

# Race Issue

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...for all  
of you  
are one  
in Christ  
Jesus

Galatians 3:28

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# May God Now Make Us Brave, and Strong, and Faithful

By the Rt. Rev. Andrew M.L. Dietsche

**M**artin Luther King, Jr. preached twice from the pulpit of the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine. Both sermons took place on May 17, and commemorated the Brown vs. Board of Education decision of the United States Supreme Court. The first was in 1956, on the second anniversary of the decision, and was attended by 12,000 people. The second was in 1965, nine years later. The first sermon was entitled “The Death of Evil Upon the Seashore,”<sup>1</sup> and took its text from Moses’ crossing of the Red Sea. The second was preached as an imaginary letter from Saint Paul to the United States of the 1960s. Both are creative, insightful and pointed, and perhaps as they were preached from our pulpit, I have become something of a student of these two addresses. But on the occasion of that first sermon, in 1956, Dr. King had a second speaking engagement on the same night, at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund annual dinner. That speech was entitled “A Realistic Look at Race Relations,”<sup>2</sup> and it is that speech, more than the two sermons, that I have been thinking about in these days.

King observed, in language which rings as true sixty years later as on the night he delivered the speech, that there are three attitudes regarding progress in race relations. The first is that of the optimist, and the second that of the pessimist. The optimist points to the great advances made in racial justice, and believes that the fulfillment of the civil rights hopes is inevitable. The pessimist argues that the gains made are modest, and that the fact of human original sin and of the inflexibility of human nature mean that the gains do not point toward an ultimate victory, which the pessimist sees as impossible. What the optimist and the pessimist share is the conviction that there is nothing which people, faced either with inevitability or impossibility, can or need do to further racial equality or civil rights justice and reconciliation. I’ll come back to the third attitude.

I think that both that optimism and that pessimism are alive today. The progress that has been made in America in racial equality is real, it is substantive, and by any measure we do not live in the same America as in the time of our former pre-1960s racial apartheid. These gains have come at high cost, and required profound sacrifice by many, but we have seen by those self-offerings a not inconsiderable measure of something like the “overcoming” for which so many prayed and sang. And the hope of that is so strong that I believe many progressive Americans, black and white, have seen in those gains, most markedly demonstrated by the election of a black president of the United States, all of the signs to convince them that the fight is almost over. We have, they believe, already won.

But many others, battered by the almost constant reports in our own day of violence against black people, and by the continued inequalities in education and health care and economic opportunity and political advancement, are seeing the very real civil rights gains which have been made as finally only a thin cover over a much deeper well of racial hatred in America. They have heard the renewed viciousness of racist language and assault. They have seen the numbers who are still dying. And they have concluded that those in the majority culture, white people, will never willingly relinquish the privileges that come with racial supremacy, and that faced with that reality, the assumptions, hopes and strategies of the civil rights struggle, as that struggle has been waged in the past, are finally ineffective to bring about the ultimate liberation we seek.

Neither the optimist nor the pessimist were wrong in 1956. Both conclusions can fairly be made from the same evidence. Neither are they wrong in 2017, though the context for the evidence to support either claim is different, more complex now, and reflective of sixty years of history that had not yet happened on the night that Dr. King gave this address. But when Martin Luther King gave this speech he described the third attitude toward race relations, which he named the Realistic Attitude. Finding the place of meeting between the merits of the arguments by both optimist and pessimist, he said: “We have come a long long way, and we have a long long way to go.”

He recognized that the struggle for equality continues, and that it is not yet time to declare either victory or defeat; not yet the time to rest on our gains nor to despair of unconquered evil. And I am convinced that the capacity he had to rise again every morning to face anew the same fight came from the depth of his remarkable, almost breath-taking Christian faith. To “rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.” It came from his certainty that in the Gospel of Jesus Christ are all those things necessary for the conversion of the human heart and the transformation of the human life. He worked for legislation to protect and advance oppressed people because he understood that the untransformed man of power needs the external control of law while we wait for God to turn him around. And he said: “Religion and education must change one’s internal feelings, but it is scarcely a moral act to encourage others to patiently accept injustice until a man’s heart gets right.”

That baptismal, eucharistic possibility of transformation of human beings is our special thing. We are the church. We refuse to give up or despair, or to passively count on a righteous parousia, so we intend in these days to take effective action to address the currents of racial injustice which are not gone from our common life, trusting that the God who has brought us thus far will lead us from strength to strength and glory to glory.

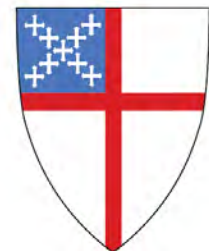
By the time we come to convention in November, I believe that the Reparations Committee of our diocese and I will be ready to roll out a three year proposal for serious racial study, dialogue, and reflection; honest repentance; and, finally, practical opportunities for the diocese to address the legacy of racial injustice inside our own church and do something about it. This is the work of internal transformation. You will hear much more about this, but it will ask of all of us our very best.

I am also partnering with Father Pierre Andre Duvert, Rector of Saint Luke’s Church in the Bronx, to develop a series of diocesan-wide indaba-style conversations among clergy about race, particularly regarding the barriers to and opportunities for raising up



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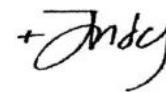
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<sup>1</sup>Text available at <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/death-evil-upon-seashore-sermon-delivered-service-prayer-and-thanksgiving>.  
<sup>2</sup>Typescript at <http://thekingcenter.org/archive/document/realistic-look-race-relations>.

ordained and lay leadership among people of color. We will also be calling together a steering committee of people to strategize the recruitment and training and deployment of clergy of color across the church, and broad leadership development among lay persons from congregations of color. This is the work of external structures and controls.

God has stretched out his mighty arm in our midst and in our day, and we have seen with our own eyes not only the sacrifices, but the overcomings and new possibilities

which have been God's reward to faithful soldiers. May God now make us brave and strong and faithful to continue to work for equality and justice, to serve peace and righteousness, and where we have work we may do to bring the church ever closer to God's Kingdom, to equip us for those challenges that we may meet them, face them, and rise above them. As Dr. King said 61 years ago in this great city, this is "soul work."



## Que Dios Ahora Nos Haga Valientes, Fuertes y Fieles

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Andrew M.L. Dietsche

**M**artin Luther King Jr. predicó dos veces desde el púlpito de la Catedral de San Juan el Teólogo. Ambos sermones ocurrieron el 17 de mayo, y conmemoraron la decisión de Brown contra la Junta de Educación de la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos. El primero fue en 1956, en el segundo aniversario de la decisión, y asistieron doce mil personas. El segundo fue en 1965, nueve años después. El primer sermón se tituló "La Muerte del Mal en la Orilla del Mar", y tomó su texto del cruce de Moisés del Mar Rojo. El segundo fue predicado como una carta imaginaria de San Pablo a los Estados Unidos de los años sesenta. Ambos son creativos, perspicaces e incisivos, y tal vez como fueron predicados desde nuestro púlpito, me he convertido algo así como en un estudiante de estos dos discursos. Pero en ocasión de ese primer sermón, en 1956, el Dr. King tenía un segundo compromiso en la misma noche, hablar en el Hotel Waldorf Astoria en la cena anual del Fondo de Defensa Legal de NAACP. Ese discurso se tituló "Una Mirada Realista a las Relaciones Raciales", y es en ese discurso que he estado pensando, más que los dos sermones en estos días.

King observó, en un lenguaje que suena tan verdadero sesenta años después como en la noche en que pronunció el discurso, que hay tres actitudes con respecto al progreso en las relaciones raciales. La primera es la del optimista, y la segunda la del pesimista. El optimista señala los grandes avances en la justicia racial, y cree que el cumplimiento de las esperanzas de los derechos civiles es inevitable. El pesimista argumenta que los avances logrados son modestos y que el hecho del pecado original humano y de la inflexibilidad de la naturaleza humana significa que los avances no apuntan hacia una victoria final, la cual el pesimista ve como imposible. Lo que el optimista y el pesimista comparten es la convicción de que no hay nada que las personas, frente a la inevitabilidad o la imposibilidad, puedan o necesiten hacer para promover la igualdad racial o los derechos civiles, la justicia y la reconciliación. Volveré a la tercera actitud.

Creo que tanto el optimismo como ese pesimismo están vivos hoy. El progreso que se ha hecho en América en la igualdad racial es real, es sólido, y en gran medida no vivimos en la misma América que en el tiempo del apartheid racial antes de los años sesenta. Estos avances han ocurrido a un alto costo y han requerido un sacrificio profundo de muchos, pero por esas ofrendas hemos visto una no insignificante medida de algo como la "superación" por la cual tantos oraron y cantaron. Y la esperanza de eso es tan fuerte que creo que muchos norteamericanos progresistas, blancos y negros, han visto en esos logros, lo más marcadamente demostrado en la elección de un presidente negro de los Estados Unidos, todas las indicaciones para convencerlos de que la lucha casi ha terminado. Ellos creen que ya hemos ganado.

Pero muchos otros, agobiados por los informes casi constantes en nuestro propio día de violencia contra los negros, y por las continuas desigualdades en educación y salud, oportunidades económicas y progreso político, están viendo los verdaderos avances logrados de los derechos civiles como solo una capa delgada sobre un pozo mucho más profundo de odio racial en América. Han escuchado la crueldad renovada del lenguaje y ataque racista. Han visto las cifras de los que siguen muriendo. Y han llegado a la conclusión de que aquellos en la cultura mayoritaria, los blancos, nunca renunciarán voluntariamente a los privilegios que vienen con la supremacía racial, y frente a esa realidad, los supuestos, las esperanzas y las estrategias de la lucha por los derechos civiles, emprendidas en el pasado, finalmente son ineficaces para lograr la liberación final que buscamos.

Ni el optimista ni el pesimista estaban equivocados en 1956. Ambas conclusiones se pueden hacer con justicia a partir de la misma evidencia. Tampoco están equivocados en 2017, aunque el contexto para la evidencia que apoya cualquier afirmación sea diferente, más complejo ahora, y refleja sesenta años de historia que aún no habían

ocurrido en la noche en que el Dr. King dio este discurso. Pero cuando Martin Luther King pronunció este discurso, describió la tercera actitud hacia las relaciones raciales, a la que llamó la Actitud Realista. Al encontrar el lugar de encuentro entre los méritos de los argumentos tanto optimistas como pesimistas, dijo: "Hemos recorrido un camino muy largo, y tenemos un largo camino por recorrer".

Reconoció que la lucha por la igualdad continúa, y que aún no ha llegado el momento de declarar la victoria o la derrota; no es tiempo todavía para descansar sobre nuestros logros ni desesperarse por el mal no vencido. Y estoy convencido de que la capacidad que él tenía de volver a levantarse cada mañana para enfrentar de nuevo la misma lucha provenía de la profundidad de su notable y casi extraordinaria fe cristiana. "Alegrarse con los que se regocijan y llorar con los que lloran". Vino de su certeza de que en el Evangelio de Jesucristo anidan todas aquellas cosas necesarias para la conversión del corazón humano y la transformación de la vida humana. El trabajó por la legislación para proteger y prosperar a los oprimidos, porque él entendió que el hombre de poder no transformado necesita el control externo de la ley mientras que esperamos que Dios lo cambie. Y él dijo: "La religión y la educación deben cambiar los sentimientos internos, pero no es un acto moral animar a los demás a aceptar la injusticia pacientemente hasta que el corazón de un hombre se enderece".

Esa posibilidad bautismal y eucarística de la transformación de los seres humanos es nuestro objeto especial. Somos la iglesia. Nos negamos a rendirnos o desesperarnos, o a esperar pasivamente en una parusía justa, por eso en estos días tenemos la intención de tomar medidas efectivas para enfrentar las corrientes de injusticia racial que no han desaparecido de nuestra vida común, confiando en el Dios que ha traído hasta aquí nos conducirá de fuerza en fuerza y de gloria en gloria.

En el momento en que lleguemos a la convención en noviembre, creo que el Comité de Reparaciones de nuestra diócesis y yo estaremos listos para presentar una propuesta de tres años para el estudio racial serio, el diálogo y la reflexión; el arrepentimiento honesto; y, finalmente, las oportunidades prácticas para que la diócesis enfrente el legado de la injusticia racial dentro de nuestra propia iglesia y haga algo al respecto. Este es el trabajo de transformación interna. Usted escuchará mucho más sobre esto, pero nos pedirá a todos nosotros lo mejor de nosotros.

También me estoy asociando con el Padre Pierre André Duvert, Rector de la Iglesia de San Lucas en el Bronx, para desarrollar una serie de conversaciones diocesanas estilo Indaba entre clérigos acerca de la raza, particularmente con respecto a las barreras y a las oportunidades para edificar el liderazgo ordenado y laico entre la gente de color. También estaremos convocando a un comité directivo de personas para planear estrategias de reclutamiento, entrenamiento y despliegue de clérigos de color a través de la iglesia, y un amplio desarrollo de liderazgo entre los laicos de congregaciones de color. Este es el trabajo de las estructuras y controles externos.

Dios ha extendido su poderoso brazo en medio de nosotros y en nuestros días, y hemos visto con nuestros propios ojos no solo los sacrificios, sino también las victorias y nuevas posibilidades que han sido las recompensas de Dios para los soldados fieles. Que Dios ahora nos haga valientes, fuertes y fieles para seguir trabajando por la igualdad y la justicia, para servir a la paz y al bien, y donde tengamos trabajo que podamos hacer para acercar a la iglesia cada vez más al Reino de Dios, a fin de equiparnos para esos desafíos y poder enfrentarlos y elevarnos por sobre ellos. Como dijo el Dr. King hace 61 años en esta gran ciudad, esto es "el trabajo del alma".



<sup>1</sup>Texto disponible en línea en <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/death-evil-upon-seashore-sermon-delivered-service-prayer-and-thanksgiving>

<sup>2</sup>Tipografía en <http://thekingcenter.org/archive/document/realistic-look-race-relations>



## Strangers at Home

By the Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin

In my former parish on Long Island, one of my parishioners was a Japanese American whom I had the privilege to get to know. As we spent time together, he told me his life story. He was born in Seattle and his family attended St. Peter's Japanese Episcopal Church. One day, his family and friends were rounded up and sent to an internment camp, where he grew up as a young boy. After his studies at the University of Chicago, rather than returning to Seattle he went eastward to Long Island and built his new life as a successful businessman. While he was still full of life in his mid-seventies, he died after a year-long bout with cancer. As he lay dying, I saw a man of immense courage and deep Christian faith in spite of the racism he experienced. James was a stranger in his own home.

The internment of 120,000 Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans was set into motion by Executive Order 9066, signed by President Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. The then managing secretary of the Grower-Shipper Vegetable Association, Austin Anson, is quoted as saying: "We're charged with wanting to get rid of the Japs for selfish reasons. We might as well be honest. We do. It's a question of whether the white man lives on the Pacific Coast or the brown men. If all the Japs were removed tomorrow, we'd never miss them in two weeks, because the white farmers can take over and produce everything the Jap grows. And we don't want them back when the war ends either." The last internment camp was not closed until March 20, 1946, well after the end of World War II.

Behind the Japanese internment is a long history of anti-Asian policies. The first naturalization law, enacted by the Congress in 1790, limited naturalization to "free white persons" of good character and required two-year residence for immigrants—thus excluding Native American Indians and African slaves from citizenship. As the number of Chinese laborers grew in the nineteenth century, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1882 to exclude Chinese laborers from naturalization and land ownership. This was soon followed by a law in 1885 that barred admission of Chinese contract laborers, and then another law in 1888 that allowed the deportation of Chinese laborers. Then in 1913, the State of California passed an Alien Land Law which barred Asians from owning land. The then State Attorney General of California, Ulysses



Webb, rationalized this law by saying, "It is unimportant and foreign to the question, whether a particular race is inferior. The single and simple question is, is the race desirable. . . It [the law] seeks to limit their presence by curtailing their privileges which they may enjoy here: for they will not come in large numbers and long abide with us if they may not acquire land. And it seeks to limit the numbers who will come by limiting the opportunities for their activity when they arrive."

In 1917, Congress passed a law which created an "Asiatic Barred Zone," and then passed the Asian Exclusion Act of 1924, which severely curtailed Asian immigration and naturalization. In 1923, Indian immigrants, who had been naturalized before due to their "Aryan" heritage, were officially reclassified as "non-white" and retroactively stripped of their citizenship. Native American Indians, meanwhile, were allowed to be naturalized by the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924.

In the aftermath of World War II, we did begin to see slow change in immigration policies. At the height of the Civil Rights Movement, the quota system lost favor, with the 1965 Immigration Act admitting immigrants based on their relationship with US citizens or residents or US employers. According to the 2012 census report, Asians are the fastest growing ethnic minority group today.

Occasionally I am asked, "Why are you a Christian and not a Buddhist?" Coming from a family of four generations of Christians, I never know quite how to answer that. I am also often asked, "Where are you from?" As a Korean immigrant, the answer for me is straightforward on one level. But having lived in the US for 45 years, this is my home, not Korea. On the other hand, for those Asian Americans who are born in the US, such as my niece, this is a pretty difficult question to deal with. Such a question seems to be saying, "You are not really American because you are Asian." This attitude, I believe, has its roots in the anti-Asian immigration and naturalization policies of the past centuries, which never allowed Asians to feel at home.

+ Allen

## Extraños en su Tierra

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Allen K. Shin

En mi antigua parroquia de Long Island, uno de mis parroquianos era un japonés americano a quien tuve el privilegio de conocer. Cuando pasamos tiempo juntos, él me contó la historia de su vida. Nació en Seattle y su familia asistió a la Iglesia Episcopal Japonesa de San Pedro. Un día, su familia y sus amigos fueron acorralados y enviados a un campo de prisión, donde el creció. Después de sus estudios en la Universidad de Chicago, en lugar de regresar a Seattle fue hacia el este, a Long Island y construyó su nueva vida como un exitoso hombre de negocios. Aunque todavía estaba lleno de vida, a mediados de sus setenta años, murió después de un año de batallar contra el cáncer.

Mientras estaba moribundo, vi a un hombre de inmenso valor y profunda fe cristiana a pesar del racismo que experimentó. James fue un extraño en su propia tierra.

La detención de 120.000 extranjeros japoneses y japoneses americanos fue puesta en marcha por la Orden Ejecutiva 9066, firmada por el Presidente Roosevelt el 19 de febrero de 1942. El entonces secretario administrativo de la Asociación de Cultivadores y Exportadores de Vegetales y Hortalizas, Austin Anson, se cita: "Nos acusan de querer deshacernos de los japoneses por razones egoístas. Podríamos ser muy honestos. Lo somos. Se trata de saber quiénes viven en la costa del Pacífico, el hombre blanco o los hombres marrones. Si todos los japoneses fueran eliminados mañana, nunca los extrañaríamos, porque los campesinos blancos pueden hacerse cargo y producir todo lo que cultivan los japoneses. Y tampoco los queremos de vuelta cuando termine la

guerra". El último campo de prisioneros no se cerró hasta el 20 de marzo de 1946, mucho después del final de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Detrás del aprisionamiento japonés hay una larga historia de políticas anti-asiáticas. La primera ley de naturalización promulgada por el Congreso en 1790 limitó la naturalización a "personas blancas libres" de buen carácter y requirió residencia de dos años para los inmigrantes, excluyendo así a los indios nativos americanos y a los esclavos africanos de la ciudadanía. A medida que el número de trabajadores chinos aumentó en el siglo XIX, la Ley de Exclusión de China fue aprobada en 1882 para excluir a los trabajadores chinos de la naturalización y la propiedad de la tierra. Esto fue seguido pronto por una ley en 1885 que prohibió la admisión de los trabajadores chinos contratados, y luego otra ley en 1888 que permitió la deportación de trabajadores chinos. Luego, en 1913, el Estado de California aprobó la Ley de la Tierra Extranjera que le prohibía a los asiáticos poseer tierras. El entonces Procurador General del Estado de California, Ulysses Webb, racionalizó esta ley diciendo: "Si una raza en particular es inferior, no es importante y ajeno a la cuestión. La única pregunta simplemente es, ¿es la raza deseable. . .? La ley procura limitar su presencia restringiendo los privilegios que pueden disfrutar aquí: porque no vendrán en gran número y no se quedarán con nosotros si no pueden adquirir tierra. Y trata de limitar el número de personas que vendrán limitando las oportunidades de su actividad cuando lleguen".

(continuado en la paginación 48)

## Racism and Sanctuary

By the Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool

I thought I understood the assignment I had practically given myself: to write my column on the connection between racism and sanctuary. My initial thoughts and conversations had been about what I see as the Church's *duty* to provide safe places in which to have difficult conversations about race, as well as working to ease the growing pressure to reject and deport those people living and working in our country who do not have the appropriate documents.

But when I sat down to write the column, and casually googled *racism and sanctuary* to see what would come up on the Internet, I was astonished to find a plethora of different articles, video clips, and ideas in placing those two words together about which I had not thought! I watched a two-minute video of an African American mother at a town hall meeting in California passionately decrying the town's attempt to become a "Sanctuary City" and supporting President Trump's Executive Order on Travel because, as she said, undocumented immigrants have, for years, taken away jobs from African American citizens of this country. I read a *Washington Post* article (May 5) titled *Sports are not a sanctuary from racism* written immediately following the racist slurs and name-calling that occurred in Boston's Fenway Park during a game with the Baltimore Orioles. And I read, in the online publication *Latinlife.com*, an article about how many restaurants (at least around Chicago) are signing up to be *Sanctuary Restaurants*—safe places where people of color can dine without harassment.

A possible connection between *racism* and *sanctuary* is almost certainly filled with irony. The history of this country is built, in large part, on forcing huge numbers of



African people away from their homes to come here and build this country while they were treated as less than human. Today it seems that our country wants to shut its doors to others and even deport many who have lived here and worked to continue to build the country. I should note that this perspective is that of a white person of European descent.

Even so, I have a fear or two, and some hope for the future as we in the Episcopal Diocese of New York continue to struggle against the evil of racism and try to live into the Reign of God who welcomes all. One fear I have is that some of us—especially those of us who are white—will find working on sanctuary a way to feel better about ourselves as we subtly avoid dealing with the deeper and infinitely more treacherous issues of the institutional racism that keeps our entire country imprisoned. And I have a fear that we will give up fighting that evil precisely because it is so complicated.

Then my (and God's?) hope kicks in and says to me that the entire Episcopal Church has made battling racism and doing the work of racial reconciliation a central part of its engagement with God's Mission: *Reconciliation lies at the heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; it is simultaneously that which we long for, and that which remains elusive* (from the Episcopal Church's website). You and I are not alone. We are all affected by the sin of racism, and together we will work for racial reconciliation even as we continue to build safe places for all God's people.

## Sobre Racismo y Santuario

Por la Revdma. Obispa Mary D. Glasspool

Creía comprender la asignación que prácticamente me había dado: escribir mi columna sobre la conexión entre el racismo y el santuario. Mis primeros pensamientos y conversaciones habían sido sobre lo que veo como el *deber de* la Iglesia de proporcionar lugares seguros para tener conversaciones difíciles sobre la raza, así como trabajar para aliviar la creciente presión para rechazar y deportar a las personas que viven y trabajan en nuestro país que no tienen los documentos apropiados.

