

# DAYS OF GRACE

RETIRED CLERGY ASSOCIATION CAL-NEVADA CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER 2021

## REPORT ON RETIRED MINISTERS' FIRST BOOK STUDY

### CASTE

BY ISABEL WILKERSON

Review of the book by **Linda Holbrook**,  
[San Jose, CA] our discussion leader:

*Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent* by Isabelle Wilkerson is a profound and disturbing book. Wilkerson begins by saying she is talking about the three best known caste systems; India, Nazi Germany, and the United States. I was surprised to see the United States in the list of caste systems. Wilkerson claims that caste is a better description of the United States than saying that the US is racist. She also claims that the caste system is deeply embedded in our culture and influences decisions made in every part of our culture, and in our daily lives. Further, Wilkerson notes that to change a caste system requires extensive work.

Many people refer to the period of slavery in this country as a sad, dark chapter of our history. Wilkerson reminds us that this chapter lasted hundreds of years and many of the inequities from the period of slavery continue today. In a caste system there is a dominant caste and a lower caste. In this country from the days of slavery, the white culture is considered the dominant caste, and people of color are considered the lower caste. The caste system requires the individuals in the caste system to fulfill the roles they are assigned. Those in the dominant caste have rules allowing for superiority over the lower caste. Those in the lower caste are expected to defer to those in the dominant caste. We can see examples of these rules in the culture today.



Photo by César Viteri on Unsplash

There are so many things I learned from this book. I will include just a few here that show the disparity between the dominant caste and the lower caste. A Virginia law in the 1600s stated that a child inherited the status of his or her mother. That meant a white slave owner who had children with a slave gained additional property. Years later after the Civil War, reparations were paid to the slave owners who lost property, and no reparations were paid to the former slaves. More recently, the GI bill for education and first time home ownership enacted after World War II did not apply to African Americans who had served in the war, only white soldiers.

One of the most disturbing things Wilkerson mentioned was that when the Nazis started determining how to establish laws to discriminate against the Jewish people, they used the laws from the southern states in the United States as models. I think we are all repulsed by Nazi Germany and the actions they took. We don't usually have the same reaction to the events in the United States and the laws

regarding the lower caste. Perhaps it is easier to see the horrors of Nazi Germany than our own culture.

In addition to the well-founded research Wilkerson has shares personal stories; both her own personal stories and the stories of others.

I recount one story from the book. An African American father is at dinner in a restaurant with his son and telling him to eat his food. A white woman (a stranger) comes to the table and contradicts the father. The white woman is entitled to interfere because she is in the dominate caste, and the father is left in a quandary on whether to confront the woman or not.

*Caste: The Origins of our Discontent* encourages the reader to examine how the embedded rules of the caste system influence our thoughts and decisions. I grew up in the South and I remembered hearing many of the justifications of why African Americans expected to be treated a certain way. I did a lot of reflection on the things I learned as a child, and what beliefs I hold today. Whether you grew up in the south or not, this book will help you understand the history of our country from a different perspective. I recommend this book to everyone.

Comments by several members:

**Marty Murdock [Santa Rosa, CA]:**

The best thing about our weekly book study discussion on the book *Caste*, was that we actually did it. Linda was gracious and well prepared as she nudged a group of talkative preachers along, as we reflected not only on the reading, but parallel sources, and our own experiences.

I found the book enlightening, sobering, and haunting. The specific examples from the past 300 years had great impact and made the case clearly

for the ideas of caste advanced in the book.

I had always thought that caste was something in India, and it is. Maybe also South Africa and other current and former colonies. But I saw clearly that it was true in Nazi Germany, and it was horrifying to realize that the Nazis studied the American system to learn how to minimize and ultimately destroy the Jewish population, after they were turned into the lowest caste.

It rings true and explains a lot, to realize that we in the US actually live within a caste system. Wilkersons description of the 8 “Pillars of Caste,” as she describes them, are clearly the mechanisms which keep the

case system in place, in the US, or anyplace.

