

Discussion and film at Messiah College on forgiveness and oppression; February 2, 2011 at 7 p.m.

The relation of forgiveness to communal memories of oppression will define a symposium and film screening on Feb. 2, 2011 at 7 p.m. in Parmer Cinema on the campus of Messiah College in Grantham, Pennsylvania. In a program the Religion and Society Center helped to conceptualize, three panelists will explore communal memories of oppression as those memories are held by Jews, African Americans, and Amish and Mennonites, descendants of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists. The award-winning film, "The Power of Forgiveness," will follow those presentations. Named best documentary at the Sun Valley Spiritual Film Festival in 2007 and produced by Martin Doblemeier, this film explores forgiveness in the face of crimes so heinous that one would think forgiveness impossible. Following the panel presentations and the film, the audience will be invited to explore connections between all the issues raised.

The event is co-sponsored by a number of local, regional, and state-wide organizations, including the Religion and Society Center, The Interfaith Alliance of Pennsylvania, Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg, the Episcopal Church Central Pennsylvania Diocese, the Mennonite Central Committee East Coast, the Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, and the World Affairs Council of Harrisburg.

About the panelists

Marcia Sachs Littell is professor of holocaust and genocide studies at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. An author in the field of Holocaust studies, she has co-organized for over 40 years the annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches.

Robert A. Scott, professor emeritus in behavioral sciences and education at Penn State, is a specialist in cross-cultural counseling and diversity management, and helped design the "Framework for Diversity" for the entire Penn State system. In February 2010, the International Civil Rights Committee presented him the "Unsung Hero" award for his participation in the 1960 lunch counter sit-ins in Greensboro, NC.

David Weaver-Zercher is a leading authority on the history, life and culture of the Amish. He is a professor of American religious history at Messiah College and the co-author of "Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy" and "The Amish Way: Patient Faith in a Perilous World."