Pero cuando me senté para escribir la columna, y casualmente busqué en Google sobre *racismo y santuario* para ver lo que aparecería en Internet, ¡me sorprendió, al poner juntas esas dos palabras, encontrar una plétora de diferentes artículos, videoclips e ideas sobre lo que no había pensado! Vi un video de dos minutos de una madre afroamericana en una reunión del ayuntamiento en California que desacreditaba apasionadamente el intento de la ciudad de convertirse en una "Ciudad Santuario" y apoyaba la Orden Ejecutiva del Presidente Trump sobre Viajes porque, como ella dijo, los inmigrantes indocumentados desde hace años, les han quitado los trabajos a los ciudadanos afroamericanos de este país. Leí un artículo del *Washington Post* (5 de mayo) titulado *Los deportes no son un santuario del racismo* escrito inmediatamente después de los insultos racistas y de los nombres que se dieron en el Fenway Park de Boston durante un juego con los Orioles de Baltimore. Y leí, en la publicación en línea *Latinlife.com*, un artículo sobre cuántos restaurantes (por lo menos alrededor de Chicago) están firmando para ser *restaurantes santuario* - lugares seguros donde la gente de color puede cenar sin acoso.

Una posible conexión entre racismo y santuario está ciertamente llena de ironía. La historia de este país se construye, en gran parte, en forzar una gran cantidad de

gente africana a irse lejos de sus hogares para venir aquí y construir este país, mientras eran tratados como menos que humanos. Hoy parece que nuestro país quiere cerrar sus puertas a otros e incluso deportar a muchos que han vivido y trabajado aquí para continuar construyendo el país. Debo señalar que esta es la perspectiva de una persona blanca de ascendencia europea.

Aun así, tengo un temor o dos, y alguna esperanza para el futuro, ya que en la Diócesis Episcopal de Nueva York continuamos luchando contra el mal del racismo y tratamos de vivir en el Reino de Dios que acoge a todos. Un temor que tengo es que algunos de nosotros - principalmente aquellos de nosotros que somos blancos - vamos a creer que el trabajo en el santuario es una forma de sentirnos mejor acerca de nosotros mismos mientras sutilmente evitamos tratar con las cuestiones más profundas e infinitamente más traicioneras del racismo institucional que mantiene a todo nuestro país. Y tengo miedo de que dejemos de combatir ese mal, precisamente porque es tan complicado.

Entonces mi esperanza (¿y la de Dios?) entra en acción y me dice que una parte central del compromiso con la Misión de Dios de toda la Iglesia Episcopal es combatir el racismo y trabajar por la reconciliación racial: *La reconciliación está en el corazón del Evangelio de Jesucristo; es simultáneamente lo que anhelamos y lo que esquivamos* (del sitio web de la Iglesia Episcopal). Tú y yo no estamos solos. Todos somos afectados por el pecado del racismo, y juntos trabajaremos por la reconciliación racial, incluso mientras continuamos construyendo lugares seguros para todo el pueblo de Dios.



The Episcopal Diocese of New York Presents:  
**The 2nd Annual  
Global Mission Fair  
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**“We Will All be Changed: Mission as Mutual Transformation”**

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**Christ Church Bronxville  
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- **Booths:** Advancing human rights in Central America with Cristosal, empowering poor children in Honduras with El Hogar, Global Women's Fund, Haiti Project, Human Trafficking, India Network and others
- **Workshops:** *Engaging All Ages of the Congregation in Global Mission* given by Rev. Matt Heyd and Rev. Richard McKeon. *Mission the Size of a Mustard Seed: Stories of Transformation From the Field*, multiple speakers

**There will be designated buses going to and from the Mission Fair  
making multiple stops in Manhattan**

**Admission \$20 when registered by October 1, \$30 thereafter: Lunch included**

For more information and to register, go to [www.diocesenyny.org/gmfair17](http://www.diocesenyny.org/gmfair17) Call 212-316-7484 with any questions.



# The Legacy of Racism

By Nell Braxton Gibson

I've been an Episcopalian all my life—growing up in Georgia, Texas, Florida, Mississippi, Northern California and New York City. I came of age in segregated southern churches but the God that southern white Episcopalians worshipped across town, the God that kept the white Bishop of Mississippi from entering my little black church in Jackson—that God was never my God and that Episcopal Church was never my Episcopal Church.

When I was a child, the African American community I lived in taught me that my God was the God of my ancestors; the ancestors who sang, “I’ve Been Buked and I’ve Been Scorned,” and “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?” That was my ancestors’ God and that was (and is) my God.

My ancestors’ God is the God who guided my parents and me through a southern race riot, the God who saved my mother’s life after a horrific car accident in a segregated southern town, the God who protected me as I smuggled information and banned music in and out of South Africa during apartheid; the God who comforted me when my son was taken from this earth and I gave up my will to live.

Sometimes when history repeats itself, when black men and women are shot down in the streets of this country, I argue with and rant at my God. Weren’t the bodies that were raped, the stolen ones that died in the Middle Passage and the ones who endured slavery enough? Weren’t the lynchings after Reconstruction enough? Weren’t the murders of Emmett Till, Mack Parker and countless others enough? Did we still have to endure the killings of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, Lt. Richard Collins, III and God knows how many unrecorded others?

My ranting at God about these atrocities is not to negate the oppression and pain of other groups that have, and continue to suffer. This country has been unspeakably cruel to and intolerant of Native Americans who nourished and respect this land; to Chinese people who built the rail roads, to the Irish, Italians, Jews, Latinos, Haitians, Japanese and Muslims; to nearly every immigrant and refugee population that has come to these shores. So I’m not for one minute minimizing what other groups have been through. It’s just that as an African American I can only personally speak of what African Americans have experienced.

Sadly, this legacy of racism remains in our country and in our church and it is doubly painful when the place we call safe (church) becomes the place in which we experience rejection and discrimination. In June at a conference of the Episcopal Women’s History Project, women of color told our stories of both the pain and the hope we have found in The Episcopal Church (TEC). Much of what we shared was heartbreaking but many of us still have hope that we can work for change from inside the church we hold dear.

Some of us were asked why we stay in TEC. My answer is that when I was young, Jim Crow laws dictated that I attend an all-black church,

and as rich as that experience was, I wanted for myself and for my children, a church experience in which the whole of humanity worshipped together—black, white, Asian, Native American, Latino, LGBTQ, married people, singles, families—so that’s the kind of parish I became part of. Yet something inside me also longed for the loving experience of my childhood, longed for a worship experience in which I did not need to explain myself—and I wanted that for my children as well. From time to time I wanted to worship in a place where we could see black bishops, priests, deacons and laity together. Black people singing our blues, Gospels, spirituals, jazz and hip hop as we swayed together and clapped our hands. I found it in the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE).

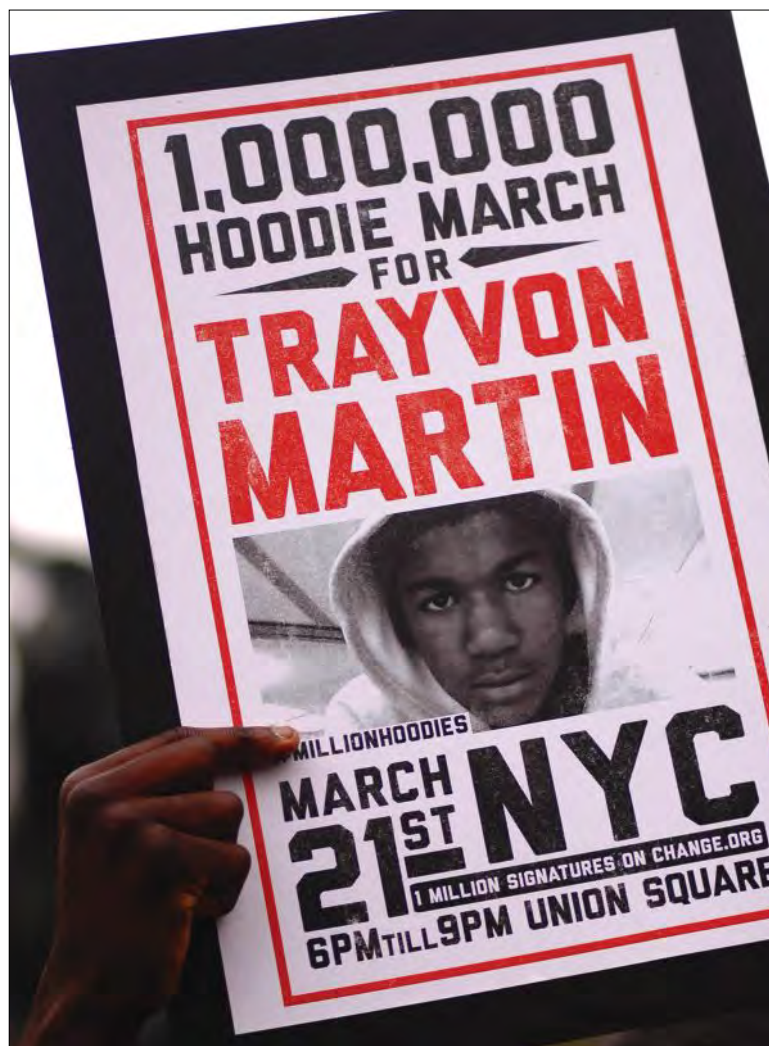
Like all Black institutions where organizations bonded and found power, the UBE was formed to work for justice from within TEC. The founders knew that most of the progress in race relations in church and society has come through laws brought about by black political clubs, social institutions, schools, fraternities, sororities, civil rights groups and black churches. So they came together to make that kind of difference in TEC.

I also became part of the Episcopal Urban Caucus (EUC), a church organization in which leadership is shared among all races and genders. It has set a remarkable example of multi-racial governance. And while our proceedings may not always feel tidy, every race and gender within the EUC has had a turn at the presidency and we have lived into true forms of acceptance of and tolerance for one another.

Sadly in this country Native people are still working to gain respect for this land and for themselves—most recently at Standing Rock. African Americans still come face to face with murderous bigots and lynching nooses—a few weeks ago a noose was found at the African American Museum of History and Culture. Latinos are afraid to open their front doors, send their children to school or worship in church for fear ICE will arrest and deport them. And Muslim Americans contend with name calling, damaged mosques and the banning of people from the countries of their families’ origin. And people of color still find barriers to equality within TEC.

On the bright side there is another legacy that continues. The abolitionist movement that began during slavery materialized later in the civil rights movement and lives today in Black Lives Matter, MoveOn.org, Change.org, The Dream Defenders and other organizations that work to combat racism and oppression. And the God of my childhood lives on as the God of the oppressed. It is to this God that I entrust the future of my country and my church.

*The author, a member of St. Mark’s Church in-the-Bowery, has served the diocese in numerous ways over the years, including as chair of the Reparations Committee. In 2016 she was awarded the Bishop’s Cross.*



“Did we still have to endure the killings of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, Lt. Richard Collins, III and God knows how many unrecorded others?”  
Photo: Michael Fleshman, Flickr.



# Waking Up Slow

By the Rev. Stephen C. Holton



I woke up to the fact that “liberty and justice for all” in this nation was not for all, but simply for some.

*“Jesus) cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.” (John 11:43-44)*

Lazarus woke up dead. Though a friend of Jesus, he still had fallen victim to the diseases that stalked his society—as racism stalks us. It was in the air. Perhaps he didn’t have a choice. All fall victim.

Nevertheless, his friend Jesus had not given up on him, but came to save him. His beloved Words penetrated the tomb, and Lazarus’ sickened heart, and brought it to life. His Words bring us to life.

Lazarus came out of the tomb, still stinking with the disease that put him there, as the racism that has infected our actions still reeks. We cannot help but bear the stench. Others stand back, unable to do anything to help us—until they too are freed from their inaction by Jesus. For he says to them: “Unbind him, and let him go.” Here, the Church steps forward to help, no longer horrified, no longer turning up its nose at the stench of the dead. We can step forward to help others out of the bandages, the habits that still hold them, so they can walk free into the new life that Jesus has promised.

People are waking up to the racism that has sickened our nation for too long, and the whole world for too long. The Word is abroad. But there are few to help them step completely free; and there are many who are happy either to avoid the resurrected sinner, or to turn up their noses because he still stinks.

Jesus sets us free so we can help his other friends get free. This is a story of freedom for me, and about those—white and black, liberal and conservative—who played a part, and showed a way.

After Trayvon Martin’s death and George Zimmerman’s acquittal, I woke up to the fact that “liberty and justice for all” in this nation was not for all, but simply for some. The biggest wake-up call was not simply Trayvon Martin’s death. It was rather, upon George Zimmerman’s acquittal, the complete lack of surprise among African Americans whom I knew. This was an appalling commentary on the record of our country—and on my appalling ignorance of that record.

I later preached on this to my parish in northern Westchester, and spoke of my belief that it was my duty as an American citizen to make sure “liberty and justice for all,” was indeed for all. They agreed.

There was a rally for Trayvon Martin’s parents. I went down, hoping to be a person of comfort at a time when there had been so little comfort. I went to be a white

face in what might be a black space. I was stepping out of my tomb, if you will, not certain of how I would be received.

An African American man about my age was standing next to me. He turned and said, very simply and quietly: “How are you doing?” I said, “Fine, how are you doing?” We shook hands. His handshake, in many ways, unbound me and let me go. It welcomed me into this circle of freedom, this circle of a newer America and a newer humanity.

A second story shows the release of liberal and conservative from their respective roles—a division that also afflicts our country. On Memorial Day, my parish processed across the street to the historic cemetery in our town. We went to give thanks for all those who had left their homes in the Revolution, the Civil War, and beyond—to fight for liberty and justice for all.

I contacted the police department to assign an officer to the intersection. As we crossed, I asked him, “do you have any buddies you’d like us to pray for?” “All the wars,” he said. The poignancy of his words caught me, and the sheer openness with

which he spoke.

Again, a handshake helped us remove the bandages that bound us. This time the help was between liberal priest and conservative police officer. We both walked into a circle of freedom.

Finally, recently, I attended an “NYC Loves Muslims” rally. There again, I hoped a white face, and clergy shirt and collar, would convey love from an unexpected source.

The next day I preached on this. I spoke of how Jesus sends us out to the nations with love, even if we’re not sure what more we can do. After church, a member asked me: “So, do you leave church every Sunday and go to a demonstration?” “No,” I said. “A lot of my friends are afraid for their rights and their safety. I figure if I go down there, they’ll be less scared.”

“Oh, makes sense,” he said.

Friendship makes sense. Friendship cuts across the divisions of politics and race and religion. Yet friendship with Jesus also comes with a cost. The cost is to step forward in love when others hold back.

It seems Jesus can’t free everyone all by himself. He needs us to step forward, to whomever is in our midst—black or white, liberal or conservative—extend a hand and unbind them, and let them go.

*“Friendship with Jesus comes with a cost—to step forward in love when others hold back.”*

*The author is interim pastor at St. James’ Church, North Salem and founder/director of Warriors of the Dream at St. Philip’s Church, Harlem.*



## Race and the Way We Reach Out

By *Leeanna Varga*

**W**hen did you become aware that there was something called race? When did you become aware that people are treated differently based on race? With these two questions, members of the diocesan Anti-Racism Committee launched a morning of spirited discussion for participants in a workshop for Episcopal Charities grantees.

“The goal of that particular workshop was to open a door to get people to start thinking about race, and where we fit into the whole scheme of race in America,” said Carla Burns, Chair of the diocesan Anti-Racism Committee.

Such discussions are a building block of the two-day anti-racism workshops offered by the Committee on behalf of the diocese. At Episcopal Charities’ request, the Committee modified the workshop to focus on the race, privilege, and power dynamics inherent in outreach work and offered it last October to Episcopal Charities’ grantees and others engaged in parish-based outreach efforts.

What does anti-racism training have to do with food pantries, community kitchens, summer camps, after school programs, other outreach programs? Becoming aware of ways in which privilege and oppression—both internalized and external—operate is critical to effective outreach. Are people unable to live the life God intends for them due to overt or institutionalized racism? Do racial stereotypes play a role in our expectations for those we are trying to assist? Does internalized oppression impact the ways in which we offer—or don’t offer—our gifts for outreach ministry?

Also, there is an inherent power imbalance between those engaged in service and those on the receiving end. Do our parishes and outreach programs model the self-reflection and learning necessary to correct those imbalances?

“As professional [service providers], we have an obligation to be culturally diverse and understanding,” said Ya’el Williams, Executive Director of Helping Hands for the Homeless of Rockland, an organization supported by Episcopal Charities through St. Mary’s, Tuxedo Park. As a US Special Forces veteran who worked as a VA nurse and a workforce development trainer before taking on the leadership of Helping Hands, he “was surprised that so many people were oblivious to what is considered racism.” Nonetheless, he found the workshop engaging and interesting, and left hoping that “we took away the understanding that we have to look at [people] as individuals.”

As a result of the training, Lana Williams-Scott, a lay leader at St. George’s Church, Newburgh who serves as Program Director for Voices of Hope, a community children’s choir founded by the church, was inspired to make some staffing changes. Counselors from more privileged backgrounds didn’t always understand where children in the program were coming from, she said, and sometimes made insensitive comments. “We began talking about the racial makeup of our staff,” and “discussing how to bring in volunteers from different backgrounds.”

Beyond discussion, the training incorporated experiential learning exercises and even a short film to get participants thinking about privilege, “to understand how subtle privilege can be, and how we don’t even know when we’re exercising it,” Burns said. A number of participants named those tools as the most powerful aspect of the training and have subsequently used them in their outreach programs.

Santy Barrera, Community Engagement Coordinator for

the GO Project, an educational enrichment program founded by Grace Church, Manhattan, is one. “I enjoyed the [experiential] activity,” he said, “it was really thought provoking . . . and changed a lot in the way I saw my work at GO Project.”

One of his responsibilities is to lead a leadership training program for rising ninth graders, alumni of the program. “I’m implementing that activity,” he said. The training focuses in part on issues of social injustice, and “we need to be aware of our biases, stereotypes, and language. Along with the film, the exercise “led to an honest conversation about how we felt [about privilege] and how we can bring that awareness to our work.”

McKenzie Burton, the Intern Coordinator for Young at Arts, an arts education program of Christ Church, Bronxville, commented on the power of an article on white privilege, another resource shared by trainers. She shared a similar article with the youth she serves, to spark self-reflection and discussion. “[Anti-racism] training gets you thinking outside your normal routine,” she said. “It’s always helpful to get resources and ideas . . . to talk about diversity, to talk about loving one another.”

“We try to put people into a mindset, into an anti-racist attitude,” Burns explained. “That means you are examining your own behavior and assessing it. We all need to be more aware and check our own behavior.”

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*The author serves as program director for Episcopal Charities.*

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The diocesan Anti-Racism Committee offers two-day trainings at least three times each year. The next training will be held September 29-30 at St. Paul’s on-the-Hill, Ossining.

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Episcopal Charities Sustainability Institute Workshops are open to anyone in the diocese engaged in parish-based outreach work. For information on upcoming workshops, please visit [www.ec-ny.org](http://www.ec-ny.org).

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**Incarnation Camp's Pioneer Village offers teens a rustic camping experience including canoe and hiking trips, rock climbing, sailing, swimming, and wilderness survival skills. Episcopal Charities' grant provides scholarship assistance for youth who could not otherwise afford to attend.**

Photo credit: Incarnation Camp





The summer camp run by St. Mary's, Harlem is a free program for neighborhood elementary school children, particularly those living in nearby public housing and shelters. The grant from Episcopal Charities helps pay for enrichment activities such as photography, building solar cars, and a trip to a Broadway play.

Photo credit: St. Mary's, Harlem



Each summer at the Brighter Futures Summer Camp run by Lifting Up Westchester, approximately 90 homeless and low-income children enjoy swimming, Double Dutch, and basketball as well as arts and crafts, music and academic activities. The program, founded and supported by Grace Church, White Plains, receives funding from Episcopal Charities to pay for scholarships.

Photo credit: Lifting Up Westchester



St. John's, Monticello is receiving a grant in support of Nesin Cultural Arts, which offers music, visual arts, and dance instruction to children and teens living in impoverished and isolated Sullivan County. St. John's provides Nesin with space for lessons, rehearsals, and performances as well as volunteer and financial support.

Photo credit: Nesin Cultural Arts



Three days per week, youth enrolled in the Angels Basketball Program at the Church of St. Matthew & St. Timothy, Manhattan receive instruction and mentoring from Coach Tony Cooper. Episcopal Charities' grant helps underwrite the cost of court rental, food, and stipends for interns who offer tutoring, SAT prep, and enrichment activities.

Photo credit: The Church of St. Matthew & St. Timothy



The Pied Piper Children's Theatre, run by Holy Trinity, Inwood stages four to five theatrical productions each year, providing neighborhood youth the opportunity to learn performance and technical theater skills. This year Episcopal Charities is also helping to fund an intensive 4-week summer program for teens, a program which will employ alumni volunteers.

Photo credit: Pied Piper Children's Theatre



# Being Someone “Other”

By the Rev. Ruth Anne Garcia

So here is the thing—when it comes to race, there is only one. The uniqueness inherent in the faces and bodies of human beings and the incredible ways that God combines the almost identical make-up of our human genomes (we are 99.9 per cent identical in terms of our DNA) reflects just some of the endless possibilities that make up the face of God. These superficial differences are just that—a gift of loving detail given by a creative God who rejoices in wonderful, extravagant, beautiful difference. God is in the details. You needn't take my word for it—just look at a mandrill, or a golden pheasant or a chihuahua. Better yet, look at your face in the mirror. Every hair on our heads is counted. Only a wonderful God would have invested such time in such beautiful distinctions.

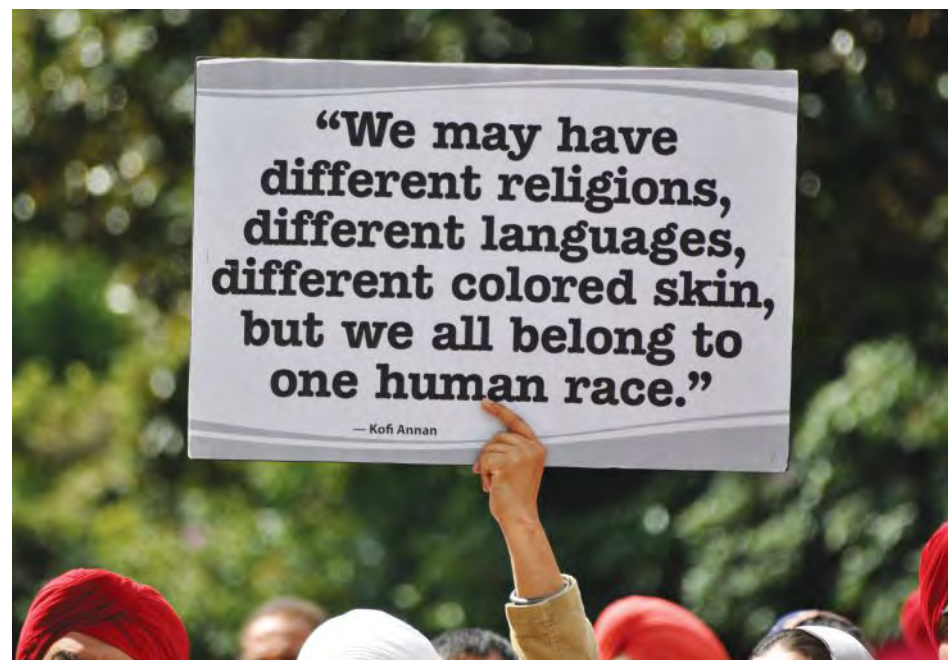
And we do notice differences. It is something that we begin to do as soon as we are born. Our brains are hard-wired that way. In fact, up until around three months old, we humans recognize the unique attributes of individual facial differences apart from ethnicity.<sup>1</sup> Less than a month later, however, the way we recognize difference changes. By six months, we are only able to see the distinctive differences within the faces of those who look like our families, the people we see around us, or our own ethnic group. It is part of how our brain develops. We do notice difference. We also make generalizations about differences.

