



**FOR RELEASE**

**Chalice Press Releases *Ferguson & Faith* in Partnership with  
The Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE)**

**Atlanta, GA. (August 4, 2015)** – Today the [Forum for Theological Exploration](#) (FTE), in partnership with Chalice Press, releases *Ferguson & Faith: Sparking Leadership & Awakening Community* by Dr. Leah Gunning Francis. As one of the [Englewood Review's top 25 books to watch](#) out for in the second half of 2015, *Ferguson & Faith* releases days before the August 9 anniversary of the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, Missouri.

The tragic death of Michael Brown re-ignited a long-smoldering movement for justice, with many St. Louis area clergy stepping up to support the emerging young leaders of today's Civil Rights Movement. Seminary professor, former FTE Fellow and author, Dr. Leah Gunning Francis, was among the activists and interviewed more than two-dozen faith leaders and organizers of the movement to take us behind the scenes of the continuing protests. These pages explore what happens when one is called to a life led by faith, and how it impacts the work of young Christian leaders within the church.

Early endorsements for the book have been abundant:

Renowned author, activist and speaker, Shane Claiborne describes *Ferguson & Faith* as “a very important book. Dr. Francis has penned a theological memoir of a movement. It is an invitation to see the spirituality...of this movement, and a call to get into the streets. One of the most important things this book does is celebrate a new generation of activists and faith-rooted organizers without forgetting the freedom-fighters of old.”

Congressman and pastor Emanuel Cleaver shares that “this book is a powerful collection of stories of clergy and young activists who were visible and vocal in the struggle for racial justice in Ferguson. They embodied the best of the human spirit that resonated with many around the globe, and challenged this nation to live up to its ideal of liberty and justice for all.”

Margaret Ann Crain, author of *The United Methodist Deacon* and co-author of *Yearning for God*, calls the book “a must-read for all leaders of faith communities, and a model for the power of qualitative research to change the narrative [of the event].”

This book has “created a pathway for the construction of practical theologies that will inform and shape the prophetic leadership of preachers, pastors, and faith-based organizers in the ongoing struggle for freedom, justice and peace in our communities,” pronounced Rev. Michael-Ray Mathews, Director of Clergy Organizing at the PICO national network.

*Ferguson & Faith* is the first book to be released from the partnership between FTE and Chalice Press.

“In light of recent events in Ferguson, Staten Island, Brooklyn, Cleveland, Baltimore, Charleston and other cities around the country – as well as questions about the church's role in the world, Dr. Francis uncovers how religious leaders are responding and making an impact in their

communities in tangible ways,” says FTE President Stephen Lewis. “As the first released book from FTE’s partnership with Chalice Press, it embodies the aims of our work to inspire young leaders to shape the future and reflects the relevance of the church in sharing God’s love, justice, and compassion.”

The Forum for Theological Exploration cultivates diverse young adults to be faithful, wise and courageous leaders for the church and academy. FTE not only provides the space and resources necessary to nurture and grow leadership among diverse faith communities, but also works with Christian leaders and institutions to explore innovative solutions to address complex problems facing today’s faith leaders. The focus of *Ferguson & Faith* aligns closely with FTE’s mission to inspire young people to make a difference through Christian communities and belief that the church can be relevant and make an impact in the world in tangible ways. As young leaders step outside of the church doors, Dr. Francis explores their journey, among others, for justice on the streets.

*Ferguson & Faith: Sparking Leadership & Awakening Community* can be purchased at [www.ChalicePress.net/Ferguson](http://www.ChalicePress.net/Ferguson).

#### **About FTE**

The Forum for Theological Exploration is committed to cultivating diverse young adults to be faithful, wise and courageous leaders for the church and the academy. FTE provides resources and a forum for young adults and students to explore their purpose and call to pastoral ministry and teaching. For more information, visit [fteleaders.org](http://fteleaders.org).

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