

**“The movement to abolish the death penalty needs the religious community because the heart of religion is about compassion, human rights, and the indivisible dignity of each human person made in the image of God.”
-Sister Helen Prejean**



A Faithful Conversation on the Death Penalty with Dallas Faith Leaders

**Tuesday, December 4, 2012
7:00 - 9:00pm
Grand Lounge, Student Union
Paul Quinn College
Dallas, Texas**

#talkDP @TCADPdotORG



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Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Mission Area of the ELCA
Pax Christi Dallas
Texas Catholic Conference
Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty**

Notes

Thank You

Speakers:

Danielle Ayers
Dr. Frederick D. Haynes, III
Kristin Houlé
Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson
Rev. Dr. Wes Magruder
Vicki McCuiston
Rev. Stanley J Meyer, D.Min.
Michael J. Sorrell
Deacon Charles Stump

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Pax Christi Dallas
Texas Catholic Conference
Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

Dialogue Planning Committee:

Danielle Ayers, Minister of Justice, Friendship-West Baptist Church
Kristin Houlé, TCADP Executive Director
Paula Keeth, TCADP Dallas
Rev. Dr. Wes Magruder, North Texas UMC Board of Church and Society
Vicki McCuiston, TCADP Program Coordinator
David Noblin, TCADP Dallas
Rev. Bernard Sanders, TCADP Board of Directors
Becky Visosky, Catholic Pro-Life Committee - Diocese of Dallas

Paul Quinn College, especially:

Cecilyn Bryan
Jacqueline Tezano
Maurice West

Program

Welcome

Michael J. Sorrell
President, Paul Quinn College

Opening Remarks

Kristin Houlé
Executive Director, Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

Faithful Conversation

Dr. Frederick D. Haynes, III
Senior Pastor, Friendship-West Baptist Church

Rev. Dr. Wes Magruder
Chair, North Texas United Methodist Church
Conference Board of Church and Society

Rev. Stanley J Meyer, D.Min.
Bishop Assistant, Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Mission Area of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Deacon Charles Stump
Director, Pastoral Services for the Catholic Diocese of Dallas

Call to Action

Danielle Ayers
Minister of Justice, Friendship-West Baptist Church

Closing Prayer

Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson
Senior Pastor, Cathedral of Hope - United Church of Christ

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Please visit exhibitors for more information before and after the program.

Dr. Frederick Haynes, III

Dr. Frederick D. Haynes, III, Senior Pastor of the Friendship-West Baptist Church in Dallas Texas for now 28 years, leads with a commitment to Christ, passion for people and yearning for community transformation. To that end, he has grown Friendship-West to nearly 12,000 during his tenure as Pastor.

Possessing a commitment to education, he has a Bachelors Degree from Bishop College, a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry from the Graduate Theological Foundation.

Dr. Haynes is an author, radio show host and foremost a Pastor. Dr. Haynes serves in various leadership capacities for organizations who champion social change. He is Trustee Chair - Samuel Dewitt Proctor Conference; Board of Directors – National Action Network; and Board of Directors – Conference of National Black Churches, just to name a few and demonstrates a commitment to intellectual excellence in both the church and academia as he is a Board Member of Paul Quinn College, where he has also served as adjunct professor. Notably, Dr. Haynes served as a committee member for the MLK Memorial Foundation, leading to the erection of the first African American Monument on the National Mall, has been honored by and inducted into the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame, and noted in EBONY Magazine 2012 Power 100 - a list of the nation's most influential African Americans.



Deacon Charles Stump

Deacon Charles Stump was ordained for the Catholic Diocese of Dallas in January 1992 and has been assigned to the Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe in downtown Dallas for the last 19 years. He graduated from Dallas Baptist University majoring in Psychology; from Texas A&M Commerce, with a Master of Science in Counseling; and from the University of Dallas, with a Masters of Pastoral Ministries.

Deacon Stump is the Director of Pastoral Services for the Catholic Diocese of Dallas, overseeing the Hospital Chaplains, Prison Chaplains, Disabled Ministry, Deaf Ministry, Substance Abuse & Addictions Ministry, Grief Ministry and is the representative of the Diocese of Dallas for the Honduras Solidarity Relationship with the Diocese of Trujillo, Honduras.



Union for Reform Judaism (1959)

Since 1959, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) and the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) have formally opposed the death penalty. The CCAR resolved in 1979 that "both in concept and in practice, Jewish tradition found capital punishment repugnant" and there is no persuasive evidence "that capital punishment serves as a deterrent to crime." The URJ notes that: "We believe that there is no crime for which the taking of human life by society is justified, and that it is the obligation of society to evolve other methods in dealing with crime. We appeal to our congregants and to our co-religionists and to all who cherish God's mercy and love to join in efforts to eliminate this practice [of capital punishment] which lies as a stain upon civilization and our religious conscience."