While I am neither a research psychologist nor an expert on infant / child brain development, I think it is important to talk about how our brains begin early on to distinguish between “us” and the “other.” Knowing this can help us to understand how we, as God's children, can so easily fall prey to prejudice, xenophobia and damaging generalizations. Regardless of how we might wish to believe that we live in advanced civilizations, we are still a world disfigured by racism and fear of the other.

I am one such “other.” But, what that kind of “other” is not clear and has changed with time, geography and hair color. I identify as a person of color. What that means exactly will have to wait until I cough up the money for the DNA test. My grandmother was reticent to talk about her mother's heritage. She called her an “original Texan;” a euphemism for Native American—which family lore suggests to be either Cherokee, Apache or Comanche. Her father was a blond-haired, blue-eyed Spaniard. A picture of them on the wedding day reveals nothing more than two young people in their wedding finery. My grandfather's father was another blond-haired, blue-eyed Catalanian; his mother a dark curly-haired Castilian with a Sephardic name.

My mother's family, on the other hand, came from the north of Europe—her father from Yorkshire and her mother's family, some of whom were here before the American Revolution, from Belgium and Germany. But this story of who I am may or may not be true—it is nothing more than the gossamer fluff of family trees, stories and names.

What is true, however, is my experience of growing up other in a community that was 99.9 per cent “Caucasian.” There I became concretely aware that I was, without a doubt, “other.” There all the aspects that a DNA test might reveal were subsumed under the realm of “other.” I was a stranger in my own hometown and all my God-given differences were erased. I was only a girl whose dark hair stuck out like a sore thumb. It makes sense, therefore, that I was asked almost daily, “Where are you from?” And why the truth, “I am from here” didn't satisfactorily answer the question. Not that the questioner wanted to get too specific. There, as in many places in our country, Spanish/Hispanic/ Latino/ South American are seen as the same. The cultures and histories of continents and countries which are rich,



Speaking the truth at American Sikh Day at California State Capitol, April 13, 2011

Photo: Jasleen Kaur, Flickr.

full, and distinctly different are melded together.

“Where is your family from?”

“Well I have a grandfather from Spain and one from England and...”

“So, you are Mexican?”

“Um, well, my grandfather is from Spain. My grandmother is “original Texan?”

“It is the same thing.”

We make distinctions. We generalize.

We also make our distinctions and our generalizations part of official documents. While the Census Bureau is now considering new ways of finding out information about origin, I grew up having to check a box about my race. Am I white if white means predominately European ancestry? Am I part Native American if I don't know which tribe? Am I Hispanic even though Spain is not listed under the choices?

This is all made more difficult because I did not grow up speaking Spanish or knowing anything about my heritage. My grandparents were of the time when fitting in and speaking English was part of what becoming an American meant. My grandfather's businesses were “headed” by an Anglo employee because his surname, an inheritance I have chosen to keep, made it difficult for him to do business. That he wanted us all to be “Americans” makes perfect sense. It just means that I am now not even a real part of the Spanish-speaking community. Can you be truly Hispanic if you don't speak Spanish? Can you be truly American even if you don't?

A few years ago, I lost a central part of my identity. I discovered my first gray hair at 16. After years of trying to keep my hair dark, I finally decided it would be easier to dye my hair lighter. And then, no longer the girl-with-the-dark hair, someone asked me if my surname came through marriage.

While I still don't know into which category I fit, I'm aiming at rejoicing in all the wonderful, extravagant, beautiful differences God gave me. The human race encompasses all human beings. Until folks recognize that—recognize me—I check the box entitled “Other.”

*The author is interim pastor of Grace Church, Middletown.*

<sup>1</sup>The Other-Race Effect Develops During Infancy: Evidence of Perceptual Narrowing, David J. Kelly, Paul C. Quinn, Alan M. Slater, Kang Lee, Liezhong Ge, Olivier Pascalis



# A Cry for Justice for Native Americans

By Janine Tinsley-Roe

**T**o a Native American, reparations can mean hope—hope that perhaps the Creator/God lives in the heart of the Conqueror. The hope that good can prevail over evil, that our lives and the lives of all of our people will not have been lost for nothing.

The Christian Church today speaks of injustices, but only rarely of the genocide of the Native American. Where is our church's conscience and heart, Great Spirit? I do not believe we should continue to speak about reconciliation when there is no prospect of action to repair the damage.

Native Americans have the highest poverty rate and one of the lowest graduation rates of any racial group. Throughout history, the oppressors have kept us busy deciphering their language in treaty obligations, legislative mandates, government policies, and church polity while we are trying to stand up against injustice, distracting us from demanding real change. The Church was silent and often complicit as we were eliminated from power. I am challenging the infrastructure that gives us no permanent place to oversee and control our economic, environmental, and social sustenance. Only when that changes will we feel whole again.

After more than five hundred years of extermination, stolen land, and discrimination, it is time for the government and churches to do more to serve Native Americans.

First, we must be given more educational and leadership opportunities. The Episcopal Church can facilitate this by providing scholarships to Native American students. There are not enough Native youth attending schools that prepare them for college. We need more opportunities for educated adults and elders to work as teachers and professors. These experiences will encourage them to strive for leadership positions in the government and the church. And we need indigenous institu-

tions, such as colleges and Native studies programs, to tell our story and represent our lives and the issues that affect us.

We have an important place in the history of this country and are proud of our contributions to the faith and our brotherhood with all Christians. The Church can advocate for legislation and initiatives that help us in our home states and territories. Where Natives are gathered, the Church can be in the midst of us with financial support for initiatives such as a convention for its Native members, protection of sacred sites and burial grounds, and more Native congregations.

I pray that initiatives like these will repair our status so that “we, the people” who suffered the first injustices will be compensated by honoring our roles and work. We live and die under the hope that one day we will receive fairness for the damages and losses we suffer living under oppression, in poverty, and treated with disrespect. I for one am tired of this life. I for one, with my family, who identify as Native, am tired of living our dream in white men's prisons. I am writing the same story that so many of our leaders have written and spoken before.

The United States is our home, our rightful birth place. We did not give it away; it was taken. Give us something that we can take to our children with pride. Let us have a permanent voice in the systems of power, an equal voice. In the Creator's name, we continue to pray.

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*The author is the former Native American missionary for The Episcopal Church.*

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*This article was originally published by Trinity Wall Street in a supplement to The Living Church in 2016.*

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## Hunger threatens 1 million people living within the Diocese of New York.



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*\*Hunger statistics provided by Feeding America—2015 data*



# Einstein, Appalled

By Rodger Taylor

joined the Reparations Committee of the Diocese of New York recently, in the spirit of two heroes that have grown on me—and a book I wrote, that is more relevant and important now, than when published almost a decade ago. That book, written by myself and Fred Jerome, is called *Einstein on Race and Racism*.

Most people, when they think of Albert Einstein, envision a brilliant scientist, an eccentric genius and a man with crazy hair. They don't think concerned, politically active citizen, much less anti-racist. When Einstein said "The taboo, the let's-not-talk-about-it must be broken," he meant that our national habit of not talking seriously about white prejudice towards African Americans is a huge part of the problem.

As I see it, the Reparations Committee's task is to facilitate conversations about race, and get Episcopalians and others, to confront this issue honestly with prayer and action.

Albert Einstein supported the agency of this, as this quote explains. "Segregation is a disease not of colored people, but of white people and I do not intend to be silent about it."

Since 2006, as an author of *Einstein on Race and Racism*, I have been invited to colleges, bookstores and other events across the country to talk about the book. One of the audience reactions I often hear is, "I never knew." Of all the things, important and trivial, in the hundreds of books about Albert Einstein, little has been written about his strong anti-racist political activism. "One can hardly believe," he said, "that a reasonable man can cling so tenaciously to such prejudice."

Albert Einstein, the most famous scientist in the world, worked and taught at the Berlin Academy of Science. However, when Adolf Hitler and the Nazis ascended into power, just because he was a Jew, Einstein became Germany's public enemy number one. Aware that he would be arrested and worse, the scientist moved to Princeton, New Jersey in the early 1930s.

At first, it seemed like a beautiful, idyllic place. Einstein, however, began seeing African Americans treated there much as Jews were in Germany. Princeton University, one of the nation's oldest schools, shaped the culture by catering to the Southern elite. Life in town became very much like the pre-civil war South. Stores, restaurants, public and private facilities, many jobs and most schools, were off limits to blacks well into the 1940s.

Einstein, appalled by what he described as "a quaint and ceremonious village of puny demigods on stilts," reached out to black people in Princeton. He got to know many of them. Unlike most in the white community, he regularly visited the African American Witherspoon Street neighborhood. He also got to know several African American celebrities and noted individuals, including W.E.B. Dubois. When a Princeton hotel would not accommodate the great singer Marian Anderson because of race, Einstein insisted she stay at his home.

Fred Jerome and I call the story of Einstein's anti-racism "hidden history."

But everybody knows who Albert Einstein is. One of the highlights of Einstein's anti-racism was the work he did and his friendship with Paul Robeson. The *Einstein on Race* experience taught us that Paul Robeson, as an important historical figure, has been erased.

I was a veteran Young Adult Librarian. I knew young people knew nothing about Robeson. But it surprised me how many students at Harvard, Fisk and smart and educated twenty and thirty, even forty-year olds, had never even heard of him. Simple things, from his name being omitted from articles, exhibitions, documentaries, and even the title of our book, to the fact that other famous people on the

left have not been so reviled, left me with no doubt that much of the Robeson silence is intentional—and that it is worth fighting against.

Today more than ever, Paul Robeson should be studied and emulated. This groundbreaking scholar and most amazing athlete of his time, was also one of the great singers, actors and political activists.

Known and admired around the world, Robeson spoke and performed in several languages. He believed in using his celebrity for justice. "The artist must elect to fight for freedom or slavery," he said. "I have made my choice. I had no alternative."

Robeson, also willingly paid the price for his ardent support of the common woman and man, and his unflinching demand for equal rights for the American Negro. He went from being one of the highest paid artists in the world, to being cut off from work and having his passport revoked, so he could not leave the country. To Robeson, being true to his beliefs was more important than making a lot of money.

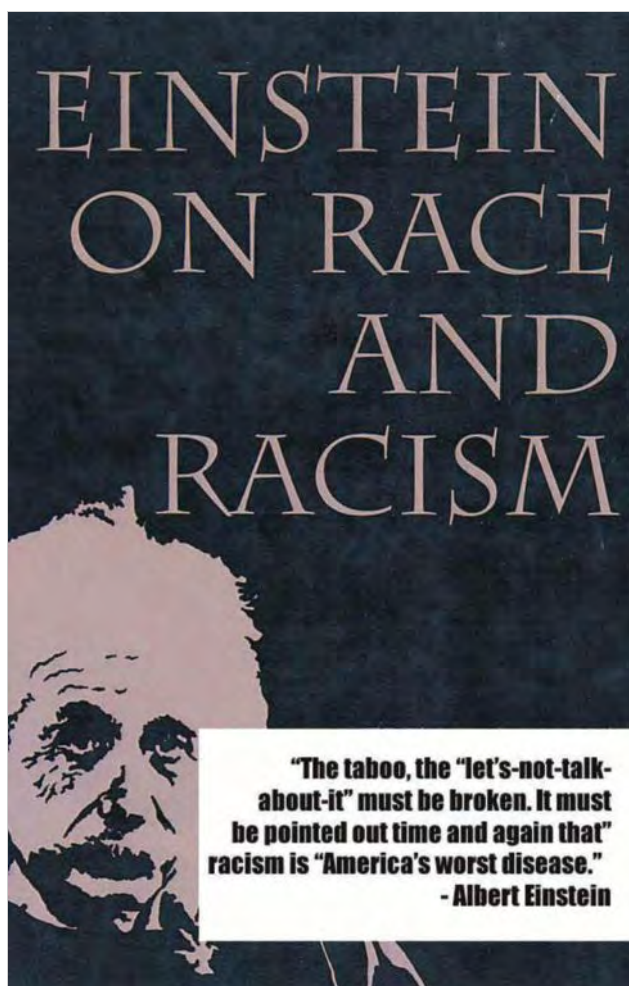
As part of the Reparations Committee, it's invigorating to be exposed to the dynamic people involved and their ideas and work. *Becoming Beloved Community* is an example. This document, embraced by the leaders of the Episcopal Church, calls for prayer, reflection and a hard look at racism in the church and society. Of its four tenets—*telling the truth about the church and race; proclaiming the dream of beloved community; practicing the way of love; and repairing the breach in society and institutions*—it is the last that jumps out at me. After thought and prayer, it is important to solve problems.

I think Einstein would be, if not impressed, hopeful. "There is sure to come a time," he said of racism, "in which school-children in their history lessons will laugh about the fact that something like this did once exist."

Einstein and Robeson believed in the importance of forming coalitions and building movements. They felt folks have a responsibility to their fellow citizens and themselves, to struggle for change. I think, given our politics, that they would have felt the struggle against racism today to be as vital as ever.

"The world is a dangerous place to live," Einstein said, "not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it."

*The author is a member of St. Augustine's Church in Manhattan and serves on the diocese's Reparations Committee.*





# Episcopal Saint: Remembering Pauli Murray's Life and Work

By Jeremy Sierra

*Liberating God, we thank you most heartily for the steadfast courage of your servant Pauli Murray, who fought long and well: Unshackle us from bonds of prejudice and fear so that we show forth your reconciling love and true freedom, which you revealed through your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

– Collect from Holy Women, Holy Men.

**W**hen my brothers try to draw a circle to exclude me, I shall draw a larger circle to include them.” The Rev. Pauli Murray wrote these words in 1945, when she was already a pioneering lawyer and activist, but long before she became the first African-American woman ordained in the Episcopal Church.

Though she was writing about segregation, the words continue to resonate today. An activist, priest, nonconformist, writer, trailblazing lawyer, saint, and more—her life, her work, and her words have many things to teach us.

“I think we are finally ready for some of the deep and important observations and theory that Pauli forwarded, and sometimes created and gave names to,” said Barbara Lau, director of the Pauli Murray Project in Durham, North Carolina, an organization that promotes Murray’s vision and legacy.

Lau is working to open the Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice, located in Murray’s childhood home in Durham, which has just received historic landmark designation and a grant from National Park Service.

## “I WILL RESIST EVERY ATTEMPT TO CATEGORIZE ME.”

“I will resist every attempt to categorize me,” Murray wrote in the same article in 1945, “to place me in some caste, or to assign me to some segregated pigeonhole.” It is obvious that she lived according to these words as soon as you read about her. And, Lau says, learning more about Murray may lead you to join “the church of Pauli Murray,” made up of those inspired by her lifelong struggle for justice.

Born in 1910 in Baltimore, Murray moved to Durham in 1914 to live with her aunt. After leaving Durham to live in New York City, she attended Hunter College. She attempted to attend the University of North Carolina for her graduate degree knowing that it was a segregated school, but was not admitted. This was one of the many times she resisted segregation and discrimination. In 1940, she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger in an act of nonviolent resistance, 15 years before Rosa Parks did so in Alabama. She continued to stage lunch counter sit-ins and other actions while at Howard Law School.

In 1944, Murray graduated from Howard, first in her class and the only female. It was around this time she developed the idea of “Jane Crow,” describing how the discrimination she experienced as an African American intersected with the discrimination she received because she was a woman. Her writings laid the groundwork for the idea of intersectionality. Ruth Bader Ginsberg cited her work in 1971 when she wrote the plaintiff’s brief for the Supreme Court, *Reed vs. Reed*, the first time the Equal Protection Clause was applied to women.

She had an important legal career, despite being denied opportunities because of her gender, race, and political affiliations (her friends included Eleanor Roosevelt and Langston Hughes). The book she wrote on commission from the Methodist Church about segregation laws, called *State’s Laws on race and Color*, was called “the Bible” for the *Brown vs. Board of Education* Supreme Court case by Thurgood Marshall.

Throughout all this, she grappled with her sexuality and gender. Today she might call herself transgender, describing herself at various times Paul, Pete, and Dude and seeking hormone therapy for many years to no avail.

“She invites us to ask ourselves, ‘What makes us whole?’” said Lau. “By describing her own experience and by trusting that her experience has value, [she invites us to] trust that our experience is valid, even if it doesn’t fit in.”

This lesson still speaks today to the marginalized, especially those who are transgender. Black transgender people today face very high levels of discrimination, violence, suicide, poverty, unemployment, and homelessness.

## “ALL THE STRANDS OF MY LIFE HAD COME TOGETHER.”

Not long after her longtime friend, and possibly her partner, died, Murray decided to enter the General Theological seminary in 1973. This was before the Episcopal Church allowed women to be ordained. General Convention approved ordination in 1976, just months before Murray was ordained to the priesthood. Her first Eucharist was celebrated in the Chapel of the Cross, in Chapel Hill, where her grandmother, the daughter of a slave and a slave owner, was baptized.

She wrote in her autobiography, “All the strands of my life had come together. Descendant of slave and of slave owner, I had already been called poet, lawyer, teacher, and friend. Now I was empowered to minister the sacrament of One in whom there is no north or south, no black or white, no male or female – only the spirit of love and reconciliation drawing us all toward the goal of human wholeness.”

She served at parishes in Baltimore and in Washington, D.C. in the following years. Murray died in 1985 and she was added to the book commemorating Episcopal saints and holy days, *Holy Women, Holy Men*, in 2012.

Murray is celebrated by the Episcopal Church on July 1. Every year around that time since 2013, St. Titus Episcopal Church in Durham, the church she attended as a child, has a commemorative service in her honor, using a litany written especially for her.

“We are using the story to continue her work, using that as the door into the bigger story,” said Lau. “What are we doing now and how are we learning from her? We are using the lessons of the past to address the issues we’re dealing with right now.”

It is not hard to see that the work of Pauli Murray’s life is far from complete, but her story provides inspiration to continue.

*Trinity Church Wall Street is partnering with the Pauli Murray Project next year to help tell her story, bringing the organization’s exhibit to St. Pauls’ Chapel in 2018. Barbara Lau will also speak with groups at Trinity and the Project will also perform the play about her life, *To Buy the Sun*, at Trinity.*

*The author is managing editor at Trinity Church Wall Street.*



Photo: UNC University Library



Photo credit: Schlesinger Archive



Pauli Murray's ordination. Photo credit: Schlesinger Archive



## Be Not Afraid

By Patty Chang Anker

Growing up Asian American in 1970s Toronto suburbs and 1980s New York City (The Bronx), I often felt ill at ease. I did well in school and had friends and good neighbors; but not infrequently, taunts like “Chinky eyes!” “Hey Geisha Girl,” and “Get back on your boat!” from kids and adults alike stung and confused me. From white people, it was a rejection from the society I was trying to enter. From non-whites, I felt it a betrayal of a common bond—weren’t we all in a struggle to belong?

My parents, who immigrated from China as graduate students and had to overcome language and cultural barriers to give me and my sister a chance at success, urged us to fit in. My dad read *The New York Times* each morning and listened to Walter Cronkite each night. “Know what people are talking about,” he said. “Don’t give anyone reason to doubt your ability.” We knew we had to work twice as hard to show our worth, but comments like “Where are you really from?” and “Your English is so good!” were a frequent reminder that although I was born in Missouri on the Fourth of July (how patriotic is that?), I would always look and to some degree be viewed as foreign in my own hometown.

I didn’t understand then how much of the racial tension around me and inside me was rooted in fear. Fear is a protective mechanism. When we meet someone new, we may feel a twinge—or a flood—of it, based on what we’ve been told about people who look like X, or what we’ve experienced before with people who look like X. In a flash, we might feel fear of rejection or of being hurt. We might feel threatened, *that this person wants what I want and may be more likely to get it*. We might be afraid of being judged, as we’re busily judging the entire encounter ourselves. “Don’t be so sensitive” to name-calling is something we often hear. But fear and defensiveness are usually about more than what is happening at the moment. The past reverberates (see Sidebar) in each interaction.

When I think about the taunts and the distancing questions I’ve experienced I wonder what might have happened if I could have said to everyone involved, including myself: “Be not afraid.” If we could have met in the middle; if we could have grown in love.

When my husband, Kent, proposed to me 26 years ago, I asked if he was up for having an interracial marriage. What would it be like for him, a white man, the son of

German-Jewish and Estonian-Protestant refugees, to become part of a Chinese American family? Of course, it was impossible to know in advance. We had to have faith that we’d figure it out.

We asked Kent’s mother’s minister (Oliver Chapin at Chapel of the Good Shepherd on Roosevelt Island, NY) to officiate at the ceremony. He said no. He’d married seven couples in his career; more than half had ended in divorce. “Don’t involve me,” he begged. “I can’t have my heart broken again.” We promised we would improve his averages.

“Look in the Yellow Pages. Anyone can ‘do’ your wedding,” he said. “Come to me only if you want a Christian marriage.” I had no idea what that meant. My father, a scientist, was as skeptical of organized religion as he was of politicians. “If anyone tries to get you to give them money, go the other direction,” he advised. I was raised to question, not believe.

Chaplain Chapin required we attend church for eight consecutive weeks and take two Christian counseling sessions with him to go over the Book of Common Prayer marriage service line by line. I joined the choir, figuring if I had to sit through eight Sunday services I might as well sing to make them go faster. By the 5th or 6th week, I felt something I’d never felt before. I belonged.

All the pressure to perform, to fit in, to know all the answers softened. God knew my anxieties and imperfections and loved me anyway. The congregation, as diverse as the United Nations, welcomed me just as I was.

Chaplain Chapin made me wait a full year after our wedding to be baptized. I’d wanted to do it right after the honeymoon. “You’re all happy now, you’re not thinking straight,” he’d said. “Keep coming to church every week. Then let’s see.” I wasn’t sure if he was the worst or the best evangelizer in the world, because we could have left the church then. But we didn’t. We built our relationship with each other as we got to know God. When I took my baptismal vows I felt I was promising God what I’d promised my husband in marriage. The questions, as I took them in, were:

*Will you love me? Will you try to understand me? Will you accept a measure of mystery, of what you may never understand? Will you lift me up, defend me, and help the world to see me and my worth? Will you trust me?*

I said I will.