We have so much work to do, to fulfill the dream of a nation where we recognize all people as created equally and having equal rights. I feel more prepared for the continuing work now, after having digested this seminal presentation.

Again, thanks to all for sharing the time and the wrestling with the concepts and difficult realities.

**Joe Brownrigg [Santa Fe, NM]:**

I found Wilkerson's book to be of most value in that she brought together ideas I'd read elsewhere. If one takes a look at her footnotes and bibliography, one can see reasons for my conclusion. It's good to have a variety of resources brought together into ONE source."



I also think she pulls us away from two of our common errors: (1) she pulls us away from our tendency to see racism as, primarily an individualist and southern problem or, (2) worse yet, simply a moralizing problem. Wilkerson re-defines the issue as one of caste and, therefore, a problem that must be approached systemically (not individualistically) and with a multi-disciplinary comprehension.

**Bud Tillinghast Oxfordshire UK:**

Wilkerson's book confirmed my experiences from when I was the executive for the Oakland Metro Ministries back in the 1980s. The Metro consisted of our 14 UMC congregations totaling 4000 members, half of which were Black.

The pastors of Taylor Memorial UMC and Downs Memorial UMC, for instance, reflected the central point of **Caste**. Though attitudes of racism were important to change in individual church members, even more important was the need to change the social, political, and economic system. From the publisher: "The hierarchy of caste is not about feelings or morality. It is about power—which groups have it and which do not."

To feel good toward people of color is nice; but what is really desired is to share the power that naturally and automatically falls on those of us in our society who are White. On the human level, it is hard to give up the perks of White privilege. But that is what the Gospel calls us to do.

**Annual Conference Session  
2021**

Please be aware that the status of Annual Conference Session is fluid. As of August 30, "in-person participation will be limited to clergy and elected lay members of the ACS, a small staff group of essential workers, and a limited number of family members of those whom we will be memorializing; no additional visitors, or guests, will be allowed in the meeting space."

The RCA will not be holding a luncheon nor will there be a lounge. No display tables are being allowed.

**REMINDER**

You may have noticed that there has been a spate of delayed death announcements. The Board of Pensions sends to them the Bishop's office promptly and then, the Bishop's office sends the announcement out via email. So why the months, sometimes many months, delay? The Board of Pensions has not heard from the family of the deceased! Please make sure your family, or whoever it is that will be caring for your estate, knows to notify the Board of Pensions (call Andrea or Paul at 916\*913\*1049) upon your death. There may be benefits that your family would appreciate! We can all then support your survivors as they mourn your passing and celebrate your life.

*IS-BEENS - Greater Sacramento Area  
Sue Angove, Scribe*

**ALLREAD, ARDITH and GREGG ATKINS** are enjoying a newborn granddaughter Coralie born in early August. Ardith continues to manage her pulmonary fibrosis the very best ways she can. Gregg has had a remarkable recovery from the shoulder surgery he had last September.

**ANGOVE, JERRY and SUE** are now living in the Natomas area of Sacramento after downsizing greatly and selling their 30 year old Roseville home. Their address is 2065 Rose Arbor Drive, 95835-1793. Jerry has traded his HO scale railroad for the small N scale trains. He is so excited; like a kid in a candy store! Sue officially retired after 53 years as an RN March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

**CALDWELL, LINDA** is doing well. These past many months have given her the opportunity to concentrate on her arts and crafts; creating them using paper, vinyl, and yarn.

**CALLAWAY, NORM** is very happy keeping in touch with his children, grandchildren, AND great-grandchildren. Another baby girl great grand-child will be born soon. Norman fell in April, fracturing his pelvis which continues to heal on its own. It has kept him at home most of these past months.

**CATTERALL, CAROLEE** practices her positive living and thinking continuing her recoveries from several surgeries starting in April, 2020. Dealing with complications and setbacks have been difficult. She has continued pastoring her churches and has even taken time to arrange an August 28<sup>th</sup> picnic for the IS-BEENS retired clergy around the greater Sacramento area.