Unitarian Universalist Association (2005 Statement of Conscience)

"The first two Principles of Unitarian Universalism address the inherent worth and dignity of every person and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. Consistent with these fundamental principles, a new corrections policy must place a primary emphasis on community alternatives."

United Church of Christ (1979)

"Be it resolved that the Twelfth General Synod of the United Church of Christ reaffirm opposition to the death penalty."

United Methodist Church (2008)

"We believe the death penalty denies the power of Christ to redeem, restore and transform all human beings. The United Methodist Church is deeply concerned about crime throughout the world and the value of any life taken by a murder or homicide. We believe all human life is sacred and created by God and therefore, we must see all human life as significant and valuable. When governments implement the death penalty (capital punishment), then the life of the convicted person is devalued and all possibility of change in that person's life ends. We believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and that the possibility of reconciliation with Christ comes through repentance. This gift of reconciliation is offered to all individuals without exception and gives all life new dignity and sacredness. For this reason, we oppose the death penalty (capital punishment) and urge its elimination from all criminal codes." (First opposition statement was released in 1956.)

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (2005)

"Since 1980, the USCCB has taken a strong and principled position against the use of the death penalty in the United States. We oppose the use of the death penalty not just for what it does to those guilty of horrible crimes, but for how it affects society; moreover, Pope John Paul II, in both The Gospel of Life and the revised Catechism of the Catholic Church, states that our society has adequate alternative means today to protect society from violent crime without resorting to capital punishment."

See more statements at <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/religion-and-death-penalty#state>

Religious Statements on the Death Penalty

American Baptist Church, USA (1982)

"Therefore, the General Board of the American Baptist Churches recommends the abolition of capital punishment in those states which still practice it and urges churches and members of our American Baptist constituency to support groups and agencies working for the abolition of capital punishment in those governmental jurisdictions of the U.S. where it is still authorized by law."

American Friends Service Committee (1976)

"The American Friends Service Committee reaffirms its opposition to the death penalty. We base our stand on the Quaker belief that every person has value in the eyes of God and on Quaker testimonies against the taking of human life."

Buddhist Peace Fellowship

"Society is like a dense fabric, made of many intertwined threads. Murder is like a violent tear in the fabric. The death penalty is like trying to repair the tear by cutting away at the fabric when we should take care to weave the many split threads back into the fabric. ...We oppose all executions, in keeping with the First Precept of Buddhism, which says not to harm any living thing."

Christian Church—Disciples of Christ (1991)

"We believe there is a Christian mandate against capital punishment. We know God's justice and mercy through the teachings of his son, Jesus Christ, who both taught and practiced the forgiveness of justice. Therefore, be it resolved, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church... support a permanent moratorium on capital punishment whether undertaken for deterrence or redress; and be it further resolved that congregations, regions and general units of this church be encouraged to pursue ways to support and implement the intent of this resolution at the national, provincial, state and local levels."

The Episcopal Church, USA (1991)

"RESOLVED, that this 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church urge the provinces, dioceses, parishes, missions, and individual members of this Church to engage in serious study on the subject of capital punishment and work actively to abolish the death penalty in their states."

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1991)

"It is because of this church's commitment to justice that we oppose the death penalty. Lutheran Christians have called for an assault on the root causes of violent crime, an assault for which executions are no substitute. The ongoing controversy surrounding the death penalty shows the weaknesses of its justifications. We would be a better society by joining the many nations that have already abolished capital punishment."

Mennonite Church USA (2001)

"Jesus' death on the cross was the final payment for sin—a final sacrifice that made unnecessary other forms of sacrifice, including the human sacrifice that we call capital punishment. Jesus showed us that salvation from sin lay in forgiving the enemy, not in getting even by imitating the enemy's wickedness."

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (1985)

"THEREFORE, the 197th General Assembly (1985): Reaffirms the position of the General Assemblies of the United Presbyterian Church of 1959, 1965, and 1977, and of the Presbyterian Church U.S. of 1966, and declares its continuing opposition to capital punishment."

Rev. Dr. Wes Magruder

Rev. Dr. Wes Magruder is the Director of Missional Community Development for The People of New Day, a growing network of missional micro-communities based on neo-monasticism. As an outgrowth of his work with New Day, he created Project Daraja, which provides bridge support for refugees as they work toward citizenship and self-sufficiency. He serves as the Chair of the Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church North Texas Conference and is on the Board of Directors of Refugee Services of Texas. He has served appointments in suburban London and suburban Dallas, as well as four years of missionary service in Cameroon, West Africa where he learned the fine art of off-roading and French-speaking.