### Asian Immigration in America —a Troubled History

The history of Asians in America is not an easy one. The first ban of an ethnic group to the U.S. was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 which stayed in effect until 1943. Over 100,000 Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps by their own government during World War II. During the Vietnam War, General Westmoreland justified continued bombings by saying “The Oriental doesn’t put the same high price on life as does a Westerner... Life is cheap in the Orient.” In 1982, during a swell of anti-Japanese sentiment over the declining U.S. auto industry, two white men beat 24-year-old Chinese American Vincent Chin to death with a baseball bat in a highly-publicized hate crime; neither served time. Today, Asian Americans are simultaneously blamed for being cheap labor and the model minority; for taking away jobs and taking up too many slots at MIT and Berkeley. Those of Asian (especially Muslim) descent are likely to have their allegiances questioned. While Asian Americans are 4.8% of the U.S. population, a “bamboo ceiling” to the upper echelons remains; we hold only 1.5% of corporate officer positions in the Fortune 500, and 2.8% of seats in Congress. Yet many Asian Americans are reluctant to talk about race openly.

Respecting authority, working hard without complaint, modesty, not bring-

ing up sad or uncomfortable truths, and not embarrassing or causing others to “lose face” are values many of us grew up with. Because Asian immigrants come from different cultures and languages (often from countries historically at war with each other) and live (with the exception of California, Washington, and Hawaii) spread out and divided across Democrat, Independent and Republican lines it’s hard to get enough critical mass to organize politically and have clout. Immigrants from repressive societies with little experience with freedom of speech and little exposure to other races may also be a reason our stories aren’t more widely known. And how much of racial stereotyping and misunderstanding is based on fear of the unknown?

In order to progress, we must own the past and put it into perspective. Asian American history should not be forgotten, because we don’t want to repeat the same mistakes. We should all be raising alarm bells over current discussions of a Muslim ban and even internment of Muslims in the U.S. It is not enough for each demographic to defend itself, especially when the demographic is small and spread out as Muslim Americans (1% of the U.S. population) are. And through care and advocacy across cultures and races we can understand each other’s humanity, and see each other’s divinity, as well.



And in entering this relationship with God, entering a marriage with Kent, I experienced a breaking down of barriers, a commitment to forging a future together that I see as the best hope for social justice, racial reconciliation, and peace.

Imagine if the church could ask its clergy and congregants to commit to these vows for a stranger (or a sister congregation) who doesn't look like them. To promise to love, to try to understand and accept what we can't understand, to advocate for, and to trust each other because our fortunes are inextricably linked. If God loves us all, then what point is there to holding ourselves apart from each other a moment longer?

Government can legislate, advocacy groups can agitate, but churches are uniquely suited to transform people and relationships from the inside out. The first step might be to admit that fear exists—then to explore where it comes from, and

whether it has to be this way. The church can invite people into safety and say “you belong.” It can help heal past hurts, facilitate forgiveness, look to a greater good.

There's more to life than the scramble here on earth to survive and thrive. In the kingdom of God there is plenty for all—what could we do if we didn't need to worry about having enough? How much could we love others? In laying down our fears and defenses we could discover that we are not alone, and together find the courage to repair our broken world.

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*The author is a member of Christ Church, Riverdale, and a widely-published author, including of *Some Nerve: Lessons Learned While Becoming Brave*, an Oprah.com recommended memoir about facing fear.*

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# History of the US Immigration and Naturalization Laws

- 1790** Naturalization Act: Limited naturalization to immigrants who were “free white persons” of good character and required a two-year residence for immigrants. It, thus, excluded Native American Indians, indentured servants, slaves, free blacks and Asians, although free blacks were allowed citizenship at the state level in certain states. It also provided for citizenship for the children of U.S. citizens born abroad.
- 1795** Extended the residence requirement to five years for immigrants.
- 1798** Extended the residence requirement to fourteen years for immigrants.
- 1802** The “free white person” requirement remained. The residence requirement was changed to five years. Directed the clerk of the court to record the entry of all aliens into the US.
- 1855** Citizenship was granted to alien wives of US citizens.
- 1870** Extended naturalization process to aliens of African nativity and person of African descent.
- 1882** Chinese Exclusion Act: Excluded Chinese immigrant laborers as well as political offenders, lunatics, idiots, and persons likely to become public charges.
- 1885** Admission of contract laborers as banned.
- 1888** Expulsion of aliens as allowed, especially of the Chinese alien laborer.
- 1892** Chinese Exclusion Act was renewed.
- 1902** Chinese Exclusion Act was renewed with no terminal date.
- 1903** Polygamists and political radicals were added to the list of exclusion.
- 1913** California Alien Land Law: prohibited Asian immigrants to own land.
- 1917** Created “Asiatic barred zone” covering British India, Southeast Asia and all of Middle East. Added to the exclusion list were illiterates, persons of psychopathic inferiority, men and women entering for immoral purposes, alcoholics, stowaways, and vagrants.
- 1921** Emergency Quota Act: Established national immigrant quotas to 3% of that particular nationality in the US according to the 1910 census.
- 1923** Officially classified Asian Indians as “non-white” and retroactively stripped citizenship from those Indians who had been naturalized.
- 1924** Indian Citizenship Act: American Native Indians were finally granted US citizenship.  
Johnson-Reed Act: established an annual ceiling of 154,227 immigrants from the Eastern hemisphere; Chinese immigrants were still excluded.
- 1932** President Hoover and the State Department shut down immigration and carried out voluntary repatriation of mostly Eastern Europeans and deportation of Mexicans.
- 1943** Magnuson Act repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act.
- 1945** War Brides Act: Admitted the foreign-born spouses and children of the US military who served in the WWII.
- 1946** Luce-Seller Act: Allowed naturalization to Indian Americans and Filipino Americans and set the quota for immigration from India and the Philippines to 100 immigrants from each country per year.
- 1948** Displaced Persons Act: Allowed immigration of persons displaced from the homelands by Nazi persecution.
- 1952** Immigration and Nationality Act: established quotas for immigrants, favoring Ireland, the UK and Germany.
- 1960** Immigration and Nationality Act Amendment: abolished the system of national origin quotas and limited the Western hemisphere immigrant to 120,000 and the Eastern hemisphere to 170,000.
- 1962** Migration and Refugee Assistance Act: Intended to assist Cubans fleeing Communism.
- 1965** Immigration and Nationality Act: Ended the national origins quota system and replaced it with admittance based on their relationship with US citizens or residents or US employers.
- 1975** Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act: Gave a refugee status to Cambodians and Vietnamese.
- 1976** Immigration and Nationality Act Amendment: Adopted “preference categories” for immigrants from Western hemisphere.
- 1980** Refugee Act: Defined “refugee” as any person outside the person's country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or particular opinion.
- 1986** Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA): Provided for a 50 percent increase in border patrol staffing, and imposed sanctions on employers who knowingly hire or recruit unauthorized immigrants. The law also creates two legalization programs. One allows unauthorized aliens who have lived in the United States since 1982 to regularize their status.
- 1988** Anti-Drug Abuse Act (ADAA): added “aggravated felony” as a new but limited ground for deportation.
- 2001** USA Patriot Act: broadens the terrorism grounds for excluding aliens from entering the United States and increases monitoring of foreign students.
- 2002** Homeland Security Act: Created the Department of Homeland Security which take over nearly all of the functions of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service.
- 2005** REAL ID Act: Established statutory guidelines for removal cases, expanded the terrorism-related grounds for inadmissibility and deportation, and barred the use of habeas corpus as a vehicle for challenging removal orders.
- 2006** Secure Fence Act: mandates the construction of more than 700 miles of double-reinforced fence to be built along the border with Mexico

## Farmworkers and the Passover of God

By the Rev. Michael Phillips



On the Farmworkers' March for Justice to Albany, May/June 2016.

Photo: Rural & Migrant Ministry.

In Genesis 3:1, the translators of the NRSV make a distinction between wild animals and the human animal. They tell us that the serpent is the craftiest of the wild species—an important distinction, because we humans are undoubtedly the craftiest of all. When something that benefits us is taken away, we're crafty enough to find other ways to keep what we had. Maybe those ways are illegal, or different in form, or hidden away inside something more visible—but one way or another we find ways to maintain our advantage and benefit.

We are a crafty lot.

When slavery was outlawed in New York in 1827, for example, it was phased out over a period of years, not in a single moment. 33 years later, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which, one might have supposed, would have ended slavery in America forever. But we humans are crafty. The ensuing 13th Amendment to the Constitution formally abolished slavery and involuntary servitude “*except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.*” In the decades after the Civil War, court records in southern states reveal that many African-Americans were accordingly convicted and imprisoned on trumped up charges. The county sheriff would then subcontract the prisoners to local businesses, who paid a fee to the county but nothing to the workers/prisoners themselves.

Crafty. Slavery took on a different form and was hidden away inside “law enforcement.”

The Federal Justice Department mostly put a halt to this practice, yet hidden racism continues. In fact, it can be found today right here in New York State, where most people I talk to are shocked to learn that state law denies one group of laborers (agricultural workers) eleven rights that are granted to every other worker in the state.

In 1935, President Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act), which put protections in place for workers, such as the right to organize and form unions, the right to overtime pay, and the right to a day off for every seven days of employment. But the president needed the support of southern legislators, the so-called “Dixiecrats,” to pass the legislation—and they insisted that agricultural workers and domestic workers be excluded. When the Wagner Act became law, many states, including New York, passed similar bills to cover workers within their borders which also excluded the same two groups of workers.

Think back to 1935 and imagine the skin color of the majority of agricultural and domestic workers in the South. Then think of the skin color of the majority of farm owners and employers of domestic workers at that same time. Crafty.

The Wagner Act was not slavery, but it could appropriately be called “slavery’s grandchild.” By that I mean we can trace its “lineage” in an unbroken line back through Jim Crow, Reconstruction, and the Civil War, to colonial slavery in North America. We may no longer allow one human being to own another, but our laws still allow us to establish a second class of citizen and worker.

Surprisingly, the story of the Passover in the book of Exodus relates specifically and directly to our current reality. You’ll recall that after inflicting nine plagues on the people of Egypt for the pharaoh’s intransigence, Yahweh took the final and devastating step of sending the angel of death overnight to kill the first born in every household, except where the residents had smeared the blood of a lamb on their houses. When Pharaoh awoke to discover his own son dead and hear the cries of anguish coming from his subjects, he’d had enough of this powerful Hebrew God, and allowed them to leave Egypt and begin their journey to their ancestral homeland.

When recalling this story, most of us tend to emphasize the ten plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea, and later, Moses receiving the Ten Commandments. Few of us focus, I suspect, on how it all began—with the Hebrew leader, Moses, asking Pharaoh for time off from work to take his people into the wilderness to sacrifice to their God; and Pharaoh reasoning that if they had enough free time to take three days off, they could justifiably work harder instead, and ordering that they would now have to find their own straw to strengthen the bricks, rather than have it provided for them—while still producing the same number of finished bricks each day. (Exodus 5:4-18.)

Two rarely emphasized aspects of this story point directly to present-day New York. The first is that the pharaoh is described as someone who “...did not know Joseph.” (Exodus 1:8.) Historians tell us that before the time of Moses, Egypt was invaded and conquered by outsiders from the north, who did not know how important Joseph had been to previous pharaohs. Although they were not necessarily of a different race, the new pharaoh saw these semitic-speaking people as foreigners, as “other,” who were gaining in population and, therefore, power. To keep them in check, he subjugated them to work as slaves.

The second aspect is that Yahweh did not send the plagues in response to slavery, which in ancient times was considered a normal way of organizing society,



resulting from military conquests. If Yahweh had wished to free the Hebrews from slavery, that could have been done well before the request for time off to worship. What pushed Yahweh to execute the plagues was Pharaoh's exploitation of the workers, by making the work conditions beyond what was reasonable.

At the heart of the Passover, therefore, lies the exploitation of workers by a political authority of a different ethnicity. Does that sound familiar? God is clearly on the side of just conditions for workers.

This bring us back to New York in 2017 and the hidden forms of racism in our midst. Most farm owners in New York are of European descent, while most agricultural workers are either of Hispanic or African descent. By denying agricultural workers eleven rights that every other worker in the State is granted, our laws have created a second class of citizen and worker that is de facto (but not coincidentally) tied to their race or ethnicity.

As Christians, what is our faithful response to racism, hidden or overt?

As a church and a diocese, we did not "crown ourselves in glory" in the years leading up to the Civil War—in fact our history on this topic is somewhere between embarrassing and shameful. When William Jay of Bedford petitioned Convention in 1846 to admit the African-American parish of St. Philip's with the argument that excluding the parish "degraded" the black man, the response as printed in the journal of Convention states that blacks, "...are socially degraded and not regarded as proper associates for the class of people who attend our conventions." (p. 166.) It was not Episcopalians, but Quakers who carried the abolitionist banner among faith communities before and during the Civil War, while as a whole, the Episcopal Church in New York found itself too closely allied with the slave economy to speak against it with any strength.

In fact even now a quick Google search of "Episcopal Church and labor rights" reveals a few scant websites on the topic. There was a resolution passed at our General Convention in 2009, urging Congress to pass legislation making it easier for workers to form unions—but there is almost nothing on this topic on the national church's website today or on the website of the Diocese of New York.

The Roman Catholic Church on the other hand has made numerous statements on the rights of workers. Pope Francis has said,

*"The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised."* (11/24/13, no. 218.)

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has stated, *"The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected--the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative."*

As Episcopalians in New York we now have an opportunity to improve our record publicly on this, and take bold steps, based firmly on our biblical and faith traditions. By joining others and pressing Albany to remove the exclusions of those who produce the food we eat and enjoy, we have an opportunity to demonstrate to the world the values of our God, and our determination to make those values a reality. We have an opportunity to redeem our past and this time get it right.

*The author is vicar of Trinity Church, Saugerties and serves on the board of Rural & Migrant Ministry.*



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# Becoming Beloved

By the Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers

*How long, O Lord, how long?*

**O**n June 16, 2017, a Minnesota jury held harmless the police officer who killed Philando Castile. New recordings showed Castile in his own car, lawfully bearing a weapon, trying to reassure an officer overcome with fear and anxiety, while a child wept in the backseat. In seconds, shots rang out. In moments, Castile was dead.

The oppression of black, Latino and indigenous communities in America isn't new, but there is a public, unrepentant, brazen, almost triumphant quality to today's racism that we haven't seen for generations. And it touches so many: unarmed black people killed by the authorities, African and Arab refugees refused entry to this "land of the free," Latinos huddled and waiting for the next Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) round-up, the centuries-long degradation of indigenous lands and lives.

White supremacy and domestic terrorism aren't just alive in America. They are thriving. And so the Psalmist's plea comes again, "How long, O Lord, how long?" What would it take to heal a nation so broken, to bend the arc toward justice? O Lord, how could your Episcopal Church—a church with white supremacy in its founding DNA—become an instrument for truth-telling, healing, reconciliation and justice?

At General Convention in 2015, our church's leaders sent the heads of the House of Bishops and House of Deputies forth with that question. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, House of Deputies President Gay Clark Jennings, House of Bishops Vice President Mary Gray-Reeves and (now former Vice President) Dean Wolfe, and House of Deputies Vice President Byron Rushing and Secretary Michael Barlowe met in Austin, Texas, last year and began to listen, learn, pray and craft a vision now known as "Becoming Beloved Community: The Episcopal Church's Long-Term Commitment to Healing, Reconciliation and Justice" (find the document and more resources at [www.episcopalchurch.org/reconciliation](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/reconciliation)).

As the Presiding Bishop's Canon for Evangelism, Reconciliation and Creation, I've been blessed to partner with the Presiding Officers, staff, more than 50 leaders and a wide variety of groups who shaped this path. We don't imagine a whole church marching in a straight line; instead, picture the community of Jesus' followers walking a labyrinth. Along this pilgrim way, you cannot be afraid to turn back in order to move forward. You must welcome wisdom left by those who have walked this way before, and you know you will cover familiar ground in fresh ways.

This comprehensive, long-term commitment seeks to effect racial healing and transformation at the individual, communal, institutional and societal levels. Here is a summary many of us are using to guide our prayer and action:

## BECOMING BELOVED COMMUNITY

### TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OUR CHURCH AND RACE

Who are we? What things have we done and left undone regarding racial justice and healing?

#### Church-wide Initiatives:

- Census of the Church
- Audit of Episcopal structures and systems

### REPAIRING THE BREACH IN SOCIETY & INSTITUTIONS

What institutions and systems are broken? How will we participate in the repair, restoration, and healing of people, institutions, and systems?

#### Church-wide Initiatives:

- Criminal Justice Reform and Advocacy
- Re-Entry Collaboratives with Formerly Incarcerated People
- Partnership with Episcopal Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)



### PROCLAIMING THE DREAM OF BELOVED COMMUNITY

What does Beloved Community look like in this place? What behaviors and commitments will foster reconciliation, justice, and healing? How can we share those stories?

#### Church-wide Initiatives:

- Series of Sacred Listening and Learning Engagements in Washington, D.C., Navajoland and Latin America.

### PRACTICING THE WAY OF LOVE

How will we grow as reconcilers, healers, and justice-bearers? How will we prepare to seek relationship across dividing walls?

#### Church-wide Initiatives:

- Beloved Community Story Campaign
- Reconciliation/Justice Pilgrimages
- Multi-lingual Formation and Training
- Liturgical Resources

Ask the questions of yourself, your church, your neighborhood, your diocese. Identify and recommit to local and regional efforts that contribute to the movement. Read and train and pray as if lives depend on it. Give financially to support racial reconciliation and justice efforts at <https://episcopalchurch.thankyou4caring.org/>. The Episcopal Church has not always pursued Beloved Community, but as dedicated followers of Jesus Christ, we can walk and work toward becoming it.

*The author is the Presiding Bishop's Canon for Evangelism, Reconciliation and Creation.*



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# A Call for a Year of Lamentations

By the Rev. Chuck Kramer

*The Reparations Committee of the Diocese of New York will introduce a resolution at the Convention in November calling for a Year of Lamentation. The following introduction to this Year of Lamentation helps explain why such a Year is not only desirable but essential to our common life as the Body of Christ.*

Slavery was a fact of life in the United States for more than two hundred years. Though we think of it as a southern issue, slavery had a strong hold on the Diocese of New York for much of that time. From the construction of our churches, to the private households of prominent church leaders, to the refusal of the Episcopal Church in New York to recognize the ministry of black Episcopalians, our diocese was a powerful agent of oppression. More than 150 years after the Civil War, its impact is still felt throughout our land. Whether in the form of Jim Crow laws, segregation, sundowner laws, redlining, wholesale imprisonment, or voter repression, slavery has never really left, and we have never fully dealt with it.

That is the job of the Reparations Committee. In 2006, Bishop Mark Sisk formed the group with the task of looking honestly at our past—and our church's culpability in it—to understand how that past affects our present, and to work to repair the breach.

This repair—these reparations—are part of our Christian mission of reconciliation, which “is about a return to wholeness and right relation with God and one another” (The Rev. Winnie Varghese in *Church Meets World*). As St. Paul writes, “Through Christ (God) reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

Reparations is more than mere monetary compensation (though that is not exclud-

ed). Reparations is confronting the prejudices that still exist and correcting the systemic injustices that, from the time of slavery to today, have continued to harm brothers and sisters in Christ.

The first step in this process is LAMENTING. Why lamenting? Because even today, we are diminished by slavery and its newer incarnations. Because even today, some of us benefit from its lingering power while others suffer. And this is lamentable. Because without acknowledging a problem and lamenting it, there can be no repentance, no recognition of the need for justice, no healing, no repair, and ultimately no reconciliation.

We lament the suffering caused by this scourge, and we lament the indifference our society and our church have for too long hidden behind.

How do we lament? Think of the scriptures, of those ripped from their homes and forced into slavery, and how they lamented their fate.

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept,  
when we remembered you, O Zion.

As for our harps, we hung them up  
on the trees in the midst of that land.

Lamentation is filled with longing and rage, but mostly it is a cry of grief. And the legacy of slavery has left us so much to grieve. We grieve not only the suffering but the sin itself, for when we fail to see Christ in each other, when we fail to see and respond to injustice or suffering, we remove ourselves from Christ and die a bit in our souls.

Over the course of this year, we will have opportunities to express our lamentation, but we do this always with the awareness that it is a first step toward repentance and reparation.

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*The author is rector of St. James' Church, Hyde Park, and serves on the diocese's Reparations Committee.*

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## Why I Joined the Reparations Committee

by Gary Ryan

So I was at Annual Convention representing my parish years ago minding my own business when I heard the then chair of the Reparations Committee, Nell Gibson, make a presentation. Apparently the bishop had appointed a group of clergy and laypersons who met regularly to discuss the aftermath of slavery within our diocese.

Hmm ...

I had grown up in Mississippi during the Civil Rights era. My very existence, who I am and how I've lived from that time to this has been influenced by that experience. I knew that. Even when I wasn't thinking about it, and even when I ignored this reality, deep down I knew this was true. Having one-sided non-verbal conversations with myself about this across the years had done little to help me process what that meant for me, for my community, and for my church.

Clearly, I live in a culture—we all do—that favors certain persons over others: I've seen this with my own eyes and heard it with my own ears. I once saw a black doctor wearing his doctor's frock and a stethoscope passed over by empty yellow cab after empty yellow cab on the street in front of his hospital, and I've heard more than one realtor either brazenly or bashfully say they were not allowed to show listings to persons of color. I could go on and on with other examples; we all could.

By way of analogy, being a bike-rider, I knew what it was like to negotiate my way very uneasily and sometimes dangerously through an entire city defaulted to favor cars, not bikes. When you're on a bike you feel it palpably: this city is for cars, not bikes. That yields a deep unsettledness whenever I ride my bike in any part of the city—yes, it was worse back in the day before bike paths were established, but also still now—it's a constant, daily emotional and physical struggle.

So I asked the bishop after Nell's presentation if I could possibly join the committee. He said “Maybe, let's talk, and let me have you talk with Nell.” Long story short, I've been on the committee several years now, and believe me, it hasn't been easy. A chart of my emotional states during that time would look a bit like a schematic for the Cyclone rollercoaster at Coney Island.

I've learned a lot, I'll say that. And I've listened. And I've gotten some things off my chest. It's not simple, but we're doing God's work, I know that. At least that's what we're trying to do.

Peace.

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*The author is a member of St. Peter's Church, Chelsea, in Manhattan and serves on the diocese's Reparations Committee.*

# It Takes Hard Conversations — You're Invited to Join In!

By Diane B. Pollard

In reflecting on an article for this issue of the *Episcopal New Yorker*, I found myself revisiting many varied and sometimes painful events of my life. I am a native New Yorker and a cradle Episcopalian—an oddity at the very onset; I have also probably held more “first” positions in this Church than many other people—if not as an African American, then certainly as an African American female. Life has not always been easy; but then, an easy life following Christ is not promised. What our faith gives us is the call to persist, to believe in a God who loves us, to persevere on behalf of others, and to perform these duties as much as possible within the context of Christian charity.

As one of the writers of the 1991 General Convention resolutions that called on the Church to declare racism a sin, I was privileged to participate in the subsequent pivotal and difficult conversations about our church's history of slavery and racial oppression. When a diocesan task force on reparations (of which I was a founding member) was established in 2006, those difficult conversations continued in many of our diocese's congregations. That task force was later upgraded to the current Reparations Committee—and now those difficult conversations are longstanding, as many congregations continue to demonstrate their strong commitment to seek actively and respectfully to acknowledge the dignity and the humanity of all to repair the breach.

