

# THE LIGHT RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY E-NEWSLETTER

## Peace and Blessings to All

BY LEA GILMORE  
MINISTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE AND MULTICULTURAL ENGAGEMENT  
FIRST SERVICE MUSIC DIRECTOR  
GOVANS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to our new Interim Pastor Rev. Dr. Ron Hankins, who will lead us while we search for and call a new, permanent pastor. I will miss Bridge Pastor Shannon Weston's witty sermons and encyclopedic Biblical knowledge.

The Racial Justice Committee examined our history as it relates to racism so that we can begin the work of repairing historic harms and seek reconciliation. Myra Brosius, chair of our Truth and Reconciliation Committee shares, "as Kamala Harris reminds us, 'We exist in the context of all in which we live and what came before us.' If we seek to dismantle racism, we must understand first who we are and the truth about how we got here; we are the product of our past as we work to build a hopeful future."

Please attend church service on September 22 to hear Myra and Rev. David Harris present the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's deep dive into the racial history of our church. Also, please make it a point to be at the unveiling of Baltimore artist Ky Vassor's artwork in the front of our sanctuary on October 13.

And, as we begin to enjoy cooler days heading into fall, please keep the Govans community and our nation in your prayers as we contemplate our nation's future leadership. May God instill wisdom in us, may we seek to continue to show love for our neighbors, and retain hope in us for a bright future as we prepare our plans to vote on November 5, 2024.

Please feel free to contact me anytime at [lea@govanspres.org](mailto:lea@govanspres.org).

Peace,  
Lea

**GOVANS**  **Racial Justice  
Ministry**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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**"America,  
Hope is making a  
comeback."  
Michelle Obama**



*Three Generation Quilt,  
Elizabeth Talford Scott*

## EVENTS

### **The Historical Truth of Govans Relationship With Race and Why it Matters**

September 22, 2024, approximately 11:30 am  
Sharp Hall, Govans Presbyterian Church

Rev. David Harris and Myra Brosius will give a presentation with a brief opportunity for discussion, after service on September 22, 2024. This is intended to present the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's research on Govans' history through the lens of racial justice.

### **Unveiling of the New Sanctuary Artwork and Reception**

Govans Presbyterian Church Sanctuary  
Sunday, October 13, During Worship Service

After receiving six inquiries and four proposals to commission a Black Baltimore artist to create and display two pieces of art in our sanctuary to provide racially diverse images in our worship space that is currently Eurocentric, Ky Vassor was selected. They will be present as their artwork is unveiled during the worship service.

#### **Objectives of the artwork, as stated in the request for proposals are:**

- Create images of people of color in our worship space to communicate that all are welcome and children of God.
- Have something visual for people to meditate on during church services, offering a narrative, story, or way of being that is different from the Eurocentric imagery currently in the church.
- Challenge members to a more expansive view of God and people.
- Bring a contemporary element into the sanctuary.
- Incorporate artwork that is reflective of worship or community.



## COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

**Sunday, October 20, 2024 at Noon**  
**Charles D. Jackson**

Charles D. Jackson is a distinguished diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging specialist with a proven track record of driving positive change. A native of Baltimore, Maryland, Mr. Jackson earned a Diversity Practitioner certification from NTL Institute and a Community Health Leadership certification from Morehouse School of Medicine. Jackson has successfully led initiatives for prominent organizations such as the Baltimore City Health Department, Family League of Baltimore, and the National Organization of Black County Officials.

Jackson will lead us in a discussion about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion after service in Sharp Hall.



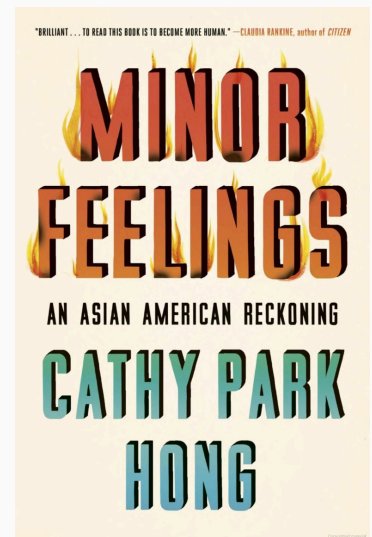
**Charles D. Jackson**  
Community & Faith  
Based Liaison/Diversity  
Practitioner

## BOOK DISCUSSION

**Minor Feelings; an Asian American Reckoning**

by Cathy Park Hong  
Tuesday, August 27, 2024, 7:00 pm  
Govans Presbyterian Church

Join us for an in-person discussion with light refreshments! This collection of essays explores Asian American identity and the complex emotions that arise from it. Through personal stories and cultural analysis, Hong exposes the racial barriers and ingrained prejudices that continue to affect Asian Americans today.



