

CENTER FOR PUBLIC THEOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY

The Center for Public Theology and Public Policy provides training for leaders who wish to be equipped with a moral framework as a guide for their vocations and to further explore the interconnectedness of public theology and public policy through scholarly research. Established in late 2022, the center's founding director is Bishop William J. Barber II, a prominent moral movement leader who spent thirty years in pastoral leadership and public ministry before coming to Yale Divinity School.

The mission of the center is to prepare a new generation of moral leaders to be active participants in creating a just society using the academic, practical, and research tools of past and present social justice movements.

The center collaborates with programs and initiatives within Yale Divinity School, at Yale College, and in Yale Law School. Its programs include:

TEACHING

The center hosts courses, seminars, and events to introduce students to the historical and contemporary theories of moral advocacy in social justice movements. Its introductory course, Introduction to Public Theology, Public Policy, and Moral Fusion Movements in America (REL 800), invites students to examine how public theology has informed the most significant advances in public policy in American history and why pastors, clergy, and theologians of our time must practice in the tradition of moral leaders who have challenged systemic oppression in the public square and who have guided critical public policy shifts over the past two centuries. The center hosts regular convenings to provide opportunities for students to learn from faith leaders, advocates, policy experts, and scholars engaged in the field.

TRAINING

Through its summer immersion program, the center provides students the opportunity to study and learn directly from clergy and pastors engaged in public ministry as an integral part of their pastoral obligations. In addition, the center hosts a national conference on the moral and spiritual issues of elections, designed to train attendees in a moral framework and put diverse leaders from today's moral fusion movements in conversation with theologians, politicians, economists, and cultural artists.

RESEARCH

The center cultivates research at the intersection of theology and public policy, critically framing public policy issues as moral issues and creating moral public policy solutions in collaboration with scholars, faith leaders, economists, lawyers, and the community. It invites collaborators to examine the interlocking injustices of racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism from an interdisciplinary perspective.

ENGAGEMENT WITH HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Beyond Yale, the center aims to be a liaison to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the U.S. South to build pathways for HBCU students to meaningfully engage in the center's work and connect its programs to the history and work of southern freedom movements and institutions.

To learn more, visit <https://theologyandpolicy.yale.edu>.