Over the past few years, the conversations and immersive workshops that the diocesan Reparations Committee has conducted with congregations in our diocese have resulted in substantive work being done both by the committee itself and by participating congregations: These conversations have modeled the beginning of a possible “journey to repair.”

This repair—these reparations—are part of our Christian mission of reconciliation, which “is about a return to wholeness and right relation with God and one another.” (The Rev. Winnie Varghese in *Church Meets World*<sup>1</sup>)

Our diocesan Reparations Committee subsequently provided the context for a Churchwide conversation. At the 2015 General Convention, after intense hearings and discussion, resolution C019<sup>2</sup> was approved calling for “the Presiding Bishop, President of the House of Deputies, Vice President of the House of Bishops and the Vice President of the House of Deputies to lead, direct and be

**When the Social Justice and United States Policy Committee of the 2015 General Convention met that June, two weeks after the murder of nine people as they participated in bible study at historic Mother Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC, we reflected not only on the tragedy but on the willingness of survivors to discuss forgiveness and reconciliation.**

present to assure and account for the Church's work of racial justice and reconciliation.” They began this work by having conversations with groups across the Church who were already doing the work of racial reconciliation, including members of our own Reparations Committee. The result of their work, *Becoming Beloved Community: The Episcopal Church's Long-Term Commitment to Racial, Healing, Reconciliation, and Justice*<sup>3</sup>, which calls on the Church to commit to the long and difficult task of becoming the Beloved Community, was published in May 2017.

Now, what is the thread that holds these resolutions, committees, task forces, proposals, and other dedicated activity together? I believe that the thread is unrelenting and unceasing hard conversation.

From the uncomfortable but well-meaning conversations that I experienced over the course of forty years in my various roles of “firsts,” to the more complex and very uncomfortable conversations of today, we walk the important path of our commitment to seek health and wholeness for our Church. Without these conversations, we are bandaging an open wound that will never heal.

In November at our diocesan convention, the Diocesan Reparations Committee will invite our Diocese to join in a “Year of Lamentations” from January through December 2018.

Why is our committee asking us to lament, and over what are you asked to lament?

We lament the indifference that our society and our church have kept hidden for centuries.

Lamentation is filled with longing and rage, but mostly it is a cry of grief. And the legacy of slavery has left us so much to grieve. We grieve not only the suffering but also the sin itself; for when we fail to see Christ in each other, when we fail to see and respond to injustice and suffering, we remove ourselves from Christ and die a bit in our souls.

After our “Year of Lamentations,” we are hopeful that we will begin the long journey of Becoming Beloved Community.

I invite our diocese to join us on this journey.

*The author is a member of Trinity Church Wall Street and a trustee of the Church Pension Fund, serves on the diocese's Reparations Committee, and has served the diocese on many occasions as a lay delegate to General Convention.*

## THE DIOCESE'S REPARATIONS COMMITTEE'S DEFINITION OF REPARATIONS:

**Reparations is the process to remember, repair, restore, reconcile and make amends for wrongs that can never be singularly reducible to monetary terms. The process of reparations is “an historical reckoning involving acknowledgement that an offense against humanity was committed and that the victims have not received justice.”**  
(Bernice Powell Jackson, Executive Minister for Justice Ministry, The United Church of Christ)

<sup>1</sup>The Rev. Winnie Varghese. *Church Meets World*. Church's Teachings for a Changing World: Volume 4. Church Publishing, 2016. <https://www.churchpublishing.org/churchmeetsworld>

<sup>2</sup>Resolution 2015-C019. See Archives of the Episcopal Church – Acts of Convention for complete text <http://bit.ly/2sImkUL>.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/becoming-beloved-community>



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# Reparations and Race

*By the Rev. Dr. William Lupfer*

**T**he discussion of reparations begins when we accept, *without making excuses*, the damage done by centuries of enslavement and discrimination. We are all still feeling the effects today—violence and division, prisons full of young men of color, police shootings, and poverty-stricken neighborhoods. When we understand that these realities harm us all, no matter our race, we begin to live into Paul’s prayer, “That we all may be one.”

The manner in which our country and our church repair this damage is a difficult subject. Many of us feel uncomfortable or simply want to move on, asking, “Why can’t we just be reconciled?” But we can’t be reconciled without repairing the deep, historical divisions, namely by recognizing that slavery was a national policy to ensure access to free labor. The problem was, and still is, a national problem. The solution will be national in scope and purpose.

Although Trinity Church did not own slaves, prominent members were slave owners and the first church building was built in part by slaves. Trinity made the controversial decision to minister to enslaved individuals pastorally and some of our members founded the New York Manumission Society. As an institution, how-

ever, we didn’t do the necessary work of advocacy to abolish slavery. Worse, along with all other white Americans, we benefited from an economic system that was built on the backs of enslaved people of color. We have work to do now and in the future to help heal that brokenness. Reparations are a compelling way to do that.

Our nation will also have to address damages done to those peoples who were already living in North America as colonists arrived. As former Native American Missioner Janine Tinsley-Roe reminded us at a recent Trinity Institute, reparations are also required for the Native American community in our nation. In this context, the questions are complicated and urgent.

What reparations will look like in practice is another difficult discussion, but I believe it is important that we have it. Trinity is exploring what our response might be as a parish and in a national context. We hope to do this with partners. Perhaps you’ll join us.

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*The author is rector of Trinity Church Wall Street.*

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# Why I Joined the Reparations Committee

*By Lynnaia Main*

**I** connected with the Reparations Committee at New York’s diocesan convention in 2008. The Committee convened a workshop and invited the 50-100 participants to speak their truth about race and racial reconciliation in an open mike format. I marveled at the honesty of one white, elderly man who revealed his self-condemnation about his racist upbringing and confessed how that infects his thoughts today.

The open forum reminded me of my time in South Africa. It was 1997 or so, Nelson Mandela was President, and South Africans had embarked on a process of healing and justice-seeking through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which held sessions across the country. I was a politics lecturer at a South African university and took some of our students to listen to the sessions when they came to Durban. Maids quietly detailed to their employers the hardships of their lives caused by their horribly unequal pay and their terrible working conditions. Township residents told South African police officers who had murdered their sons and daughters about how their families ripped apart afterwards. These were apartheid’s living victims—yet many spoke of their faith that gave them the strength to forgive.

At the end of the Mahwah forum, I ran up to one of the organizers and begged to be part of this. I wanted to find some way to connect to this healing conversation in this country. A year later, I joined the committee. I have learned so much—and, unexpectedly, most of it makes me uncomfortable: my ignorance about my country’s difficult past; the racist attitudes of dearly loved family members; the place of privilege I

hold in spite of myself. I learned at a committee retreat that I don’t like to be identified as “white,” and my distaste has to do with my sense of shame and wondering whether I’m doing enough. If I’m “white,” I’m accountable.

I don’t know where I’m going with the Reparations Committee. I don’t have a lot of money to contribute to reparations. I don’t have academic or professional expertise in this area. I can’t change the past. About all I can do is commit to stick with others on the committee and in our diocese as we try to figure this out—and to keep working on myself, something that the committee has given me a sacred space to do. I have experienced grace from my fellow committee members as I openly acknowledge my ignorance and need to grow in education and understanding. I am grateful for their friendship, their mentorship, their support and their commitment to the cause. It is a privileged and sacred space around the table with them and in the work we do.

I don’t think we can measure the impact of that work, nor understand when “reparations” will have been completed. And maybe that’s the point: to simply stay connected to each other as the Holy Spirit leads us on this journey of understanding and rapprochement, as we work out together what reparation means

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*The author is a member of L’Eglise Francaise du Saint Esprit, serves on the diocese’s Reparations Committee and is staff officer for Global Relations at The Episcopal Church.*

## Stop It Now!

By Carla Burns

I grew up believing the lie of “race.” I believed that people who were called “white” were somehow inherently smarter and better than I was, and I thought that I was somehow better than others around me because I was light-skinned and their skin was darker. How did I learn this? I learned it because almost everything I saw around me reinforced the lie.

I grew up in a *de facto* segregated neighborhood with other people of African descent, in the center of the Village of Highland Falls, the post town for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The Army was still greatly influenced by Southern culture and norms, and much of that culture seeped into our village life. The village depended, almost exclusively, on West Point for employment. The unspoken rules were clear. “We knew our place.” Men of African descent worked in the cadet mess or in the veterinary department where they kept the Army mules. Working woman of African descent worked in the post laundry or as domestics in the homes of officers, or the few local wealthy families who had established estates in Highland Falls, years prior. My grandmother worked on post as a domestic; my mother stayed at home. My father, who had grown up in New York City, refused to work on post and drove the fifty miles down 9W to work two jobs and enjoy the very different culture of Harlem.

Even our Episcopal church life reinforced the lie. White members of the St. Mary’s Guild wore frilly aprons and served at church suppers, while my grandmother and the few other black Guild members of the congregation did all the heavy work in the church kitchen. At that time, none of us was offered any position of authority in the church.

In our community, race and color consciousness impacted our behavior towards one another. Rhymes like, “If you’re white you’re all right; if you’re brown, stick around, and if you’re black, stay back” were common among neighborhood children, as were phrases like “good hair,” “bad hair,” or “She’s dark, but she’s pretty.” These words and phrases illustrated and reinforced our internalized feelings of racial inferiority. At school, kids of African descent were not encouraged academically; in fact, we were discouraged, and sometimes barred from enrolling in college-track classes. Only black boys with outstanding athletic

ability were allowed.

We African Americans were a community of renters. Even though most were ex-military, G.I. loans were not allotted to us. Having housing and employment depended on people who called themselves “white,” and how they viewed us. This greatly influenced our behavior and how we viewed ourselves.

It was not until the awakening of my Black pride during the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s that I began to question the illogical racial and cultural norms that were so deeply imbedded within my thinking. I wore an Afro which rivaled that of Angela Davis; I read black literature voraciously; when I began teaching, I was advisor to our high school’s Black Panther Party student group. Later in my teaching career, I challenged “whites only” employment patterns in the New York City and federal schools systems by winning Federal Equal Employment Opportunity law suits. I just knew that I had escaped the racial confines that had stilted my thinking as a child.

It wasn’t until the (then) Rev. Doug Fisher, priest at my home parish, Church of the Holy Innocents, invited me to join the Diocesan Anti-Racism Committee and I began participating in anti-racism workshops, that I began to realize that escaping deeply internalized racial oppression is just not that easy. I started to realize that a great deal of internalized racism still remains in me and that I will probably never totally escape it.

Whereas European Americans have the task of overcoming implicit feelings of racial superiority because they have been labeled “white” for all of their lives, people of African descent must overcome feelings of internalized racial oppression because we have been labeled “black” all our lives. How can we do this? The task seems monumental since we must go against the grain of three hundred years of history and social conditioning, but we can do it if we each adopt an “antiracist” mindset—that is one which acknowledges that these feelings exist in us, and that they can affect our actions if we don’t check and correct our behavior.

There are common behaviors that those of us who suffer from internalized racism exhibit.

- Passing on the oppression which we have experienced to other oppressed groups or to our children
- Excessive focus on physical traits and appearances
- Feeling that we are powerless
- Showing undue criticism toward members of our own group
- Perceiving that certain behaviors are “acting white”
- Feeling pressure to adapt to dominant group standards and norms and abandon our own culture
- Limiting our ability to set or achieve life goals

I remember with horror some of the incredibly racist things I heard my parents and grandparents say. They were wonderful, nurturing role models in so many ways, but as fellow victims of internalized racial oppression, they passed along what had been passed to them.

Today I say “This stops with my generation!” I have promised myself to leave these subversive and destructive ideas in the past and not inflict them on my child or grandchildren. I am thankful to our diocese for offering a forum for discussing and learning about the sin of racism and how it affects all our lives. I have had people of color tell me, “I don’t need a workshop about racism; I’ve lived it!” The unfortunate truth is we have lived it, and we sometimes unknowingly perpetuate it by passing on what we have been taught by living it out in our daily lives and interactions with others.

*The author is a member of the Church of the Holy Innocents, Highland Falls, and serves as chair of the diocese’s Anti-Racism Committee and as a member of the Reparations Committee.*

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# Choosing a New Way

Jesus calls us to break the cycle of injustice.

By the Rev. Winnie Varghese

**R**ené Girard, the philosopher of anthropology, claims that human beings and the societies we create behave in patterns of imitation that he calls “mimesis.” In this understanding of human behavior, we mimic one another and reproduce current conditions, and in doing so lock ourselves into destructive patterns. The release from these cycles involves choosing to act differently. We can choose forgiveness over vengeance. We can choose repentance over denial. We can choose restoration over retaliation.

That is a gross simplification of a groundbreaking theory, but it may be just enough to help us recognize the radical social implications of the words “reparation” and “reconciliation.”

As Christians, we believe reconciliation is an aspect or quality of the reign of God, which is a truth evident in creation and resurrection. That truth is rarely, if ever, manifest in the world as it is. We break relationships. We walk away. We scapegoat entire communities. We create defenses for our fears by generating prejudices against groups of people. We create explanations for inequity. We find ourselves imitating the most powerful among us, so that we and those we love will survive.

Our faith calls us to radically disrupt this way of being. Jesus’ victory over death was through death. He was ultimately vulnerable, and through that vulnerability he was subjected to the full force of the power of the state. By “the state” I mean the Roman Empire, or, in our time, the police or security state, the U.S. government, the things too big to defy, the institutions that are both the safeguards of our security and comfort and the vehicles through which injustice is reinforced. The state is also the tool with which reparations can be accomplished. The state is the party responsible for the great inequities that affect the lives of many people. The state supported slavery and systematically stole the wealth and took the lives of untold numbers of black and brown people. The responsibility to do work on our collective behalf must ultimately rest with the state.

## THE STATE AND THE CHURCH

Reconciliation on our plane of living requires us to create the conditions through which a glimpse of reconciliation may be seen or felt. As followers of Jesus, this is one of our most profound desires, to experience the love of God for creation in reconciliation. This requires the repair of damage done.

In issues of the scale that reparations addresses, there is both a civic and religious component for American Christians, and I think an interesting tension between the two. Reparation is the path toward Christian hope but also hope for the promise of our United States.

Reparations includes asking for forgiveness. You might have seen in this election cycle how even the possibility of admitting an error as a nation is held up as a sign of weakness. No candidate can risk saying it. It seems we cannot say slavery, genocide, manifest destiny, nuclear warfare, or internment were wrong and caused unnecessary harm. Yet we cannot begin the work toward reconciliation without repentance and a turning around of how we live our common life. The only way to break the destructive cycle we find ourselves in is to recognize the sins of our past and then choose differently.

As Christians, we have rich resources in our tradition to help us as we move toward repair. There will not be a simple way forward, but as we know from our personal lives, the fallout from a simple choice, defended over time, can take a lifetime to begin to understand, much less repair. As a people we have the same responsibility, and as Christians, maybe even a greater share because of the great hope we have in Christ, the reconciler of all things.

*The author is director of Justice and Reconciliation for Trinity Church Wall Street, and a member of Trinity’s reparations committee.*

*This article was originally published by Trinity Church Wall Street in a supplement to The Living Church in 2016.*

*The only way to break the destructive cycle we find ourselves in is to recognize the sins of our past and then choose differently.*

## Final Anti-Racism Workshop of 2017

September 29-30

St. Paul’s on the Hill  
40 Ganung Drive, Ossining, NY

The purpose of Diocesan antiracism workshops is to help us become aware of how the sin of racism impacts all of our lives, and how we all unconsciously and consciously participate in racist systems. The workshop is required for clergy in our diocese and highly recommended for lay leadership.

origins of the concept of race and its legacy. Coffee and lunch are served and there is no cost to register and attend for members of our diocese. There is a \$25.00 registration fee for members of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark and a \$50.00 fee for all others.

Dialog is the foundation of the two-day workshop (9:00 -4:00). We use group exercises and examine scientific and historical evidence concerning the

Of the hundreds of workshop participants, more than 87% have found the workshop to be “very useful” or “extremely useful” in their work and daily lives.

To register please go to [dioceseny.org/ar930](http://dioceseny.org/ar930).

## Diocese of New York Churches: Integrated? Segregated? Why? And Why It Matters

Looking for Reconciliation When Segregation Still Exists

By Roberta Todd and Jeannie Terepka

**O**n any given Sunday morning, take a good look at the racial and ethnic make-up of the congregations of our diocese. Some are white. Some are black. A very few are integrated. In 1963, when MLK noted that “On Sunday morning when we stand and sing and Christ has no east or west, we stand at the most segregated hour in this nation,” his underlying assumption was that this religious segregation was an historical phase that would one day be transcended: integration was the goal.

The idea that integrated congregations are an ideal goal for the church has been a familiar refrain for decades; there are, however, some who argue that this is an unhelpful oversimplification of a complicated set of historical and theological issues. Author Jennifer Harvey in *Dear White Christians: For Those Still Longing for Racial Reconciliation* does not support the solution of integration to gain racial reconciliation. White Christians need to realize that simply worshipping together is not a solution, she says; what is needed instead is the hard work of seeking to understand, and then facing up to, the history and consequences of racism—because those who look at the history, she states, “turn explicitly to causes,” and when they do “They assume causes require repentance...”

Bishop M. Thomas Shaw, testifying a decade ago before the House Judiciary Committee concerning the legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, agrees with Harvey that any understanding of what might make racial reconciliation possible lies in the study of history, as indicated in his quote: “The history that we are researching is essential to understanding our Church’s role in the institution of slavery and its perpetuation. With fuller knowledge will come true repentance that will then open us to reconciliation and remedies that we believe are yet to be revealed.”

### THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEW YORK’S BLACK HISTORY: SOME OF THE BASIC QUESTIONS

Over the four centuries of Anglican and Episcopal Church history here in New York, enslaved and freed Africans have been a part of the worship. But the 400 years of black

faith history have, for most Episcopalians, been unknown and unrecognized. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, blacks and whites in our diocese have at last begun to uncover this history. The continued sharing of this history will answer some of the questions below and help our diocese walk the labyrinth of “Becoming the Beloved Community,” particularly enabling us in “Telling the Truth” and “Proclaiming the Dream.”

- What was the role of slavery in the Diocese of New York? How many churches, clergy and lay leaders owned slaves? How many profited from the real estate, commercial benefits and financial investments related to slavery?
- After the Civil War, how did the economic and political legacies of slavery make institutional racism in our church inevitable? What does “religious Jim Crow” look like?
- In 2014 more than 30 of the diocese’s congregations were considered part of the Episcopal Black Ministries. Are congregations black by choice? How should that choice be interpreted?
- In a global 21st century and in our Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion, what does the “Black Church” mean? How many white Episcopalians think of black Episcopalians as essentially monolithically identical, when in fact there are black families whose ancestors were free or slaves prior to 1865, others who came to New York as part of the Great Migration from the South, others still who are immigrants from the Caribbean or from a variety of African countries, and some are first generation immigrants while others are second, third or fourth? Their histories are different. Their challenges are different. They bring rich and varied contributions to the faith experience within the Diocese of New York.

*Roberta Todd is a member of Christ Church, Riverdale, and serves on diocese’s Anti-Racism Committee.*

*Jeannie Terepka is the archivist of St. Michael’s Church in Manhattan.*

## The Diocesan Black Faith History Project

Some members of the Planning Committee of the Absalom Jones Celebration want to establish a new initiative: The Black Faith History Project. This project will include documentation—it will obtain written and oral histories and personal stories about the black Anglican and Episcopal faith experience here in New York. Prior to the end of this year, the authors will reach out to congregants to recruit members to participate in this project so that our diocese can create a complete account of the history of black Anglican/Episcopalian worship. Below is an abbreviated timeline, with snippets of historical information about black worshippers in the Diocese of New York from the colonial era until now.

### COLONIAL

(PRIOR TO 1776)

- 1697<sup>1</sup> - Trinity Church yard prevented the burial of Negroes
- 1704<sup>2</sup> - Elias Neau catechist to slaves provided instructions in the steeple of Trinity Church with support from Church of England and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
- 1710<sup>3</sup> - Trinity church records include 6 Black individuals baptized by Rector Vesey

### POST-REVOLUTIONARY

(PRIOR TO 1865)

- 1803 - St. Philip’s Church, Harlem established – originated from the

meetings of a group of free African Americans and slaves worshippers from Trinity Church on Wall Street for nearly a century

- 1828 – St Augustine Slave Gallery – restored in 2009

### POST CIVIL WAR INCLUDING JIM CROW (1865 - 1898)

- 1883 - 1st Convocation of the Colored Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA—1883 held at the Church of the Holy Communion 6th Ave. & 20th St. in response to “Sewanee canon,” which proposed establishing separate “missionary organizations” for dioceses to

separate out churches of color.

- St David’s Bronx first church in Bronx founded by a black priest in 1895

### EXTENDED JIM CROW (PRIOR TO 1957)

- Diocese created mission chapels for black parishioners in NYC & Westchester County; most prominent were St. Jude’s Chapel administered by St. Michael’s Church and St. Cyprian’s administered by the Episcopal Mission Society
- 1937 - St Martin’s Harlem established a credit union to provide banking services to parishioners—oldest credit union in the diocese

### CIVIL RIGHTS & BLACK POWER (PRIOR TO 2000)

- 1968 - Union of Black Clergy and Laity direct forerunner of Union of Black Episcopalians established
- Use of LEVAS (Lift Every Voice and Sign) Hymnal 1981 as part of services in the diocese

### 21ST CENTURY

- Active Social Concerns committees established around Anti –Racism and Reparations for Slavery
- Many congregations are voluntarily centered around race and ethnicity
- Affinity groups established within the Diocese around ethnicity

<sup>1</sup>Anglican Humanitarianism in Colonial New York by Frank Klingberg pg 113; <sup>2</sup>[http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/almanac/education/1704\\_a\\_sch](http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/almanac/education/1704_a_sch)  
<sup>3</sup>Anglican Humanitarianism in Colonial New York by Frank Klingberg pg 163



# Ask Yourself “Who Is Not Here?”

By the Rev. Canon *Altagracia Perez-Bullard, Ph.D.*

Upon returning to the Diocese of New York a few years ago, I participated in the mandatory anti-racism workshop. I was very impressed. Over the years, I have participated in and led many an anti-racism workshop, and what is offered in our diocese is excellent. The gifted trainers build on the Episcopal Church resource: *Seeing the Face of God in Each Other*. I highly recommend both the written and human resources we have been blessed with. And given this context, I am sure this issue of the *Episcopal New Yorker* is filled with good reflections that can ground and inform our ongoing commitment to end racism amongst us.