**CORSON, JANE** counts her family as a true blessing regularly connecting with them during the pandemic. She shared that her fourth great-grandchild, a little girl, is due in February!

GRUNDMAN, GARY and DEB have felt blessed in their move to a new home in Woodland during April, 2020. There is room for a large craft/quilting space for Deb and a third car garage for Gary's projects. It has been delightful to make new friends among the diverse neighborhood. Sunday dinner and game time regularly with son and daughter-in-law living in Davis have been a bright spot during the pandemic. Their recent trip to PA allowed us to re-connect with our older son and family there. God is good!

**HALL, PHIL and MARGE PATZER** have finally been on some short trips. The first was to Santa Cruz spending a delightful time with family, seeing them all after such a long time apart. Their second trip to Angels Camp included time at Murphys and Calaveras Big Trees. We are sad to have strict Covid restrictions again, but we want to stay safe. As part of our Covid activities, we have started doing Yoga every night before bed and we sleep like babies. We recommend "Yoga for Dummies" for starters!

**HERSCHBACH-MARTIN, EVA and ED MARTIN** celebrated their June wedding anniversary in Volcano, near Jackson. They stayed in a historic bed and breakfast whose fabulous chef opens the dining room therein nightly for the crowd of public folk to enjoy gourmet cuisine. Beautiful scenery, peace, and quiet surrounded them as they celebrated.

**KELLY, LINDA** is a first time grandma to Jackson, born April 10, 2020. She traveled by train to New York in July, 2020 to see him and stayed two months to help the new parents. Linda then traveled back to

Sacramento. She had her own train car each way, spent most of the trips within the cars, even had her food delivered to them. More recently she and the "new family" traveled to Mallorca, Spain for a week, then split up so Linda spent another week exploring Barcelona. What a trip!

**MILK, MARTHA** is busy preparing to move to Austin, TX to live close to her family. We will be able to stay in touch with her by cell phone, # (775) 443-7986. Give her an occasional call. She wants to stay in touch with us who have stayed here!

**MONROE, DOUG and MARTHA** were able to get a June trip in to the North Carolina mountains, enjoying time with sisters and brothers-in-law. Their planned trip for September to Ireland is doubtful. They share their hope for the well-being of all of us and are grateful for their health.

**SCHWARZENTRAUB, BETSY and KEN** moved to Elk Grove this spring. Their address is 8681 Elk Way, Elk Grove 95624. They are using cell phones instead of a home land-line. Betsy's phone number is (530) 334-0305. Betsy and Ken say, "Take care and all the best to each of you."

**WATTERS-JULSING, KAY** is so happy to be back at home. Her daughter and granddaughter are there to help her. She was hospitalized March second with a bacterial blood infection. It attacked her heart's mitral valve necessitating open heart surgery. She spent the next five months plus at Mercy San Juan Hospital and Eskaton Rehab Center Manzanita, both in Carmichael. She was finally discharged from the hospital to home last week. We all send to you, Kay our positive thoughts, prayers, and well wishes for a smooth recovery and return to wholeness. May God's loving arms embrace you totally.

To ALL: Stay safe, stay well, be wise in your living while we still deal with the Covid pandemic and...  
STAY IN LOVE WITH GOD.



Word has been heard.....

The entire California-Nevada Retired Clergy Association send their concern and condolences to Sylvia Corson, their son Tom, daughter Mary and members of all of the Corson families within our boundaries. Peter, John and Sylvia's oldest son died suddenly July 7, 2021 from a brain injury sustained in an accidental fall. May you find comfort and peace knowing we care.

SAVE THIS PAGE  
FOR REFERENCE!



Photo by [Adi Goldstein](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Birthdays!