## Thoughtful Readings & Resources

School has begun and that means getting kids to bed early, chaotic breakfasts, packing lunches, and brushing hair. Here are a few great books about taking pride in black hair, which can be shared with children of all colors, and hair types. These books show young girls who are (or learn to be) proud of the hair they have. This can help girls withstand the oppressive forces they often endure as they grow into young women and face pressure to conform to and are compared to Eurocentric ideals of beauty.

A 2021 study by Dove revealed that 53% of Black mothers reported that their daughters were discriminated against because of their hair. Reported numbers were higher if they attended predominantly white schools.

### **I Love My Hair by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley, illustrated by E. B. Lewis**

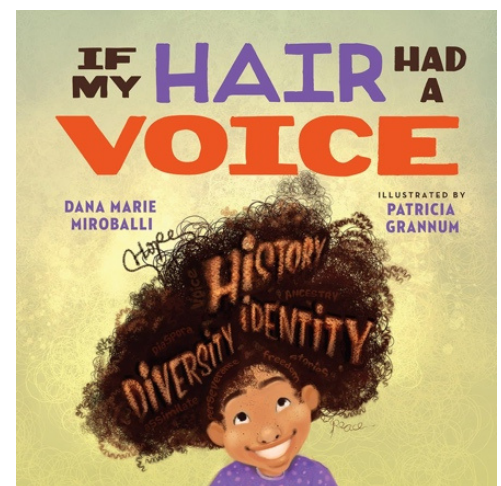
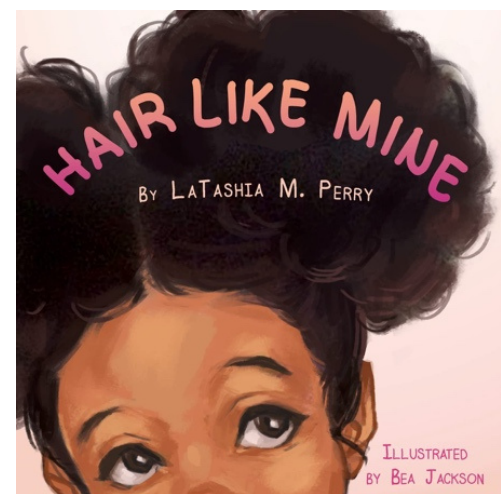
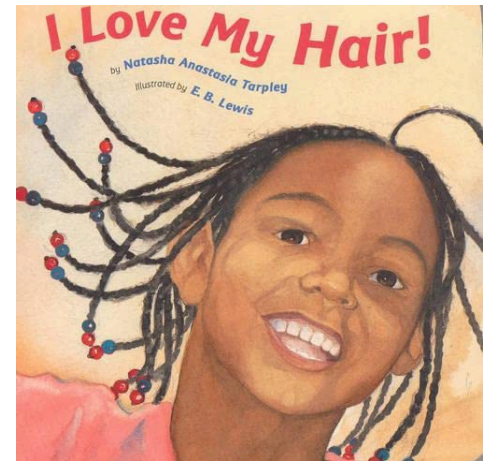
This is an oldie but a goodie! For over 20 years, Tarpley's book has helped African American girls feel happy with their hair!

### **Hair Like Mine by Latashia M. Perry, Illustrated by Bea Jackson**

The child in this book doesn't like her different hair, but her wise mother helps her to see that we are all different, unique in our own ways and that it's okay to be different.

### **If My Hair Had a Voice by Dana Marie Miroballi, illustrated by Patricia Grannum**

This is a more whimsical entry into the forum of Black Hair books, where a young girl learns the history of Black hair. "If your hair had a voice, it would sing of diversity and identity. It would tell you stories of our history."





## Racial Justice Ministry Working Group

**Co-Chairs** Akilah Atkinson Julie McDill      **Secretary** Wendy Smith

### Members

	Shelley Ensor	Tanya Morrel
Kamila Alexander	Kaye Gooch	Susan Saunders
Beth Allen	Deletta Gillespie	Keith Snipes
Myra Brosius	David Harris	Maria Wong
Laila Ali	Gwen Lloyd	McKenna Traynham
Lisa Beacham	Julie McDill	

**Advisory Members** Rev. Dr. Heber Brown, III  
Professor Ron Williams  
Rev. Jennifer Williams

### Mission

We are Govans Presbyterian people who have come together in response to what we believe is God’s call to understand, address, and dismantle racism in ourselves, and our society.

We want to:

- Provide opportunities and a safe environment at Govans where we can openly share thoughts and feelings, and ask questions about racism.
- Educate ourselves about the history and continuing presence of personal and systemic racism.
- Publicly advocate for racial justice in our society.

To generate this kind of learning and action, we will utilize book discussions, films, speakers, museum exhibits, prayer groups, partnerships with other organizations, and other modes yet to be determined. We are open to ideas and suggestions, and would welcome your participation in any aspect of this work.

**“Bridges are built through dialogue, not through weapons.”**

**NADEEM AHMED**

For more information about the racial justice ministry, please email [lea@govanspres.org](mailto:lea@govanspres.org) or go to <https://www.govanspres.org/what-we-do/racial-justice/>.

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