That frees me to share some reflections from my perspective, both personal and professional. As an Afro-Latina and a priest responsible for congregational vitality in our diocese, I am very aware of the perniciousness of the sin of racism among us. It impacts the growth of our congregations, bringing to mind, “for the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). The good news that the Church has for the world, however, is that although brokenness and sin are our lot, we are freed, redeemed in Christ, and they are not our end. As we live into this truth as a Church, we show the world that transformation is possible, and just like a Spirit-filled Peter, we can say “look at us” transformed and bringing health to others. (Acts 2:43-3:10)

But first we must admit and confront our sinfulness. There is not one of us that has not been affected and/or impacted by racism. “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1: 8,9). And this is bigger than our prejudices and unconscious bias. Although awareness of these is critical, and learning not to act out of them is important, as congregations we must be aware of the systemic ways that racism inhabits and inhibits our churches from enjoying the new life that is ours in Christ.

Fighting racism will take all of our tools and skills, “for our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:12) It is a struggle against all the ways that seem normal to us, but diminish the hopes and possibilities of others. Given our history as a nation, what is normal is based on white supremacy—literally on the ways white culture is the norm against which all else is measured; the ways in which this way is judged supreme and has been made dominant. Our cultural identity as Anglicans may, moreover, further strengthen our predisposition to value this culture over the gospel.

In churches, our unwillingness, as communities change around us, to join God in doing a “new thing” may be understandable, but it is also an example of us doing our will instead of God’s. God wants the church to be transformed as it welcomes new people with the new gifts necessary to continue the work of the gospel. For early Christians, this meant reinterpretation of their faith with new practices that best expressed the new thing that God was doing among them. Barriers of language, culture, gender, social status, were overcome by the inclusive message of Jesus Christ. When in our own communities we refuse to reinterpret our faith and practices to be welcoming to the strangers at our door, we are giving in to the oppressive systems that divide us. We may cloak it in a love for tradition, but we are called to love God above all else, and to express that in love of neighbor.

When we regularly operate out of generalizations and assumptions instead being

curious about people and communities of a different race or ethnicity, we often offend, exclude and marginalize our neighbors and even our fellow Episcopalians. Here’s one I come across all the time: that Latina<sup>1</sup> congregations cannot be good stewards of their churches/ministries. The assumption is that poor people do not know how to manage money and property, although the ability to survive on very little contradicts this; or it is that all Latinas are poor, which is also not true; or that stewardship is all about money—also false. As opposed to learning and sharing what we’ve learned about stewardship in our congregations, we assume that people are incapable of supporting their congregations in significant, important ways. This is a misapprehension to which clergy run the greatest risk of falling prey, and which they often emphasize directly and indirectly in their congregations. I have found, though, that in such congregations, thousands of dollars of in-kind skills have in fact often been provided, especially for buildings and grounds, and fundraising events.

This assumption of people’s inability to do, or lack of qualification to do, what we need done for ministry is hard to overcome; it comes disguised in so many ways. When we have committee or commission seats to be filled, we gravitate to the usual suspects: people we have worked with before; people who have work experience like ours; or people whose knowledge or expertise we value—usually academic. Then we are flummoxed about how to diversify our church work, and we lament the lack of qualified candidates. We forget that for the church, God is calling us into being in this new century, and that none of us has all the answers—that what we need the most is the experience and knowledge of people who have not spent all their lives inside the doors of the church, but outside interacting with the world and with the people whom we seek to welcome—the generations of “un-churched” we are called to serve. This takes more work—or different work. It is uncomfortable, inconvenient, challenging, but it bears fruit; and is a better use of our energy than doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.

If you want your church to grow, seek the life that God has promised in Jesus Christ. Part of what that means is that you repent of the sin of racism, as individuals and as congregations; that you pray for openness, for the willingness to have God transform you and your community, and that you start living into the pattern of life set before you in the gospels, in the manner of life and ministry of Jesus Christ; that you learn ways to eradicate racism in your practices and decisions as a congregation. Always ask the question “Who is not here, how can we make it possible for them to be here and feel welcome?” Dedicate yourselves and your resources to sharing the good news of God in Christ: for this you have been called to be church. It is your reason for being. Live into the promises you made and reaffirm in the baptismal covenant: renounce evil, especially racism; accept the saving grace of a loving Jesus; spend your time as church praying, learning, growing; continue to ask for forgiveness and act into new ways of being; share the gospel by loving and welcoming and serving others, fighting oppression, and standing for justice. You can do it, we can do it, God will help!

*Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart, and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 823)*

*The author is the diocese’s canon for Congregational Vitality.*

<sup>1</sup>I use the feminine form because it is what would be used in Spanish, and because it reflects the fact that most churches, of any kind, are predominantly composed of females.

## What Can One Church Do? A View from Trinity Church Wall Street

By Roslyn T. Hall

### HISTORY

The development of the North depended on slavery, and New Yorkers should understand that enslavement was part of life in their city—that New York was right in the middle of it. Africans cleared the forests, built the roads, dredged the harbor, and built the wall on Wall Street.

Slaves were used in the building of the first Trinity Church in 1697. The parish had close ties with most prominent merchants, slave owners and government officials, who consigned their slaves to work on the church's construction, as witnessed by documents still in the parish's archives: "To Consult of ye most Easy Methods in Carrying on the building of a Church for the Protestants of ye Church of England," reads one, "Mr. Mayor Mr. Emott Capt. Tothill & Capt. Willson have each of them lent a Negro to worke on Wensday Next for ye Opening the Ground for the foundation and that ye twelve Managers of the church building doe each find A Negro or Labourer to be Employ'd on the Sd building for fourteen days and each member present send a Negro."

### ANTI-RACISM MINISTRY—THE EARLY YEARS

Trinity's anti-racism ministry began as an outgrowth of the Diocesan Conference on Racism held during Lent in 1984. Congregation members, led by the late Pauline Dougherty, Gabriel Bonadie, Ruth Antoinette (Toni) Foy, Selvena Mosley, and many others, inspired by the conference, created a Trinity house church to discuss racial issues. The house church met in members' homes to study and discuss topics ranging from individual racial experiences to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech "Beyond Vietnam."

As racial problems in the city escalated, the house church began to redirect its goals toward action. In 1988, its name changed to the Task Force Against Racism (TFAR). We inaugurated our first annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday celebration, including a Sunday sermon at the 11:15 a.m. service and an afternoon forum with the guest speaker. The tradition of celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday continues as an annual event in the life of the parish.

In 1991, TFAR collaborated with the diocesan Anti-Racism Committee to sponsor a conference at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine entitled "Healing the Sin of Racism." People of different races and cultures, clergy and congregations united to hear speakers discuss racism in the context of education, criminal justice, economics and environmental management.

In 1994, the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church issued its *Pastoral Letter on the Sin of Racism*. This did not attempt to touch on every aspect of racism, but "to initiate a continuing discussion on a spiritual malady which infects us all."

### TODAY AND TOMORROW

So where is the Church now? How much progress have we made during this 23-year history? Are we having continuing discussions about this "spiritual malady" in our communities? Has your church ever joined the conversation? Are your discussions inclusive of other races and cultures? Are we doing our share to create a more equitable society? We are called to serve "Matthew 25" people, yet their numbers are increasing exponentially in these times. We have to want to talk about race. We have to come

together. Colorblindness is a myth.

During our journey, the National Institute for Dialogues on Multi-Culturalism & Anti-Racism, led by Rev. Ed Rodman, then president and Canon Missioner of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, was established to advance an anti-racism agenda within *all* churches. At Trinity, we collaborated with the Institute and held a series of five sessions covering five levels of training over several months. We continue to host anti-racism workshops sponsored by the diocesan Anti-Racism Committee. These well-received workshops are conduits for historical education, building diverse relationships, and offering opportunities for collaboration.

### EMBRACING PRISON MINISTRY, CONFRONTING THE SIN OF RACISM

At the 2004 Diocesan Convention, we all received a call to new ministry from the Rev. Peter Sabune, then chaplain at Sing Sing Correctional Facility. His presentation spoke to the need for churches to support prison ministry. In Lent 2005, Sabune led a forum at Trinity, at which he inspired us with his compassion and vision. Following this, Susan Mareneck, then Trinity's Standing Committee chair, together with clergy, staff and congregation members, embarked on the task of discerning how to develop, implement and advocate for prisoners and their families. Dedicated individuals nurtured the process alongside professionals and organizations active in criminal justice, juvenile detention and reentry advocacy; innumerable meetings were held; and we reached out to a range of community-based programs. Unequivocally, this ministry has been a blessing to our parish. It has enabled our church community to confront the sin of racism in a profound way – through the lens of mass incarceration.

### WHAT CAN ONE CHURCH DO?

We offer the following suggestions:

- We spend too much time with people who think like we do. If your church family lacks racial and/or economic diversity, collaborate with a church community that has what yours lacks.
- Examine, embrace and discuss your church's historical role in slavery, an essential part of our common social experience that is neither being taught in most schools nor mentioned in textbooks.
- Recognize, and act on, being inclusive at the table of discussions—racially, ethnically, economically, gender, age and sexual orientation. Church decisions must reflect a variety of opinions and experiences within the community.
- Promote racial diversity in church leadership and in the pulpit.
- Education is essential to issues of social justice. Be bold and creative.
- Open your doors to young people. Listen and support their ideas; encourage their leadership.

Above all, we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to treat others as we want them to treat us. In other words, "Seeing the face of God in Each Other."

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*The author is a member of Trinity Church Wall Street and serves on the diocese's Anti-Racism Committee.*



# Modest Steps — Worth Taking

By the Rev. Elise Ashley Hanley

**T**he block on which I grew up was fairly typical for neighborhoods of eastern Queens and western Nassau County in the early 1980s: the man of each household was a civil servant. One was an FDNY firefighter; one worked for Con Edison, one worked for the MTA, and another for the Department of Education. Then there was my father: he was a New York City Police detective.

We were all white.

At a time when New York City was still considered dangerous and dirty, the families on my block had escaped Queens or Brooklyn to move to Floral Park. We felt safe on our tree-lined street. Mostly of Irish and Italian heritage, we all went to the same Catholic church, had a block party each summer, and we kids went to excellent public schools. The city was just 20 minutes away by train, but most of us never went there, except our fathers, to go to work.

We were all white.

My father was a police officer, as was my grandfather, a great uncle, two of my uncles, and two cousins. It was the family business, and we were a “police family.” I was given a Detective’s Endowment card to keep in my wallet, should I ever get pulled over. I grew up hearing stories of grisly murders, pickpockets and mafia killings: it seemed that anything could happen, especially in the city.

My father died young of cancer, never making it to retirement. There is so much I wish I could ask him about his time “on the force,” as it was called. I wish I knew now how he would react to the deaths of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Philando Castile, and Deborah Danner. I know he had not planned to become a police officer. The son of Irish immigrants, he was the first person in his family to go to college, and he wanted to be a doctor. Not having the resources for more school after college, he instead took the police test. Having a science degree, he graduated from the Police Academy, and worked in the Forensic Lab. Most of his work involved investigating hit and runs. He also served on the Bomb Squad, investigating the terrorist bombings in New York City in the 1970s and 1980s. I was raised to believe, especially in blessed memory, that my father was a good man and a good cop. In my naive, all white world, I grew up believing that police officers were mostly “good.”

As I grew older, I began to realize that cops were not always “good.” In the early 1980s, one of my police officer uncles shot and killed a young man who approached him and his wife outside a restaurant. The judge ruled against my uncle, citing “his failure to use proper police procedure, and his hasty and unwarranted resort to deadly force.” The cases of police brutality against Abner Louima and Amadou Diallo shocked and disturbed my adolescent self. I hoped they were extreme incidents, not symptoms of a greater disease.

As the years went on, I remembered one thing my father instilled in me before he died: “If a police officer ever approaches you, stay calm. Be respectful. Show your hands. Answer the questions, and don’t run.” Reflecting on this now, I do believe my father did not just want me to be “respectful.” I think my father knew that his colleagues were capable of killing. But if the white daughter of a police officer could be at risk, how much more in danger were people of color, especially young men?

“COPS ARE PIGS!!” A young white man with dreadlocks is shouting in my face—the hate in his spit lands on my cheek. I chose to go to college at a liberal school in the Manhattan my father despised, now “cleaned up” and gentrified, yet still full of activists and artists in the Village. I wanted to be one of them, and yet I did not fit in, because I did not hate the police outright. As I began participating in marches and rallies, and working with activists of color in New York City, I began to understand the extreme differences in our experiences: as a white

woman with police in my family, I had experienced the police to be helpful, while my friends and colleagues, especially people of color, experienced them as dangerous, disruptive and disrespectful. I began to realize how I was both naive and racist, and have tried to learn from people of color, and act on their behalf in response. As I began supporting the Black Lives Matter movement, I saw some friends and family using “Blue Lives” and “All Lives.” I absolutely understood why my friends of color felt like their lives did not matter. I could also understand how my police friends and relatives could feel misunderstood—wanting to show that they were the “good” ones. Instead of shouting at each other on social media, I wondered how true dialogue and understanding could actually occur.

One answer has come from the All Stars Project, a non-profit in New York City with which I have volunteered and have supported for many years. The All Stars Project created a program called *Operation Conversation: Cops and Kids*, now run in partnership with the NYPD. Police officers and young people participate in community workshops that use performance, improvisational games, and conversation, to help them develop and improve their relationships. Several workshops are open to the public each year, and I have been in the audience. I was particularly moved when young people and police officers could both realize that they held things in common: both had stressful and potentially dangerous lives, both had lived through serious traumas. Both could better understand and have empathy for the other. While dialogue like this cannot outright stop racism and police brutality, I think it can absolutely help, and I hope that our churches can find ways to contribute to real time conversation and dialogue, following such good examples.

*The author is a priest in the diocese.*



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# Environmental Racism

## Climate Change and Industrial Farming

By Amy Halpern-Laff and Damien Jones

**E**nvironmental racism is a term for the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards—including exposure to industrial chemicals, air pollution and toxic waste—on people of color and poor people. These impacts are often exacerbated by lack of access to utilities, such as garbage removal and clean water, and exclusion from land management and resource-related decision-making.

While environmental injustice is systemic and multifaceted, this article focuses on the impacts on disadvantaged and marginalized communities of climate change and industrial farming.

### CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Climate change affects people of color and the poor first, worst, and longest.

Heat islands — densely-populated places where low-income African American and Latino families are most likely to live — can be up to 10°F (5.6°C) hotter than the surrounding areas. As global temperatures become more extreme, heat islands are even hotter, with resultant increases in air pollution, heat-related illness, and death. Low-income residents of these heat islands are at even greater physical risk due to poor housing conditions, lack of air conditioning, and inadequate resources to find alternative shelter during heatwaves. They are also affected economically, as they are ill-equipped to afford the increased energy costs that heatwaves inevitably bring. Meanwhile, emissions from the burning of fossil fuels—a key source of climate change—create air pollutants that disproportionately impact urban communities of color, especially children—millions of whom suffer from asthma at higher rates than white children, often leading to chronic health issues and high mortality rates.

Another example of the effect of climate change is the wider one of the rising seas, cataclysmic storms, and dry seasons that it causes—all of which threaten our poorest neighbors with disproportionate levels of catastrophe. Hurricane Katrina's impact—where those trapped in the city and left waiting for rescue and aid were overwhelmingly African-American and poor, as were 55 per cent of the 1,400 casualties—is surely only a harbinger of more to come.

*In spite of all the evidence, however, according to Motherboard.com, 53 per cent of members of Congress are climate change deniers—and President Trump, who recently withdrew the United States from the Paris Agreement, once called climate change “an expensive hoax.”*

### INDUSTRIAL FARMING

Factory farming, technically “Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations” or CAFOs, is the practice of keeping tens of thousands of animals indoors for their entire lives. Designed to produce the most product for the most profit, CAFOs have largely replaced traditional farms. Animals are kept inside dark, cavernous barns in cages scarcely larger than their bodies. They're fed antibiotic-laden, genetically-modified corn and soy. Viewed as units of production rather than sentient creatures, they are denied freedom to engage in even their most basic natural behaviors.

The result is cheap meat, milk, and eggs, with Americans now spending a significantly smaller percentage of their incomes on food than they did half a century ago. But that cheapness is mostly because the costs of factory farming are “externalized,” or off-loaded, to third parties—in particular, to the CAFOs' neighboring, mainly minority and low-income, communities.

Much of the environmental devastation wreaked by CAFOs results from the tremendous volumes of animal waste that they produce, and the inadequacy of their waste disposal processes. Along with nitrogen-based fertilizers, these waste products end up in the surrounding air and waterways.

In North Carolina's eastern region, for example, where pigs in industrial farms far outnumber the state's total human population, hog operations each year dispose of billions of gallons of untreated pig urine and feces in large open-air pools known as lagoons. To keep these lagoons from overflowing, operators periodically spray the fecal matter over vast fields of feed crops with pressurized sprinklers.

The people who live near these “farms,” who are overwhelmingly Black and low-income, experience significantly higher rates of asthma, high blood pressure, eye irritation, and depression than those in surrounding areas. At the same time, runoff from the lagoons makes its way into the local water, drastically raising nitrate levels, which have been linked to blue baby syndrome, autoimmune diseases, birth defects, and bladder cancer.

To add insult to injury, there is no possibility of compensation for those affected, since North Carolina's legislature recently enacted a law limiting compensation in suits against agricultural and forestry operations, including industrial farms, to the amount that affected property has diminished in value. Plaintiffs are barred from receiving any compensation whatsoever for damage to their health, quality of life, lost income, or enjoyment of property. (There are, however, numerous suits against Smithfield subsidiary Murphy-Brown making their way through the federal courts. Almost all the plaintiffs in these suits are black.)

### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

Justice-seekers must not only acknowledge the pervasiveness of environmental racism but also insist that lawmakers and industry leaders take immediate action to reverse the ongoing health risks and prevent

future harm.

One approach would be to require racial impact statements, already mandated in about 20 states for changes to criminal laws, for proposed environmental policies or permits. Such statements would not only help lawmakers predict outcomes of the laws that they enact but would also, just as importantly, inform the public how proposed legislation would affect disadvantaged communities.

Above all, environmental racism demands concerted and continuing focus. During the recent crisis in Flint, MI, where cost-cutting measures led to tainted drinking water, politicians registered outrage, but their attention was short-lived. Flint was not an anomaly; too many innocent people are suffering disproportionately from systemic apathy towards marginalized populations. To repair existing inequities, and to prevent further devastation of already disadvantaged communities, will require dismantling institutional systems of oppression and exploitation. Social justice organizations and political movements would be well advised to keep environmental injustices in their purview.

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“Summer heat in NYC: The lighter the color, the hotter it is.”  
Image: NASA; map by Robert Simmon. Date of image: August 14, 2002.



# Racism and Idolatry

By the Rev. Frank Morales

“You shall have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3).

**R**acism is a faith,” wrote Dr George D. Kelsey, Theologian and Professor of Ethics at Drew University in his 1965 book, *Racism and the Christian Understanding of Man*. “It is a form of idolatry. It is an abortive search for meaning... It arose as an ideological justification for the constellations of political and economic power which were expressed in colonialism and slavery. But gradually the idea of the superior race was heightened and deepened in meaning and value so that it pointed beyond the historical structures of relation, in which it emerged, to human existence itself.”

In other words, the idea of the “superior race” was initially nothing more than a way of justifying the economic oppression and exploitation that was already underway; but that given the oppositional dictates of Christian morality and law, it was necessary to concoct a justification rooted in the very order of being itself for the continuing exploitation of whole communities.

Thus was born the idea of a “superior race,” heightened over centuries in the context of the hard existential fact of racist violence and power. In the process, the “white race” grew as an object of devotion into the universal idea of a “white supremacy” that offered sanction for the brutal particularities of racist oppression. “White supremacy” (and presumably the “white god” that informs such an idea) thus became an idol, reified and deified, an infallible object of faith that, “elevates a human factor to the level of the ultimate.” And while “the god of racism is the race, the ultimate center of value,” it possesses, according to Kelsey, an inherent “will to power,” and by sheer force of might, executes its murderous “will to reduce the life of the other.” Such is, for the white racist, “the inevitable correlate of the exaltation and glorification of the self.”

It has been said that the personal is political. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of white racism. For while we can view racism as a disposition, an attitude, and following Kelsey, as a form of religious devotion, it is also a mode of collective behavior—a social reality. More specifically, it is an institutionalized form of collective injustice that specifically harms and violates the health, safety and human rights of “people of color.”

This institutionalized racism permeates our systems of governance and the everyday workings of our society, including our churches: It affects every aspect of our collective, lived experience; and it and the systems that are corrupted by it are the means through which “white” ruling elites maintain their dominant economic class status. Those elites use race as a wedge to divide one group from another, thus obscuring the real source of their (our) common misery, namely a social system built on class conflict and division. Here in New York City, a deep and wide racial caste system persists. For example:

Our school system is the third most segregated public education system in the country, with nearly three out of four black students attending intensely segregated schools, where less than 10 per cent of the children are white. Meanwhile, a shocking 90 per cent of the incarcerated population on Rikers Island is African-American and Latino, many of whom are victims of the New York Police Department (NYPD)’s so called “broken windows” practices, an orchestrated means of arresting and incarcerating mostly non-violent offenders in greater and greater numbers, particularly youth, who make up 95 per cent of the total. As regards the profound injustice regarding the death of black and Latino people at the hands of law enforcement, a recent news report cited that “in 179 fatalities involving on-duty NYPD cops in 15 years, only 3 cases led to indict-

ments—and just 1 conviction.” (NY Daily News, 12/8/14)

Concerning matters of housing (or lack of): Here in New York City 90 per cent of roughly 60,000 homeless people are black and Latino. As for homeowners, foreclosure defaults occur three times as often in mostly minority census tracts as in mostly white ones, with 85 per cent of the worst-hit neighborhoods—where the default rate is at least double the regional average—having a majority of black and Latino homeowners, with the hardest blows raining down on the backbone of minority communities—the black middle class. In New York City for example, “black households making more than \$68,000 a year are almost five times as likely to hold high-interest subprime mortgages as are whites of similar—or even lower—incomes.” (NY Times, 5/15/09)

Of course, much more could be said of the institutionalized racism embedded within the lived experience of many NYC residents, not to mention the wider US population. But let us ask:

What undergirds this behavior? The answer, as this article argues, is a manufactured and incessantly promoted racism that nurtures a devotion to “white supremacy” as a form of religious idolatry—a deification of the “white” race that elevates it to the status of the highest value, that worships a “white god”; a racism that infects an individual’s soul and affirms that one human is less than another; a racism that divides and rates human beings as human beings, and thus enables and encourages

our social institutions to violate the lives and livelihoods of our neighbors, enabling the perpetuation of systemic inequality and continued suffering—and all this despite the knowledge that the category of race is itself a construct, a category lacking scientific basis, a category that most biologists and anthropologists do not recognize as a biologically valid classification, in part because there is more genetic variation within groups than between them!

As Christians we affirm that we are all created in God’s universal image, a divine image of Love, and that when one part of the body suffers the whole body suffers (1 Corinthians 12:26).

Beyond all notions of race and our presumed “differences” is a moral consciousness that says that we are all God’s children. And so we must ask: Is it feasible that religion, which some maintain originally divided the human community, could ever succeed in (re)uniting it? Or more precisely, what must we as Christians do in order to banish forever the violence of racism, to foster reconciliation and heal its wounds, and to overcome the evil and sin of an anti-Gospel racist idolatry?

