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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **Trinity Institute's 38<sup>th</sup> National Theological Conference**

### ***Religion and Violence: Untangling the Roots of Conflict***

***An Interfaith Dialogue with  
James Carroll, James H. Cone, Susannah Heschel, and Tariq Ramadan  
Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori, Preacher***

**January 21-23, 2008**

**NEW YORK, June 14, 2007**—Trinity Church Wall Street will present Trinity Institute's 38<sup>th</sup> National Theological Conference, ***Religion and Violence: Untangling the Roots of Conflict***, on January 21-23, 2008. A panel of prominent Christian, Jewish, and Muslim theologians will explore the deeply rooted, seemingly inexorable union of religion and violence, illuminating the resources within each tradition for living together in peace, without losing the unique identities of each faith. Keynote speakers will include: **James Carroll, James H. Cone, Susannah Heschel, and Tariq Ramadan. Katherine Jefferts Schori**, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church, will preach the opening Evensong. Conference participation is open to clergy and laypersons of all faith traditions and can be attended onsite at Trinity Church, at video-linked partner sites located throughout the U.S. and Canada, and online at [trinitywallstreet.org](http://trinitywallstreet.org).

While people of all faiths raise prayers for peace, reports of religiously fueled violence fill the news. Critics question whether we can afford to tolerate any longer a force as destructive as religion. Is violence an inescapable result of religious commitment, or is it a distortion, a human projection on a God in whom there is no violence? Is it the sole province of extremists, or do its roots touch all persons of faith? Do solutions to the problem lie within the traditions themselves? Through keynote presentations and small group theological reflection, this interfaith gathering will provide opportunities to deepen understanding, build community and explore how religion

can be a powerful force for peace within ourselves, our families, our communities, and the world.

The Rev. Dr. James H. Cooper, Rector of Trinity Church/St. Paul's Chapel states, "In nearly four decades of exploring the intersection of faith and culture, Trinity Institute has never addressed a topic with such high stakes. Every day religious violence affects people around the world, threatening our very survival. This year's conference will not only consider the roots of religious conflict, but also ask how we can manifest religion's true vocation as a force for peace both locally and globally."

***Religion and Violence: Untangling the Roots of Conflict*** will be held for onsite participants at Trinity Church in New York City. Regional partner sites will be established throughout the United States and Canada for groups participating through an online telecast. Both onsite and offsite forums will include the keynote speakers, panel discussions, and facilitated break-out groups. The conference presentations will also be telecast live online and available on demand following the conference.

To attend the conference in New York, early registration before November 16 is \$300; registration between November 17, 2007 and December 31, 2007 is \$350; late registration after January 1, 2008 is \$400. The registration deadline is January 11, 2008. Registration is available online at [www.trinitywallstreet.org/institute](http://www.trinitywallstreet.org/institute) or by phone at 1-800-457-0224. Local parishes or groups wishing to apply to be a partner site will find information at [www.trinitywallstreet.org/institute](http://www.trinitywallstreet.org/institute), and click on "regional partners."

### **Keynote Speakers**

**James Carroll** is a bestselling author of fiction and nonfiction, a former Roman Catholic priest, and a lifelong activist for peace. His recent books include the National Book Award-winning memoir *An American Requiem: God, My Father, and the War that Came Between Us*; *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews -- A History*; and *House of War* (2006), a history of the Pentagon. His regular column for the Boston Globe newspaper is a widely read engagement with national and global issues.

**James H. Cone** forged black liberation theology in the crucible of the civil rights movement and has remained on the cutting edge of its development. His ten books began with *Black Theology and Black Power* and include *Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare*; *God of the Oppressed*; and his most recent work, *Risks of Faith: The Emergence of a Black Theology of Liberation, 1968-1998*. He is the Charles A. Briggs Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Seminary in New York City.

**Susannah Heschel** holds the Eli Black Chair on Jewish Studies at Dartmouth. A scholar of Jewish-Christian relations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, she is the editor of *On Being a Jewish Feminist* and *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity*, an anthology of essays by her father, Abraham Joshua Heschel, and co-editor of *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism*. She is the author of *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, which won a National Jewish Book Award, and the forthcoming *The Aryan Jesus: Christians, Nazis and the Bible*.

**Tariq Ramadan** writes and speaks on the future of Islam in pluralistic society. Named one of *TIME* magazine's "100 Innovators for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," he has written six widely translated books, including *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammed*; *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*; and *Islam, the West, and the Challenge of Modernity*. He is currently Senior Research Fellow at St. Antony's College (Oxford), Doshisha University (Kyoto, Japan), and the Lokahi Foundation (London).

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### **Trinity Institute**

Trinity Institute is a continuing education program founded in 1967 as an outreach of Trinity Church Wall Street, an Episcopal parish. The Institute's annual National Theological Conference equips clergy and laypersons for imaginative and catalytic leadership. Past conferences include: *The Anatomy of Reconciliation*, *Naming Evil* and *Shaping Holy Lives* with such speakers as Helen Prejean, Kofi Annan, and Rowan Williams. The conference presents emerging and inclusive theological perspectives and engages participants in inquiry, dialogue, and reflection. Theological reflection groups are assembled both onsite and at partner sites and provide opportunities to arrive at a deeper understanding of the presentations through peer learning,

reflect on how to integrate conference themes with life and work, and build community with colleagues. Participants from all faith traditions are welcomed.

### **Trinity Church-St. Paul's Chapel**

Firmly rooted in the history of the city of New York and the nation, Trinity Church was established under British royal charter in 1697. The Episcopal parish, consisting of Trinity Church and St. Paul's Chapel, offers eighteen worship services during the week and daily interdenominational prayers for peace at St. Paul's Chapel.

For three centuries, Trinity Church has reached out with neighbors, near and far, to be a catalyst for transformational change—from starting schools in New York in the eighteenth century to fighting apartheid in South Africa in the twentieth. Since 1972, Trinity Grants has funded more than \$72 million in eighty-five countries around the world. This philanthropy is the expression of a diverse and vibrant parish community. Parish ministries include the Trinity Institute Theological Conference; outreach efforts in lower Manhattan supporting the homeless at John Heuss House and the elderly at St. Margaret's House; liturgical and concert music programs hosting more than one hundred concerts each year through the Trinity Choir and Concerts @ One; a neighborhood preschool; and a premier website, [www.trinitywallstreet.org](http://www.trinitywallstreet.org), providing faith formation resources throughout the Anglican Communion. *For more information on Trinity Church-St. Paul's Chapel, go to [www.trinitywallstreet.org](http://www.trinitywallstreet.org).*