



Catherine Meeks, founder of the Turquoise and Lavender Institute for Transformation and Healing (Courtesy of Catherine Meeks)



by John Dear

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On this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I speak with Catherine Meeks, a nationally recognized leader in racial healing and the founder of the [Turquoise and Lavender Institute for Transformation and Healing](#). Her latest book is *Bridging the Rivers of Difference: A Proclamation of Unity in Resistance*. Her other books include *The Night Is Long but Light Comes in the Morning: Meditations on Racial Healing* and *A Quilted Life: Reflections of a Sharecropper's Daughter*. She spent 25 years as chair of the African American studies program at Mercer University.

"I grew up poor and Black in Arkansas, and my way in the world is to connect to the spiritual and God and the way people should be treated right," she said. "This country was founded on the notion that some humans were worth more than others, including Black people and women. The Constitution wasn't talking about us. The Heritage Foundation has been working militantly with Project 2025, but we have to be willing to stop having a hierarchy of human value."

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"Racism has injured us all," she said. "Everyone has been wounded by it. The culture in the U.S. reinforces the notion that people of color are inferior to white people, but we're all made in God's image and we all deserve to be treated right. We have to create new narratives and trust each other enough to work for the general welfare that benefits everybody, not just one set of people."

"We need to recognize the nonviolent Jesus. To dehumanize another person is violent while Jesus was always respecting people. There is no Jesus for warmongers. War is never going to end other wars. We need to reimagine what nonviolence really is about. I see this moment as a time to grips with what kind of human we want to be."

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