## September

KATHRYN ANDERSON  
VIRGINIA BLACK  
DENISE BOWMAN-WYLIE  
DAWN BOYD  
DAVE BUNJE  
CAROL CARTER  
JEAN CONRAD  
BOBBIE CORSON  
JANE CORSON  
MARY ANN DE OCERA  
RICHARD EDDE  
SHIRLEY FELLERSEN  
MYRTLE FINDLEY  
CARYL FLOYD  
GEORGE GOLDEN  
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JIM KUBIK  
YANG JA KYE  
MELE LOUMOLI  
MICHAEL LOVE  
DOLLY LOVE  
HELEN MANSFIELD  
LORI McLAUGHLIN  
YURI MORITA  
AURA-LILA OCHOA

CAROLE PATERSON  
KAREN PAULSEN  
NANCY PHARIS-CURIE  
NANCY PHILLIPS  
SHARON PITCHER  
MARLENE PLAIN  
VICTORIA SCHLINTZ  
VIVE SIMON  
NANCY SIMPSON  
STANLEY SIMPSON  
CHUNG-MYUNG SONG  
JERRY SUMMERS  
STEVEN THOMPSON  
JUDY TRAVELSTEAD  
TONY UBALDE JR.  
MARK VALE  
LISA VO  
BENTON WHITE  
CECIL WILLIAMS

## October

DAVID ATKINS  
ANGEL BETANCOURT  
JERRY BRUCE  
MARSHA BRYAN  
TOM BUTLER  
CAROLYN BUTLER  
VIRGIE CABOTAJE  
LOUISE CARTER  
BOB COLLINS  
GINNY CORZINE  
CORAZON CRUZ  
PAM CUMMINGS  
DENNIS CURIE  
DONNA DECAMP  
RAY DOWDY  
RON DUNN  
STEVEN EATOUGH-SMITH  
NYMPHAS EDWARDS  
JAN EVERHART  
CAROLINA FABILA  
MAY FINAU  
STAN GARMENT  
LYNN GEORGE  
NANCI GOODYEAR  
TOM GOULD  
FLORENCE GREILICH  
RONALD GREILICH  
SHIRLEY GUNCKEL  
HOLLY HILLMAN  
TOM HILLMAN  
HOLLY HILLMAN  
HEE-SOK KIM

ALAN KIMBER  
BOB KUYPER  
ELIZABETH ANN KUYPER  
PHIL LAWSON  
ROD LEE  
FRANK LEIBERT  
BRIAN MARK  
NANCY MATSON  
VICTOR MATSON  
KAREN McNEILL  
MARK MOON  
LARRY MOORE  
KRISTIE OLAH  
NANCY PATTERSON  
MACK PHILLIPS  
STEVE PUDINSKI  
VICKI RESCH  
SYLVIA ROBERTS  
RONALD SAYLOR  
NAOMI SOUTHARD  
LAURA LEE STARBUCK  
GLENDA THOMAS  
PATRICIA THOMPSON  
ANNE MARIE VALE  
SAMUEL VORN  
TEMPE WENNERHOLM  
DOROTHY WILLIAMS  
EMILY WOUDEMBERG



# ANNIVERSARIES!

## September

JERRY & SUE ANGOVE  
DAVE & JACKIE BENNETT  
BOBBIE & DICK CORSON  
DICK & BOBBIE CORSON  
NANCY & NORM DALEY  
JAN EVERHART & JAN RATLIFF  
ALPHA GOTO & PAMELA ODO-GOTO  
PHIL HALL & MARJORIE PATZER  
LEE & LINDA HAYWARD  
BILL & KATE JOHNSON  
VINCENT & KERRY MIXIE  
DOUG & MARTHA MONROE  
MICHAEL SWARTZ & NANCY MC CONNELL  
REV MIKE & CHRIS TURGEON  
SAMUEL & SOLINNA VORN  
PAUL & BARBARA WEBB  
HERB & ROSE WHITE