You can follow Wes on his blog at <http://newmethofesto.com>.

His forthcoming book, *Our Refugee God*, will weave together real stories of resettled refugees in America with a Bible study in a grand narrative of the refugee experience. The book is designed for private devotional or small group study.



Rev. Stanley J. Meyer, D.Min.

The Rev. Stanley J. Meyer, D.Min., is Bishop Assistant for Leadership and Disciple Life in the Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Mission Area of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Ordained in 1975, he has served in parish ministry (Redeemer Lutheran Church, Greenville, Texas), campus ministry and university administration (Texas Lutheran University, Seguin, Texas) and, since 1994, as Assistant to the Bishop with responsibilities for leadership development, mobility and communications. He is a graduate of Christ Seminary – Seminex, St. Louis (M.Div., 1974), Texas A&M Commerce (M.A., 1980) and Austin Presbyterian Seminary (D.Min., 1998). The father of three sons and grandfather of three grandchildren, he and his wife, Connie, live in Arlington, Texas.



Facts About the Death Penalty

The State of Texas has executed **492 people** since 1982, out of more than 1,300 executions nationwide since 1977. Thirteen executions took place in 2011, the lowest number in 15 years.

Fifteen executions took place in Texas this year – 5 from Dallas County and 1 from Tarrant County – out of 40 nationwide.

There currently are 289 people on death row in Texas, including 10 women; this is the lowest the death row population has been since at least 1989, according to research by TCADP.

Since 1973, 141 individuals – including 12 in Texas – have been released from death rows nationwide due to evidence of their wrongful conviction.

There also have been investigations into whether Texas wrongfully executed Carlos DeLuna in 1989, Ruben Cantu in 1993, and Cameron Todd Willingham in 2004.

In Texas, the cost of an average death penalty case is nearly three times higher than imprisoning someone in maximum security for 40 years. (*Dallas Morning News*)

Five states – New York, New Jersey, New Mexico, Illinois, and, most recently, Connecticut – have abandoned the death penalty in recent years. A total of 17 states and the District of Columbia do not allow the death penalty.

139 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. In 2011, the top five executing countries were China, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the United States.

New death sentences in Texas have dropped more than 75% since 2002. In 2011, new death sentences remained at a historic low level, when eight people were sentenced to death statewide. To date in 2012, there have been nine new death sentences, including two in Dallas County, two in Tarrant County, and one in Johnson County.

Texas' Highest Sentencing Counties, 2008-2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total 2008-2012	Total Since 1976
Harris	0	0	2	3	0	5	289
Dallas	3	1	2	0	2	8	104
Tarrant	2	1	0	1	2	6	72
Travis	0	1	1	1	0	3	19
Brazos	0	1	1	0	1	3	17
Total:	5	4	5	5	5*	23	559

*Death sentences also have been imposed this year in Brazos, Johnson, McLennan, and Smith Counties.

Opportunities for Involvement

- Become a **MEMBER** of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (TCADP) at www.tcadp.org/join-tcadp/. **SUBSCRIBE** to the TCADP email list, which provides information on upcoming executions, breaking news, legislative updates, and local events.
- Become involved in TCADP's **CAMPAIGN:**
 - Invite a TCADP staff **ORGANIZER** to come talk to your faith community or civic group about how you can make a difference.
 - Host a **SPEAKER** or watch a **FILM** on the death penalty with your faith community, civic organization, or student group (films and speakers available from TCADP).
 - Sign up to **VOLUNTEER** for special events, fundraisers and other community outreach opportunities.
- **WRITE, VISIT, and CALL** your state senator and representative and share your concerns about the Texas death penalty. Share any information you gather with the TCADP office.
- Ask your **CLERGY** to sign the interfaith sign-on letter (available at <http://www.tcadp.org/interfaith-sign-on-letter> in Spanish and English).
- If you are a faith leader, contact TCADP for resources and ideas for **MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE MEETINGS, CLERGY BREAKFASTS** and other **PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS** where you can talk with fellow faith leaders about the death penalty.
- Learn about TCADP's partnership with **MURDER VICTIMS' FAMILIES FOR RECONCILIATION** (www.MVFR.org).
- Attend the TCADP **ANNUAL CONFERENCE:** February 23, 2013, in Austin at St. Edward's University. <http://tcadp.org/what-we-do/annual-conference/> (Special registration rates for TCADP members and students.)
- Follow TCADP on **FACEBOOK** and **TWITTER:** www.facebook.com/tcadp and [@TCADPdotORG](https://twitter.com/TCADPdotORG)