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Wimberly and Farmers' "Raising hope: 4 paths to courageous living for black youth" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Wimberly, A. & Farmer, S. (2017). *Raising hope: 4 paths to courageous living for black youth*. Nashville: Wesley's Foundery Books. 250 pp. \$24.99. ISBN 9780938162346

Raising Hope: 4 Paths to Courageous Living for Black Youth is a practical, scholarly book that provides proven methods to influence young Black youth effectively to make healthy choices and create positive outcomes for their future. This book can help educators, youth leaders, parents, pastors, and any caring adult guide Black youth as they navigate through often-difficult circumstances. It is full of methods on how to remind youth, and adults, that they can succeed and thrive in life and have a hopeful and promising future.

Anne E. Streaty Wimberly is the Professor Emerita of Christian Education at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta, Georgia. She currently serves as the Executive Director of the Youth and Family Convocation. She is a renowned African American researcher, scholar, professor, advocate, and champion of black youth and a leading Christian educator rooted in the United Methodist Church.

Sarah Frances Farmer is an associate research scholar and lecturer at Yale Divinity School. For the last ten years, Farmer has worked with Anne E. Streaty Wimberly at Youth Hope-Builders Academy, and currently co-directs the Certificate in Theological Studies Program at Arrendale Women's Prison in Alto, Georgia.

Raising Hope is divided into two parts. The first brings to light the opportunity that Black youth have of obtaining a courageous hope and promising future. This first part, "Envisioning Courageous Hope and Courageous Living," contains three chapters that present the idea of the nature of courageous hope that is needed in young Blacks, the role of church leaders and other engaged adults in stimulating and fostering courageous hope, and reasons for obligatory action. The second part emphasizes "Entering Pathways to Courageous Living" which presents a review of four pedagogical pathways, or programs, that are directed towards youth and forming a courageous hope in them. These pathways are the *narrative pathway*, a *creative pathway*, a *peacemaking pathway*, and a *pathway of exposure*. These chapters

contain a variety of ways that Black youth can be empowered and equipped with a courageous hope that uses storytelling, creative arts, teaches communication and relational skills to offset the violence in their culture, and by engaging them in multidimensional experiences that fosters positivity and purpose into their lives. Each of these four chapters provides relational strategies that these approaches focus on. The book is well documented, containing footnotes throughout, a bibliography, and an index. It is written clearly with historical and cultural accuracies and research to support its content.

The authors' purpose of writing this book is to encourage the church to be on the front lines of standing and supporting the youth, listening to their stories, standing with them in times of crisis and need, giving them hope when theirs is fading, and assuring them that God has a plan for them, which is filled with hope. This book does an excellent job of fulfilling its purpose, as its methods have been utilized within the Youth Hope-Builders Academy and is promoted by the United Methodist Church. There is limited literature that addresses Black youth on the bookshelves of Christian publishers, which is what makes *Raising Hope* unique and desirable to those engaged in helping Black youth.

Reviewer

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