## October

JUAN & DEBBIE ARJONA  
WARREN DALE & GEORGI LaBERGE  
BARBARA HORIKOSHI-FIREBAUGH & JOHN FIREBAUGH  
HEE SOON KWON & HONG KI KIM  
DON LEE & TANA McDONALD  
HANKYU & YOONHYEH PARK  
PATRICIA SPOONER-WALTHER & GARRET WALTHER  
B.J. STILES & STEVEN MC COLLOM  
RICHARD STINSON & YURI MORITA  
JOHN SUBLETT & NADINE DeWITT  
DANTE & OLIVE TANGONAN

# WELCOME RETIREE CLASS OF 2021!

(SECOND -AND LAST- IN A SERIES)

## **Lisa Nordlander**

Her husband's name is Jeff, a Restorative Dentist, and together they have 2 adult children.

She currently is serving on the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

## **Holly and Tom Hillman**

After forty-one and a half years of ministry Holly and Tom are looking forward to retirement from formal ministry. Beginning in Boulder Creek United Methodist Church and ending in Burlingame United Methodist Church Holly and Tom feel that their ministry has been meaningful and fruitful. But now God is calling them to a new phase in their lives.

In addition to normal pastoral ministry, their time is being spent concluding the ministry at Burlingame, assisting in planning their son's wedding and preparing to move to Hughson where they have a home which they have rented out for a number of years.

Planning to take a sabbatical for a year Holly will keep busy with children, grandchildren, Kairos Prison Ministry at the Chowchilla State Prison and gardening. Tom will spend time with children, grandchildren, working in his machine shop, developing his skills as a Spiritual Director and his annual trek with a group up Half Dome in Yosemite.

Tom mentioned that they have an interest in participating in a House Church and of course Annual Conference.

## **Lori Sawdon**

Rev. Lori Sawdon is joining the ranks of retired clergy after serving under appointment for 35 years. She is currently serving First UMC Santa Rosa. In addition, she has been appointed to St. Paul's, San Jose; Trinity, Sunnyvale; Los Gatos, Rio Linda, Merced and Lafayette. Her dad lives in Reno and is requiring more assistance these days. One of the high points in her ministry was founding Wesley Foundation Merced when Merced UC was being built. Lori and her husband Mark will continue to reside in Santa Rosa and she looks forward to having time to walk the trails of Sonoma County. Their son Jeff lives in Southern California where he works in the film industry.

We welcome the entire Class of 2021 into Retired relationship!

We look forward to getting to know you in a new way.



## Help Wanted - Program Research and Development.

This sounds like a job in Silicon Valley, but actually it is with the Retired Clergy Association of the California-Nevada Annual Conference. The RCA serves retired clergy and their spouses through fellowship programming, mission opportunities, and spiritual care. We are seeking a quarter-time person to work with us for six months (with a possibility of extension) in surveying our very diverse 700+ membership about their needs and desires in these areas, evaluating current programming and helping to develop new ministries, with attention to the possibilities in new communication technologies.

You can get a full job description by email the RCA Executive Officer, Nancy Daley, at [nancydaley@ca-nv-rca.org](mailto:nancydaley@ca-nv-rca.org) or visiting the Retired Clergy website, <https://ca-nv-ca.org/>.

### Weather Report

by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

*Unfolding Light* [www.unfoldinglight.net](http://www.unfoldinglight.net)

Capacious,  
the air heavy with possibility  
under a cumulus of blessings.  
At lower levels obscuring fog will persist;  
at higher levels wonder will give way to gratitude,  
the winds of fortune loaded  
with more grace than you can absorb,  
though the wise will try.

Thank you to Donna DeCamp for sharing this poem.



Photo by [Mila Young](#) on [Unsplash](#)

California-Nevada Annual Conference of the  
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Retired Clergy Association  
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### EXECUTIVE OFFICER & RCA CONTACT INFO

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Annual Conference Session**

*October 28-31, 2021*  
> Sacramento/ZOOM

### **Annual Luncheon**

*To Be Determined*  
> To Be Announced

### **Spring Fling**

*April 19-21, 2022*  
> Christ The King  
Citrus Heights