As I said, they say that the personal is political. It is my contention that the best way for folks to fight against the evil of racism is first to pray to the God of all to liberate us from those harmful thoughts and attitudes, platitudes, paternalisms and behaviors that poison our souls when we fail to recognize the inherent dignity and beauty of the other person whatever the color of their skin. But I believe that more importantly, we must unite to educate ourselves, one another and our children to the hard truths of the evil caused by institutionalized racism and “white supremacy,” and together rebuild our societal institutions and ourselves in ways that are consonant with our true faith and morality as Christians.

Only in this way can we insure our fidelity to our God and to our Christian values, so that together we might build a world where there is neither “black” nor “white,” neither slave nor free, but One People abiding together in His Holy Spirit, and with fidelity to His Holy Will, make justice and love real, on earth as it is in heaven.

*“We must unite to educate ourselves, one another and our children to the hard truths of the evil caused by institutionalized racism and “white supremacy.”*

*The author is priest-in-charge of All Souls’ Church, Manhattan.*

# What Will We Do About It?

By the Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas

**A**t this disturbing moment in our nation's history the warring soul of the black American, which W. E. B. Du Bois so poignantly described in his 1903 book *Souls of Black Folks*, provides as apt a description as it ever has of America itself. Drawing upon Du Bois's prescient words, America is a nation defined by "two thoughts, two warring ideas."<sup>1</sup> What America must decide is whether it wants to be a nation defined by its Anglo-Saxon myth of exceptionalism or one defined by its democratic rhetoric of being a nation of liberty and justice for all. This question is more poignant for people of faith. For we must decide if we are a people committed to a divine vision that reflects an Anglo-Saxon God or a divine vision that reflects a God whose image is revealed through a racially, religiously, and culturally diverse humanity. If we are in fact committed to building a nation and being a people that reflects a vision of justice and freedom for all who are children of God (and that is everybody who has breath), then the work we do as theologians, religious scholars, and leaders must be defined by at least three things: moral memory, moral identity, and moral participation.

## MORAL MEMORY

We continue to arrive at these "Make America Great Again," moments of Anglo-Saxon chauvinistic backlash where whiteness continues to stand its ground because of America's utter refusal to face the hard truths of its own story. As we have just seen, it is a story about the various vicissitudes of America's defining Anglo-Saxon narrative and the culture of whiteness that accompanies it. We as a people and as a nation will certainly continue to be held captive to and defined by this narrative until we as a people and a nation confront it and the history it has created. That is what a moral memory is all about.

Moral memory is a memory defined by telling the truth—even the harsh truths about who we are as a nation and a people—and then taking responsibility for the truth that is told. For moral memory is not about facile apologies meant to exonerate white Americans from the past. Rather, it is about holding oneself accountable to the truth of a past that continues to enact itself in the present. This is something that this country, particularly white America, has simply refused to do—to tell the truth. Instead, it would rather maintain a comfortable "racial amnesia" and ignore the unrelenting realities of whiteness that indeed compromise the possibilities of this nation ever being a place where there is justice and liberty for all.<sup>2</sup> In this regard, William Faulkner was right: "The past is never dead. It is not even past." As long as the truth of our past is not confronted it will not be dead; rather it will continue to control our present realities and shape our future.

## MORAL IDENTITY

My son was seven or eight years old. He and his best buddy at the time (I will call him James) were sitting in the backseat of the car as I was driving them home from school. James was white. It was during black history month, so they were learning about "famous" black people. That day, Arthur Ashe was the focus of the black history lesson. As my son and James were discussing Ashe, James said, "Good thing we [meaning white people] decided to share our stuff with you guys [meaning black people] or Arthur Ashe would have never been champion." Already implanted within James's young consciousness was the awareness that with his white skin came certain privileges that were not given to black people. The only way for black people to attain these privileges was for white people to confer them upon black

people. Otherwise, these privileges were off limits to black people—like the privilege of playing tennis and becoming a champion.

To claim a moral identity in a society shaped by a kind of stand-your-ground culture that privileges whiteness even as it penalizes—sometimes unto death—those who are the non-white other, is to name and denounce white privilege. There is a certain paradox of white privilege illustrated in the story about my son and James. Even as white privilege ascribes a false sense of superiority to white Americans at the peril of the non-white other, it is not the non-white other—that is, those without the benefits of white privilege—that are the most dehumanized. Rather, it is the humanity of those who live out of and into the privileges of whiteness that is compromised and denigrated. The fact of the matter is, the only way "white" people can be who they are is by claiming a privilege that belittles the humanity of non-white others. Baldwin rightly observed that white people's sense of self for far too long has depended upon the lie that black people are inferior to them; and tragically, what white people have not realized is that in "this debasement and definition they have debased and defined themselves."<sup>3</sup> In this way, it was actually James's very humanity that was being compromised and debased, even as he viewed himself as superior to my son.

In order to claim a moral identity there is one thing that must be understood: to be white is an immoral choice. It is the choice to see oneself as better than another and, thus, it is the choice to betray the sacredness of our common humanity—the fact that everyone who has breath or has ever had breath is a sacred child of God, reflecting God's own image, nothing more and nothing less. (In the words of James Cone, just because one looks like a white American does not mean that one has to act like one). To understand this makes it clear that whiteness is a sinful choice and likewise the culture that privileges whiteness is a sinful culture, for they both separate human beings from God. To reiterate, they both distort the very integrity of our human being as sacred children of God.

In short, to live into the privileges of whiteness, that is to be white—whether one does so innocently or guilefully—is to live into a sinful identity. Therefore, there is an ethical responsibility to claim and call others to a moral identity. Borrowing from the words of theologian Paul Tillich, our work as religious thinkers and leaders must exemplify the "courage to be oneself," that is the courage to be ourselves—children of God, nothing more and nothing less.<sup>4</sup> Such courage requires letting go of and certainly not striving for what it means to be white in America. A moral identity is one that lets go of those spoken and unspoken privileges of whiteness such as the privilege to claim space, the privilege of voice and perspective, the privilege of innocence—and the privilege of being protected from the "non-white" other. Notwithstanding the issue of skewed perspectives, there is an even more costly implication stemming from the white privilege of social segregation: the inability to empathize with, let alone enter into solidarity with, those who are victimized by the violent and sometimes deadly realities of systemic, structural, social, and culture whiteness itself. This inability to enter into solidarity with those victimized by whiteness is even more consequential for those who claim to be followers of Jesus, the one who was crucified.

That Jesus was crucified, a fate that he refused to escape, shows that he emptied himself of any sense of exceptionalism and privilege that might be bestowed upon him due to his maleness, Jewishness, or even divinity. In short, he "let go" of that which would set him apart from humanity, especially the crucified classes of

<sup>1</sup>See W.E.B. Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folks* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1903).

<sup>2</sup>For reference to "racial amnesia" see John Blake and Tawanda Scott Sambou, "How Trump's Victory Turns into Another 'Lost Cause,'" CNN, December 28, 2016.

<sup>3</sup>James Baldwin, "On Being White and Other Lies," *Essence*, April, 1984. <sup>4</sup>Paul Tillich *The Courage to Be* 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene 2000; Yale University Press, 1952), 87.



humanity—those victims of the deadly cultural, political and religious privilege of his time. In this regard, central to those who would follow Jesus is the requirement to let go of white privilege.<sup>5</sup> Put bluntly, it is impossible to be at once white and Christian. To reiterate, whiteness is a sinful reality for it means that one is not able to be where the God of Jesus is—in solidarity with those who are victimized by the crucifying realities of white privilege. Worse yet, one is not able to see Jesus in the face of the Trayvons and Renishas of our world. To be Christian therefore requires a moral identity—one free from the pretensions of Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism and the privileges of whiteness.

This brings us to the final aspect of what is required if we are in fact committed to building a nation and being a people reflective of a God with a vision of justice and freedom.

### MORAL PARTICIPATION

If faith is about partnering with God to help “mend the world,” then faith communities are compelled to join God in mending the world of its injustice and thus building a world where everyone is cherished for who they are. This is a world and a society where the peace of God that is justice and freedom flourishes. Practically speaking this means that our work as religious thinkers and leaders as well as our lives should be places of sanctuary and witness.

To be a sanctuary means that in our work and presence no one should feel diminished or unsafe because of who they are or are not. It also means that we must work to make our communities safe spaces for all who are made to feel unsafe by the various narratives of exceptionalism and privilege in our society and our world. More specifically it means creating spaces free of bigotry or intolerance of any kind and resisting

at every level of our society any efforts to reinstate 21st-century versions of Jim Crow laws like “stop and frisk,” or poll taxes in the form of Voter ID’s, or versions of McCarthyism with “House Un-American Committees,” or ethnically and religiously driven “travel bans” and immigration policies. In short, that aspect of moral participation that is sanctuary means that, drawing upon the words of Mahatma Gandhi, we must be and work for the “change we want to see.” This leads to what it means to be a witness for the vision of a God for freedom and justice for all.

In the final analysis moral participation, for those who claim to be followers of Jesus, is about nothing less than remembering Jesus—as in anamnesis, the Greek word for the remembering which Jesus called his disciples to during the Last Supper. Such remembering is about more than a mental recollection of events. Rather, it is about bringing the past into the present through our bodies, our lives, and our very work. In this regard, moral participation is about bringing the past that was Jesus’ ministry into our very present. This, then, is a past defined by a ministry of sanctuary, especially for those who are most marginalized by the power and privilege of whiteness; it is a past that empowers us to witness against forces of oppression and the perpetrators of unjust privilege.

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*This essay is adapted from a chapter in Faith & Resistance in the Age of Trump, Miguel De La Torre, editor (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017).*



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## A Black Immigrant's Tale

By Sheila Brandes

*My mother bore me in the southern wild,  
And I am black, but O! my soul is white.  
White as an angel is the English child:  
But I am black as if bereav'd of light.*

William Blake, "The Little Black Boy" ll. 1-4

**A**s a child growing up in Jamaica, I always wanted to go abroad. The ostensible reason was to study. In fact, one of my favorite pastimes was going to the airport to see family members leave for distant lands. I chose the United States, rather than England or Canada, primarily because I heard college students could work part-time in the U.S. What I did not know, however, was that despite the opportunities, a black immigrant's experience in the United States could be both disconcerting and even painful.

Among the opportunities was the advent of Affirmative Action. What this meant was that a certain number of slots were reserved for blacks and other minorities in higher education.

As expected, there were complaints. Some agreed that not all blacks and other minorities qualified for college level work. Others maintained that these slots should be awarded only to those born in the United States. This last requirement could affect me: I did receive a Martin Luther King scholarship for one year, but it was not renewed. It is true that our ancestors were all taken from Africa as slaves, but the similarity ended there. Whites were the majority in the United States, whereas blacks were the majority in Jamaica. This was a crucial difference. Also, the British ended slavery before the Americans did. In 1833, Parliament passed the Slavery Abolition Act, but it was not until 1863 that President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. These facts gave the slaves in the British colonies an initial advantage over their American counterparts. Does this initial advantage mean that I should not take advantage of Affirmative Action?

Whatever I felt about Affirmative Action, there would come a time toward the end of my student days when I had no qualms about benefitting from it. For example, this happened at Stony Brook: the chairman of a small liberal arts college asked his counterpart at SBU to send him those minorities who had completed all requirements except the dissertation. There were two of us. I was one interviewee; the other was an American Chinese male. Anecdotally, he had been offended by the chairman, who had asked about Chinese laundry practices during their interview. For my part, I took the instructor position offered, and so began my career in academia.

The first step in my career began at Howard, a black university in Washington

D.C. There I discovered that among blacks, culture trumps color. Jamaicans avoided black Americans, and they, in turn, were far from welcoming. In fact, this could be said of all the various groups: black Americans, Africans, West Indians, and Indians: each remained separate. Among the West Indians, however, there was further friction. Three islands vied for leadership: Jamaica, the largest in the British West Indies (BWI); Barbados, a.k.a. Little England, where the British royalty vacationed, and the "brightest" (with 90% literacy); Trinidad and Tobago, the home of calypso.

When I left Howard, I also left my compatriots behind. I moved to New York City, where two of my uncles lived and I had spent all my summers since coming to the United States.

If I were looking for a change, this was it. At City College, I was the only black in the English M.A. program. I made my mark there with a paper comparing the Jamaican dialect with standard English, using a poem, "Jamaica Labrish" by Louise Bennett. I was thrilled when the professor recorded me reading the poem. Academia was definitely the place for me!

My next step was Stony Brook University, where I was a Ph.D. candidate in English. Here I encountered a light-skinned black whom I thought was white. He would later call me an "Oreo cookie" (at the time I was unfamiliar with the phrase; he and I were the only two blacks in the class). After class, I asked Claire, a white classmate from New Orleans, its meaning. "Black on the outside and white on the inside," she replied. I imagine he regarded me as having "white" views, whatever those are.

After returning to New York City from Stony Brook, I can recall only three instances when I experienced overt racism. Two occurred initially over the phone. The first was when I called and was told an apartment was available for rent, but when I arrived a short time later, it was suddenly rented. The shocked look on the owner's face told the hidden story: confused by my quasi-British accent, he had assumed I was white. The fact that my mother had given me an Irish name, Sheila McDonald, only added to the confusion. Another time was when I was getting married and was looking for an Episcopalian minister and a rabbi to perform the ceremony together at the United Nations Chapel. As I called around, I finally encountered a church secretary who upon hearing my request exploded with, "How can you marry a Jew?" I felt the urge to respond, "You don't understand, I am black." Instead, I hung up the phone.

My third experience of overt racism was by far the most painful, and the one that still haunts me. My fiancé's Jewish parents were outraged that their son was about to marry a *schwarze* (one of the ironies of which was that my father-in-law had been a principal at an East Harlem high school where the students were black and Hispanic). One might have expected, anyway, that the discrimination suffered by Jews would have led his parents to empathize with the similar plight of black—and many Jews did, of course, march with Dr. Martin Luther King during the 1960's Civil Rights Movement—but I was nevertheless surprised at the limits to the willingness of some to help to eradicate racism. Intermarriage, in this instance at any rate, was definitely going too far. In fact, to show their disapproval, my husband's parents did not come to our wedding; nor did his brother, his only sibling, who had been with King on the historic march to Washington, D.C. What I also found puzzling was that my three in-laws came to visit us the day after our wedding. Had guilt settled in so fast; or perhaps, they did not want to participate in a reception with blacks?

Still I cling to Dr. King's dream that in the future, blacks "will not be judged by color of their skin but by the content of their character." ("I Have a Dream" speech, August 28, 1963.)



The author was called an "Oreo Cookie."

Photo: mihoda, Flickr.

The author is a member of the parish of Calvary/St. George's, in Manhattan.



# A Surge in Hate

By *J. Richard Cohen*

In a scene that has become all too familiar, a man at a gas station in Bellevue, Washington, in May came upon a driver and two passengers who had stopped to pump gas. Angered simply by their presence, he began shouting threats and racial epithets.

A police detective who interviewed the man later wrote that his voice grew loud as he “started talking about how he hated those people,” specifically “Iranians, Indians, Middle Easterners,” according to the *Post Intelligencer* in Seattle. He also said he supported President Donald Trump’s efforts to keep them out of the country.

Police charged the man with a hate crime.

But this story is just one of thousands that are playing out in public venues all across the country. Substitute a Latino victim for a black victim, or a Muslim victim for a Hindu one, and so on, and the story remains the same: An aggressor harboring white nationalist sentiment lashes out at his fellow Americans. Many times, as we saw on a commuter train in Portland, Oregon, last Memorial Day weekend, these bias incidents turn into tragedies. In that case, a man who was directing slurs at two young women, one wearing a hijab, stabbed two courageous young men who came to their defense, killing one.

The situation that has given rise to these kinds of incidents must be considered in the broader context of the deep polarization of our political system as well as the corresponding increase in hate and extremism we have seen in recent years—both in terms of emboldened individuals and highly organized groups.

The number of hate groups, which the SPLC has tracked for decades, is an important indicator of this rising extremism. They are organizations that vilify entire groups of people based on their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or some other characteristic. Not all are violent, though some certainly are. But even those hate groups whose members do not commit or explicitly advocate violence often provide inspiration or justification for hate crime or domestic terrorism. We saw an example of this in 2015, when nine African Americans were massacred at the Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston by a young man who had been indoctrinated into white supremacist ideology largely by reading hate group propaganda online.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center’s most recent count, there are currently 917 hate groups operating within the United States. In 2016, we documented a second consecutive year of growth that coincided with the president’s incendiary election campaign. Significantly, anti-Muslim hate groups tripled in number last year—from 34 to 101. This increase has been accompanied by a rash of hate crimes targeting Muslims, such as the arson of a mosque in Victoria, Texas, that occurred just hours after the president announced an executive order suspending travel from some predominantly Muslim countries. The most recent FBI statistics show that hate crimes against Muslims surged by 67 percent in 2015, the year in which Donald Trump launched his campaign. It was also the year in which he called for “a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States.”

In our view, the most important factor driving the increase in both hate crimes and hate groups is the backlash against our country’s changing demographics. To white nationalists, President Obama symbolized the kind of “change” they fear most: the day—coming in 2040, according to the U.S. Census Bureau—when non-Hispanic whites will no longer comprise a majority of the population. Adding to the anxiety has been significant economic disruption, caused by rapid technological change and globalization, as well as the fear and anger created by terrorist attacks perpetrated by groups like ISIS that are



**Victims of hate: civil rights martyrs of the 1960s. Photos carried in August 2016 by Diocese of New York participants in the Jonathan Daniels pilgrimage in Hayneville, Alabama, which remembers, along with all martyrs of the civil rights cause, an Episcopal seminarian who was shot to death in 1965 in that town, where he was working to register black voters.** Photo credit: Carla Burns

associated with radical or perverse forms of Islam. Together, these factors form a perfect storm for far-right extremism to flourish.

Trump’s campaign rhetoric only fanned the flames. It energized the radical right and gave people in the broader population a license to act on their worst instincts. We’re seeing the social norms that stitch our society together—the unwritten rules of common decency and civilized behavior that have been built up over generations—begin to unravel.

In two surveys of educators, one in March 2016 and another just after the election, we found that the rhetoric associated with Trump’s campaign inflamed racial and ethnic tensions in the classroom and caused a sharp uptick in the bullying of children whose races, ethnicities, nationalities or religions were targeted by the candidate. Then, in November, we documented nearly 900 bias-related incidents involving harassment, intimidation or violence within the first 10 days after the election. More than half occurred during the first three days, and many of the perpetrators invoked Trump’s name—just like the man charged with a hate crime in Washington.

We often hear people say that no one is born a bigot. But the reality is that people are tribal and ethnocentric by nature. The social norms we observe curb these tendencies and allow us to build a society that aspires to fairness, equality and a common good that makes the world better for all of us. These norms are expressed in the world’s great religions, and they’re taught to generations of children in our schools, in our homes and in other institutions. Once they’re cast aside, my guess is that it will be a serious challenge to get them back.

It will take hard work from each of us—faith leaders, elected officials, educators and, indeed, people from every walk of life—to help heal our nation’s wounds and put us back on a path toward realizing the full promise of our democracy.

*The author is president of the Southern Poverty Law Center, a civil rights group based in Montgomery, Alabama, that monitors the American radical right.*

## One Christian's To-Do List

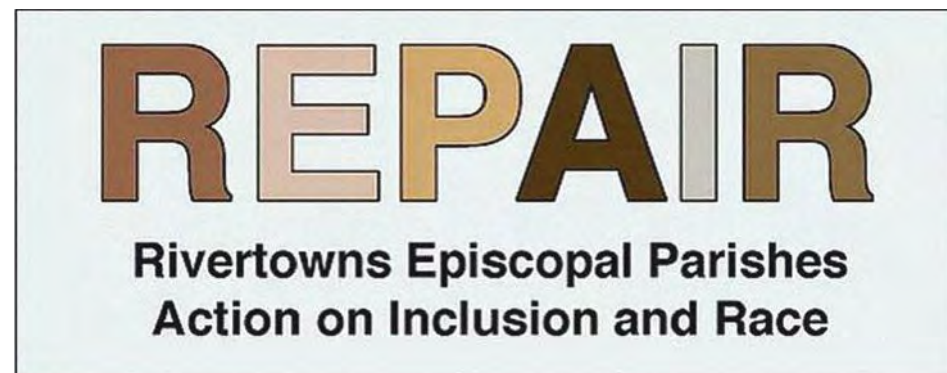
By Karl Weber

**W**e're living in a time of challenge for American Christians unlike any most of us can recall. Our national history shows that every episode of meaningful progress in human rights is followed by a period of backlash and repression. The end of slavery was followed by Jim Crow in the South and segregation in the North. The Civil Rights era of the 1960s gave rise to white flight from our cities, the Southern Strategy in politics, the "war on crime" and mass incarceration. Now, the presidency of Barack Obama and the movements to recognize the rights of women and LGBT people has been followed by the rise of white nationalism and the alt-right, an assault on voting rights, and an explosion of xenophobia and hate crimes.

We didn't ask to be the ones called to address this third great backlash. We are here now purely by the timing of our birth. But of course that doesn't excuse us from the responsibility we bear.

The issues we face aren't ones we can comfortably ignore if we consider ourselves "apolitical" or "nonpartisan." Millions of us feel we can't ignore a change in our political climate that treats hatred and exclusion based on racial, ethnic, national,

- Talking about social justice with people around whom I normally avoid these subjects—such as relatives, neighbors, and acquaintances with prejudiced views.
- Exposing racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, and other forms of bigotry when I encounter them . . . including in settings where it makes me uncomfortable, like in meetings at work and especially during coffee hour at church.
- Participating in marches, sit-ins, and other demonstrations against government or private acts that violate our national and religious values . . . even when this means partnering with individuals and groups with whom I don't always see eye to eye.
- Defending friends, neighbors, colleagues at work, strangers on the street, and other fellow citizens against bullying, threats, harassment, or physical attacks . . . even if this entails some risk to my own comfort or safety.
- Putting myself on the line through acts of peaceful civil disobedience and being willing to suffer the consequences.



religious, gender, and sexual prejudice as acceptable or even laudable. The message of the gospels on this issue is clear and unequivocal.

So those of us who aspire to practice these Christian values are facing new challenges in today's changed American climate. That includes me and my fellow members of REPAIR, a Westchester County organization of Christians dedicated to racial justice and inclusion. And we're discovering that being in a position to participate in making history is no fun.

We are having to make changes in our lives that will be unwelcome and unpleasant—and not just because we want to, or because it is "a nice thing to do," but because we have no choice if we want to go on claiming the mantle of followers of Jesus.

Each of us probably has a personal to-do list of actions we feel called to consider in this new era of backlash. Some we've already begun taking. Others are in reserve for the tougher times we hope we may avoid, but that we fear are looming. Here's my own to-do list, arranged in increasing order of difficulty and pain. I've created this list partially as a matter of personal discipline and partially as a tool for us to use in our ongoing conversations about how we must prepare for the tough times ahead. It includes:

- Giving money and other forms of support to organizations that will resist efforts to marginalize, oppress, exclude, and attack the vulnerable members of our community.
- Taking time away from things I'd rather be doing—at work, with friends, with family—to publicly and actively defend our rights and those of our fellow citizens.

