hate, don't hate. Love and truth are more powerful and more

redemptive. Those who didn't vote, we need to say to them, don't you ever sit out again. Democrats, stand your ground, not on Democratic principle, but on the principles of justice, and don't just go along to get along.

This is not the time for the politics of playing games with the lives of the most vulnerable. This is the time for people to rise and be statesmen and stateswomen, not mere partisan actors.

To those who call for healing, remember you can't have healing without treatment and we need more than anything, we can't say peace, peace, where there is no peace. We must treat the soul of our nation, treat this racism.

To the children, we must say don't be what you have seen, don't be racists, don't be bullies, don't be haters because you are both our future and our now, both at the same time. To the faithful, it is our time even now to be in the public square, to engage non-violently whenever and wherever we have to for the cause of love and justice.

Like Samuel, we cannot mourn. We must still be prophet, even though we do not like who's on the throne. Saul must – needs a prophet, because without a prophet you can't get from Saul to David, and we've got somewhere to go.

In this intermediary time, we must declare that we will be the moral defibrillators and dissenters of our time. We are the ancestors of those who stood up against far worse than we face now.

In fact, as I started, we have to hear what God said through Jeremiah: go to royal palace, tell the king, listen up king, let me tell you what you better do; you'd better treat the poor right. You'd better not – you'd better stop violence, you'd better rescue the victim because if you don't, this whole place will be rubble.

So I stopped by to tell all the economists that are here if you believed in economic justice and stood for it on Monday, you need to keep on standing for it after Tuesday. If you believed in love and healthcare and living wages, and public education and criminal justice reform, and equal protection under the law on Monday, no matter what happened on Tuesday, you need to stand for it now Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and beyond.

Our principles cannot, must not and did not change, and in this moment we must be steadfast, unmovable and always abound in the work of love and justice. So I've been talking about applying the moral defibrillator to the rest of the nation.

I want to start in here and say put your hand on your own chest and apply the moral defibrillator to yourself, and say despite the fact that we may have seen rejection on Tuesday, it's time for resiliency, it's time for revival and it's time for us to stand as those who came before us in their moment stood.

[Audience applauding.]

[End of Audio]