Our Assistant Director, Natasha Sistrunk Robinson, had the opportunity to participate in the 2015 Summer Institute of Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School where the theme was *Refresh your spirit, Renew Your Mind and Ministry, and Expand your Christian Community*. Dean Richard B. Hays urged attendees with the words: “In a confused world fractured by conflict and competition, and torn by tragic racial and ethnic tension, the message of reconciliation must be proclaimed more urgently and confidently than ever.”

Participants began and ended each day with worship which reflected a united body of Christ and celebrated the diversity of the ethnic groups, nations, and tongues present at the gathering. Facilitators and faculty led the group in a focused morning devotional which set the tone and carried themes for the remainder of the day. The theme of day one was *New Creation*, followed by the themes of *Lament, Hope, Spirituality* and *Sending*, respectively. So much of the learning experience was enriched by the table fellowship which occurred daily during breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

The Common Journey or general sessions consisted of two parts: theological presentation and practical application. Faculty and theologian lectures expanded upon biblical texts while practitioners followed the theological presentation with practical application for relevant topics and concerns like immigration reform, racial tension, the abuse of power by law enforcement, and political engagement. Participants had the opportunity to hear from the likes of Curtiss Paul DeYoung, author and executive director of the Community Renewal Society in Chicago, IL; Alexia Salvatierra, author of “Faith-Rooted Community Organizing” and ordained pastor; Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II, President of the North Carolina NAACP; and Cecilia, ministry initiatives director for the Department of Compassion, Mercy, and Justice (CMJ) of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Eight focused seminars were offered including: Theology of Reconciliation; Faith-Rooted Community Organizing; Mission among the Poor: Poverty, Power & the Kingdom of God; Sharing Communion but Not Convictions: Making Peace over the Same-Sex Marriage Divide in Local Churches; The Theology and Practice of Faith-Based Organizations; Isaiah and a Prophetic Ministry of Peacemaking; and Christian-Muslim Peacemaking for Christian Leaders. To support CDEL’s commitment to Multi-ethnic Leadership, our Assistant Director participated in the Segregated Sundays: Racial Reconciliation in the Church seminar.

As a center, we are thankful for Duke’s leadership and commitment to being a training ground, retreat, and advocate of reconciliation for the Christian church, faith leaders, and the world. We celebrate the appointment of Dr. Christena Cleveland as associate professor of the practice of reconciliation and as the new director of the Center for Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School.

Some Recommended Reading from the experience include:

*Radical Reconciliation: Beyond Political Pietism and Christian Quietism* by Allan Boesak and Curtiss DeYoung

*Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* by Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith
United by Faith: The Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race by Curtiss DeYoung and Michael Emerson

Teaching for a Culturally Diverse and a Racially Just World by Eleazar Fernandez

Disunity in Christ: Uncovering the Hidden Forces that Keep Us Apart by Christena Cleveland

Duke Divinity School Resources for Reconciliation book series:

Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing by Emmanuel Katongole & Chris Rice

Living Gently in a Violent World: The Prophetic Witness of Weakness by Stanely Hauerwas & Jean Vanier

Welcoming Justice: God’s Movement Toward Beloved Community by Charles Marsh & John Perkins

Friendship at the Margins: Discovering Mutuality in Service and Mission by Christopher L. Heuertz & Christine D. Pohl

Forgiving as We’ve Been Forgiven: Community Practices for Making Peace by L. Gregory Jones & Celestin Musekura

Living Without Enemies: Being Present in the Midst of Violence by Samuel Wells & Marcia A. Owen

Making Peace in the Land: God’s Call to Reconcile with Creation by Fred Bahnson & Norman Wirzba