

# BREAKING THE CHAINS

## *faith and justice and the incarcerated*

### Schedule and Workshop Descriptions

#### Schedule: Sunday, November 17, 2019

10:00 AM | Worship in the Sanctuary, Shane Claiborne preaching (free)

11:30 AM | lunch in the Fellowship Center \*

1:00 PM – 1:50 | Workshops Session One\*

2:00 - 2:50 PM | Workshops Session Two\*

(Each workshop will repeat)

3:00 Gun-to-Garden Implement forging demonstration (Outdoors, weather permitting)

\* registration and ticket required

#### Workshops (Choose 2)

1. *Hope for the Hopeless: The Injustice of Mass Incarceration in America*

Interested in learning more about the issue of mass incarceration – if you're new to it or want to learn more? Join Alison Stump, Intervarsity Staff at Rider College and Mercer County Community College and other Intervarsity students for a workshop that will provide an opportunity to share information about mass incarceration, its origins and rationale. The group will also discuss a scriptural basis for taking action on the issue of mass incarceration, including tangible ideas for responding.

2. *Re-Entry from Incarceration: CookWell, Job-training through a Community-based Partnership*

Learn about how a local congregation got involved in welcoming returning citizens into a supportive, respectful and caring community through a partnership-based model. Moderated by Tom Wilfrid, President of the organizing board, presenters will include Chef Frank Benowitz of Mercer County Community College; Angel Perez of the NJ Association on Corrections; Andre Gause of Arm in Arm; one or more local restaurateurs that host interns from the program, and one or more program graduates.

3. *Criminal Justice Reform: What's needed, and What's Changing?*

U. S. Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman and her husband, Rev. William Coleman, will speak about how our country's policies on mass incarceration have affected our

communities, and why they personally care about that issue. They will also offer information and a perspective on recent and potentially upcoming legislation in the U. S. Congress and in New Jersey proposed to respond to the need for criminal justice reform.

4. *Beating Guns, and Other Topics: Conversation with Shane Claiborne*

Shane will discuss his new book, *Beating Guns: Hope for People Who Are Weary of Violence*, and will engage attendees in a less formal mode of conversation about the Christian intentional community where he lives, Simple Way, and about how Christians can put their faith into action.

5. *The Mark of Cain: Theological Understanding of Mass Incarceration*

The lifetime purgatory for people with convictions is a kind of double jeopardy that never allows them or their families to ever stop serving time. For years people have centered their belief of God and the need for God's justice as the reason for punitive justice, as opposed to reconciliation for those who have been convicted of committing crimes. This type of thinking has led to the broken structure in our society as it pertains to criminal justice issues. When we allow this broken structure to dictate our vision of justice, we see punishment as the way to justice, instead of the Christ-like response of restorative justice. Join Erich Kussman, pastor of St. Bartholomew's Lutheran Church and founder of Ransom Writers & Speakers, as he helps us explore our response as a Christian community.

6. *Trauma, Poverty, and Incarceration: How to Make an Impact from the Sidelines*

Bill Davis will address some of the challenges faced by men who are incarcerated or returning from incarceration. He will suggest strategies and resources available to help them survive and succeed. Jonathan Shenk will highlight some of the challenges inherent in connecting people of relative wealth and privilege with those trapped at the bottom. He will offer strategies and resources for how to engage those on the sidelines.

Bios (Partial listing):

Bonnie Watson Coleman is the U. S. Representative for the 12th congressional district; her husband William Coleman is a Pastor at Shiloh Baptist Church.

Bill Davis is a graduate of The Monmouth Bible Institute and Eastern University's School of Christian Ministry (ESCM). Bill now serves as a Certified Anger Management Specialist facilitating classes in Anger Management, Parenting and Job Readiness at UIH Family Partners Father Center in Trenton, New Jersey. Prior to this, Bill served as a Behavioral Specialist at Catholic Charities and as Network Director of the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Monmouth County (Family Promise).

Rev. Jonathan C. Shenk, a former pastor, is the owner of Greenleaf Painters, a local painting company. In addition to his business involvement he is a certified spiritual director and a social justice advocate devoted to ending mass incarceration. He is co-chair of the Nassau Presbyterian Church Mass Incarceration Task Force.