I don't know how it makes you feel to think about your own to-do list for this era of backlash. Personally, I find it intimidating. Though I'm of mixed race (half Asian, half white), in most circles I pass for white, and I generally experience the privileges that status confers. I don't relish trading my comfortable life for a life of conflict, stress, and possibly suffering.

I wish I felt I had a choice.

We Christians who feel called to respond to the great backlash will also need to be flexible and creative in our thinking and our actions. Our potential adversaries are likely to behave in ways that are smart, unpredictable, and sometimes ruthless. For example, many people on Facebook and elsewhere have already announced that, in the event that the federal government forces creation of a registry of Muslims in this country, they will register, despite being non-Muslims themselves. That's good. But we need to anticipate that the government and its supporters will respond harshly to those actions. For instance, I imagine it would be easy for leaders of the backlash in Congress to make it a crime to falsely register as a Muslim—perhaps with severe penalties attached. Then we could expect a number of high-profile arrests of "ringleaders" to intimidate and discourage others.

In other words, the relatively painless act of signing a piece of paper could quickly escalate into a threat of arrest, with all the potential implications—legal costs, personal humiliation, social ostracism, perhaps job loss. We need to assume the likelihood of actions like this and prayerfully plan our responses in advance.

We don't know whether the crisis we face will demand all of the actions listed above (or the even more extreme forms of resistance that history has shown can sometimes be required). God willing, we may be spared a lot. And I don't know that every Christian is necessarily called to perform all of the actions I've listed. That's a question for each of us to answer.

But I do believe we all have an obligation to think seriously about the road ahead . . . including the hard places toward which it may lead us.

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*The author is a vestry member at the Church of St Barnabas, Irvington, and a member of the organizing committee of Rivertowns Episcopal Parishes Action on Inclusion and Race (REPAIR), an interparish organization in Westchester County dedicated to racial justice.*



# Barbara Harris: A Witness to History

By Verne Becker

**W**itness to history, maker of history. That's the phrase used by Grace, Nyack and Christ Church and San Marcos Mission, Tarrytown to describe Barbara C. Harris, Bishop of Massachusetts (ret.), who spoke to both congregations on Mother's Day weekend in May.

Her overarching theme? Inclusion. "I am a firm believer that we all gather under the broad umbrella of Christ, and that includes all kinds and conditions of people," she said to the Tarrytown congregation. At both churches, she underscored that theme by vividly recalling story after story of her work for justice and equality. (See below for a sampling of her anecdotes.)

Bishop Harris, 87, has certainly witnessed a lot—beginning with glimpses of life under slavery as told by her great-grandmother. A lifelong advocate for civil rights, women's rights, and human rights, she joined the march on Washington led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1963, and the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. She witnessed ecclesiastical history as well, participating in the service of the "irregular" ordination of eleven women (known as the Philadelphia Eleven) as Episcopal priests in 1974—two years before the church officially sanctioned the ordination of women. She has attended eighteen consecutive General Conventions, and was a vocal supporter of the ordination of gays and lesbians.

In 1989, Barbara Harris made history with her consecration as suffragan bishop of Massachusetts—the first woman bishop in the worldwide Anglican communion. While some controversy swirled around the occasion, the new bishop chose to

focus on her responsibilities and move forward.

Though she officially retired in 2002, Bishop Harris continued to assist in several dioceses for a few years. She has a book coming out in November titled *In Conversation: Michael Curry and Barbara Harris* (Church Publishing). In April, she attended and served as co-consecrator of Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows as bishop of Indianapolis—the world's first black woman diocesan bishop.

"It was a thrilling, wonderful service—joyful, good preaching—and it was a pleasure to be a part of it," Harris said. "Jennifer will make an excellent diocesan bishop. What was particularly heartwarming was to see the gathering of black women clergy from all over the country who came together to be a part of that celebration."

Meanwhile, parishioners at Christ Church/San Marcos and Grace are still feeling the impact of Bishop Harris's visit. Grace rector Owen Thompson said, "Because of her courage and steadfast faith, the Episcopal Church shines a bit brighter with the love of God, and as an African American priest, I am able to bask in that radiant light."

But he also acknowledged the challenge. "If we—the church—are not willing to get out of the pews, go into the world, and be a part of what the Holy Spirit is up to, then we will be, in Barbara's words, a 'club full of old folks who aren't doing much of anything.'"

*The author is a member of Grace Church, Nyack.*

## Overcoming the Obstacles to Justice

As told by Bishop Barbara Harris

**M**y great-grandmother, Mom Sem, had been a slave on a plantation in Maryland. Mom Sem always kept her hair very short. As a young girl of 12 or 13, she had an encounter with General Ulysses Grant, who came on the plantation and asked her to pump a dipper of water for him, which she did. He swished the water around in the dipper, then threw it out and told her to pump another dipper.

"You didn't need to throw it out," she said, "the dipper was clean."

"Well, I don't know," General Grant replied. "People around here are trying to poison me and my men. I have to be careful." And then he did that thing that white people used to do and may still do to black people: he rubbed her head and said, "I've been south fighting for little boys like you."

She responded, "I don't need anybody to fight for me—I'll fight for myself. And I'm not a little boy!"

My confirmation was awful. The bishop who confirmed me never visited black congregations on a Sunday; it was always a weeknight. So I was confirmed on Thursday, December 11, 1941. This bishop was not a high churchman, because the diocese of Pennsylvania where I was confirmed was snake-belly low. But whenever he came to black congregations, he wore little white gloves because he did not want to touch our heads. Afterwards, I always said that I was going to be re-confirmed, until somebody told me, "Oh Barbara, the Holy Spirit works through gloves!"

Over the years at my black parish, I served as a church school teacher, choir member, sponsor of the young people's fellowship, and founder and member of the young adults' fellowship. Then my parish merged with a predominantly white congregation. I was not comfortable after that merger, because as a young person in the choir, every year during Lent, the choir from my black congregation went to sing a cantata at this white parish. It was like we were there to entertain them. So after the merger, I grew more and more uncomfortable.

One Sunday morning, I got up and got in my car. I had no idea where I was going



The Rt. Rev. Barbara C. Harris.

Photo: Verne Becker

to church that day, and I knew if I didn't go to church that day, I probably wasn't going to go again. I ended up at the Church of the Advocate in the heart of North Philadelphia, in a predominantly black neighborhood. I did not know that the parish was on a summer schedule, and I inadvertently walked right into the middle of the service, headed toward the altar. A woman stepped out of her pew, came up and put her arms around me, then walked me to a seat.

From that day forward I was in love with that parish. I later served as senior warden on the vestry for ten years. After services every Sunday, the rector, another woman parishioner and I visited the House of Correction at Holmesburg Prison. The rector went to the men's wing, and Rosalie and I went to the women's (continued on page 50)

# Embrace Every Glowing Soul

By Richard Gatjens

**M**y first job in New York City was as a waiter for a diner on Wall Street. My main duty was taking outgoing orders for the breakfast rush. People would stand in line, tell me what they wanted, and I would prepare their coffee and call out orders to the kitchen, “Two eggs, scrambled, with bacon on a roll!” Then I would take their money and hand them their order in a paper bag.

I would see the same people every day, and I would have a chance to chat with them while waiting for their order to be filled. We became friends over time. One of these friends sold me tickets to a party on a cruise around Manhattan. I had only been in New York a few months, so the idea of partying while watching the city pass by appealed to me.

Over the course of the next few days, however, a number of my white coworkers came up to me to tell me that I *should not go to this party*, because everyone there would be black, and I would be in some sort of danger as the only white person there. I shook off the first couple of people, thinking they must be putting me on. Why would my friend sell me tickets if this were true? But as person after person came up to me with the same message, I became concerned.

I first came to New York when I was 25 years old. I had been living in a rural area north of Seattle, where my interactions with black people were few (there was one black person in my high school, whom I didn't know personally). In college, I met more types of people, but I had never before been in the absolute minority of a large group. Being new to New York and big city life, I wasn't sure if these very

serious white people knew something I didn't. I decided to ask Nancy, a black waitress who was going on the cruise, if I really had anything to worry about. She looked at me with disappointment and said, “Richard, I thought you were different.” I was ashamed and embarrassed. She assured me that I had *nothing* to worry about.

I told my date that most of the guests would be black, and she decided not to come because she felt uncomfortable. She did encourage me to go on my own, however. The night of the cruise, I ran into Nancy, whose date also did not come. We spent the whole cruise together. We sat on the deck watching the city go by, we danced, and we found the woman who had sold us the tickets. She had set up a table for her group with free food and drinks. Who could ask for more? I had a wonderful time on the cruise.

As I look back on this incident, I am still embarrassed, and I regret that I asked Nancy about my safety, but I think I can forgive myself. I believe our society and our history has encouraged the separation of, and suspicion between, people of different races. We have gone to extreme lengths over the years to split people apart: Indian reservations, Japanese internment camps, and white-only drinking fountains, business establishments, schools and seating on buses.

I recall a passage from Genesis, where Joseph has invited his brothers to a banquet. The author makes a point of describing the seating arrangements:

“So they served Joseph at one table, his brothers at another table, and the Egyptians who ate with him at another table. This was because Egyptians did not like Hebrews and never ate with them.” (Genesis 43:32 (NCV))

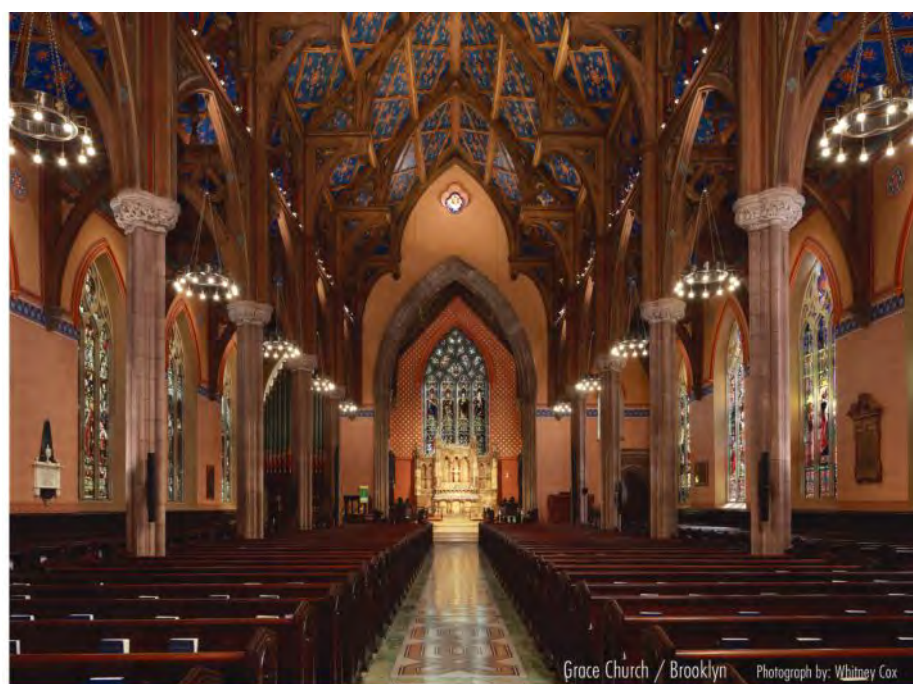
As I look at that scripture now, my reaction is: those poor Egyptians, they really missed out on a good time! Think of all the interesting stories Joseph and his brothers could have told them, but they cut themselves off from what could have been a lovely party. Just as I almost cut myself off, because I was afraid that black people wouldn't like having me at their party.

But what I'm talking about here is, of course, more serious than that. In the end, I think we really are cutting ourselves off from better, richer lives by separating ourselves. When I became active in the Episcopal Church, I joined the diocesan Anti-Racism Committee. We meet monthly to plan activities, such as anti-racism training, the annual Jonathan Daniels pilgrimage and the Absalom Jones celebration. We always share a meal, and the stories I've heard and the times we've spent together have definitely enriched my life.

Jesus was criticized by the Pharisees (and even by his own disciples) for the people he associated with, but he knew we are all children of God. Ignorance is a big factor in the rising tensions between different racial, religious and cultural groups in our country. It is much harder to hate people after you've broken bread with them.

In *Anything We Love Can Be Saved*, Alice Walker wrote, “Our last five minutes on earth are running out. We can spend those minutes in meanness, exclusivity, and self-righteous disparagement of those who are different from us, or we can spend them consciously embracing every glowing soul who wanders within our reach.” I plan on embracing as many of those glowing souls as I can in the time I have left.

*The author serves on the Anti-Racism Committee of the diocese and on the vestry of St. Stephen's Church, Woodlawn, Bronx.*



Grace Church / Brooklyn Photograph by Whitney Cox

Historic Finishes Investigations  
Conservation & Restoration  
Preconstruction Design  
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# We Are All in Shackles

By Donna Ruf

It happened to finish Episcopal seminarian Jonathan Daniels' biography, *Outside Agitator*, by Charles Eagles, a week before the *Episcopal New Yorker* called for submissions on race. I knew the story of Daniels, who died in Alabama as a Christian martyr in the Civil Rights movement. He was murdered because of his commitment to ensuring that Negroes be allowed to register to vote after the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act (In August, our diocese will, as it has annually in recent years, take a youth pilgrimage to Georgia and Alabama to remember him and others who died striving for equality and freedom.) But I'd wanted to know more about him and his journey. As I read, I struggled with the use of the N-word but I knew it had to be there.

It took two weeks for me to begin to write this article on racism because of my intense, uncomfortable feelings. I said to my husband "I do not think I can do it," but I knew I had to do it and in my own voice. I googled racism and got more confused. What connotes a race? How many races are there? The number has changed over the years. Did the term race begin with those coming from a particular geographic region of the world? Is it defined by one's physical characteristics, culture, class, education etc? I found no congruency.

Is this article supposed to focus our thoughts just on the black race as the submission invitation seems to imply? Am I using the correct adjective now? I thought I would start out with my current experiences and go back in time, but found I could not do that. I had to start with my own history. This was reinforced for me by Bow (Rainbow) on the ABC show *Black-ish*. One episode was centered on how uncomfortable Bow was when her son brought home a white girl. As a biracial woman, she had to look back to her past to see herself today. She identified as a black woman, and her white Dad saw her that way too. But had she become a racist herself? Did she believe that the race she identified with was superior to that of the young woman her son was dating? Or did it just scare her?

My personal experiences have shaped me as a woman who is white, a baby boomer and an Episcopalian. I discovered when I started to write this article that the nouns and adjectives I used and continue to use to describe myself, others, and our world are so alienating.

There were very few "colored kids" in my classes in Wappingers Falls in the 1950s. Mostly, I remember a little girl whose parents were migrant workers from Florida, as she was different from the kids I knew. She spoke with a southern accent, and her family worked farms that required them to move about. Around 1961, I met Fr. Octave Lafontant, vicar of our Haitian mission in Darbonne, at Zion Chapel in New Hamburg (now St. Nicholas on the Hudson). It was my first experience of meeting a colored person from outside the United States.

My junior high in the early 1960s brought together the few "Negro" kids from all the different elementary schools in our district. That was when I started hearing the word "prejudice."

During high school in the late 1960s I was a counselor at a camp in the Catskills run by All Souls' Church in Harlem. Most of the campers were black from New York City. I brought my white Barbie dolls for them to play with and take home. They combed my long straight hair and put "grease" in it. There was a lot of wonderful social and cultural exchange going on between the kids, myself and the counselors. The head counselor there was a guy from Brooklyn who was attending college in California. Through my interaction with him, I began to read books like *Black Like Me* by John Howard Griffin. I attended a memorial service for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with my mother at a local Baptist Church in 1967, where



Hands and shackles on the base of Savannah's African-American Monument

Photo: Donna Ruf

there were not many white people present.

In college, I experienced different things as these were the tumultuous 1970s. Black students did not want to speak with me, I believe, because I was white—and that hurt me. Muhammad Ali spoke at my college and that was eye-opening also. I knew very little about the Muslim faith.

Around 2002, I attended a diocesan anti-racism workshop. It was only a few hours on one day. It did not "require" us to talk about as many of the issues it does now. The workshops mirrored some topics from UNESCO's 1978 Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, which drew on the most recent findings of social and natural sciences at that time. At that workshop in 2002, I believe we did not talk about racism as sin; but it is.

I went to Savannah, Georgia this past fall and took this powerful picture of the base of the African-American Monument there. It is supposed to commemorate the Emancipation Proclamation and the north's Civil War victory. I question it. Were the slaves emancipated? Did the Civil War change things? I think that in the U.S., all of us are shackled and I wonder if a race war is possible.

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin?" asked Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the authors of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948—precursor to the UNESCO document of 1978. "In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world."

These are powerful words, but I feel our people, the nation and our church are not listening.

*The author is a member of Zion Church, Wappingers Falls.*

## A Troublesome Thanksgiving Sermon

by Gary Ryan

I want to tell you about a sermon preached at St Peter's Church, Chelsea on Thanksgiving Day in 1835 that resulted in the minister preaching it losing his job. But first, some background.

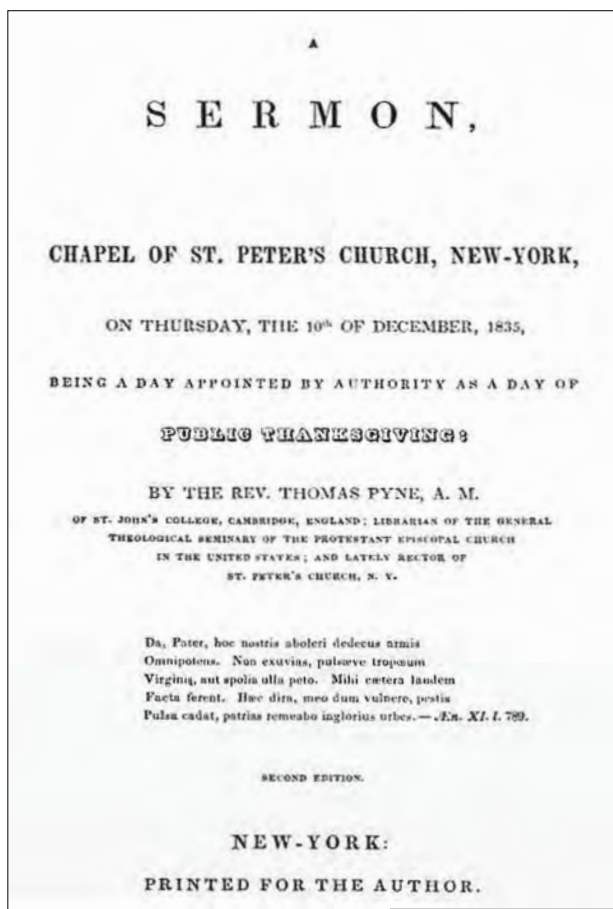
Much like today, 1830s New York City was a city in flux: constantly changing, never standing still. Indians were the first people to live here, but not very many—only a few hundred, maybe a thousand. In the 1500s, explorers came from Europe, but not to stay. Later, in the early 1600s, the Dutch built the oldest part of the city at the bottom of the island and protected it with a wood and earthwork “waal” to keep out wild animals, pirates, Indians, and the English. The wall worked well for many years, but by 1664 the English gained control of the city anyway, after their success in the Third English-Dutch War.

The city had languished under Dutch rule; but under English rule it blossomed. After independence from England, the growth kicked into overdrive—so much so that life downtown became crowded, unpleasant, and often disease-ridden. Those who could, escaped to the north to another settlement they called Greenwich. But Greenwich *Village* soon suffered a similar fate—it too became crowded, and disease occasionally swept through its crowded streets.

So in the 1830s, those with the means and will to do so bought tracts of open farm land in a place called Chelsea, far to the north of the city, and north of Greenwich—a place where some of the wealthier businessmen from downtown had established summer residences. Clement Clarke Moore was one: he divided up his family farm for development, setting aside a large tract for General Theological Seminary, where he himself was a professor—and another smaller tract, half a block away, for a parish church, St Peter's. In 1831, money was raised to build a chapel (now the rectory), then in 1838 more money was raised to build a stone church.

From its beginning, all this success and plenty was very much dependent upon slavery. Slaves had built that first wall downtown. Slaves worked the docks loading and unloading ships. They manned stores, ran presses, built the roads and houses, cooked the food, raised the children, shod the horses, and dug the graves. Typical workers then could expect \$5-10 per week for 60 hours of work at six 10-hour days. But of course slaves were not paid for their work. The going rate to buy a slave in New York City when it was still legal to do so was about \$400. For much of the 1700s, four in ten Brooklynites were enslaved persons, and three in ten Manhattanites.

Finally in the 1790s, slavery as an institution in New York State began slowly to be phased out, with 1827 being the last year enslaved persons could be brought into the state. But slaves who fled here could still be sought after here by bounty-hunters, since the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793, which protected the property-rights of slave owners, was still the law of the United States. And most, perhaps all, of the city's banks continued to finance slave purchases, and to receive slaves as collateral in business transactions almost up until the time of the Civil War. Slavery was very much a part of who we were as a people: even Washington himself, in negotiating the peace treaty that ended the Revolutionary War, had inquired of the British gen-



erals about the whereabouts of his slaves from Mt. Vernon, hoping to get them back and recoup his investment.

Such was the larger backdrop for Thanksgiving Day when the young Rev. Thomas Pyne, only the second priest St. Peter's Church had hired, schooled for ministry at Oxford University, stood to give his prepared sermon<sup>1</sup>.

For his text, Pyne chose Psalm 107:8: *Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men.* He then spoke about the fact that this nation had much to be thankful for given its great expanse and plenty. And he spoke of the natural good ties between this land and his land of England, and that it was his hope that any vestiges of contention between them would be forgotten. So far, so good.

But, then he said, “... fidelity compels me to pause for a moment, and to speak, however unwillingly from this sacred place, of America's situation with reference to the Indian and the African.” The Indians had been treated horribly here, he said, they have been driven away off their lands, and they have been kept in ignorance. The English did it here before, now the Americans, so the disgrace is common for them, perhaps the reparation should also be common.

And then, he said, that other national calamity of slavery must also be spoken of, the Gospel required it. Two million of our persons were made to be born into bondage. “I cannot bear to think,” he said, “while we are praising God for civil and religious privileges ... growing rich, and prosperous, and luxurious, while our brethren, merely because their skin is dark, must work unrecompensed and almost unpitied.”

“... America is emphatically the stranger's home,” he said, “Here do we meet from every tribe and kingdom ... may these privileges be extended to all classes throughout the earth; and may the great family of man ... be united in one triumphant jubilee ... with glad hope, for a common heaven.”

What happened next, I do not think he anticipated—or maybe he did. The sermon caused a sensation. The vestry had an emergency meeting, with some opposing the sermon who were not present for it. So the priest offered to read it again for their benefit, but was refused. The matter went before the bishop, who sadly was of little help.

Was the priest fired? It seems, no, he was not, not per se. Was he expected to resign and seek other employ? Yes, which is what happened. He stayed in the United States for a while, then returned to England, where he famously wrote a pamphlet opposing capital punishment and another advocating for the education of the African continent.

What is does this mean for us today?

If Pyne were here today, what would he see, and what would he say?

He is not here, however—we are: so I ask us, what do we see, honestly, when we look, really look, at our culture? And what should we say and do about it?

*The author is a member of St. Peter's Church, Chelsea, in Manhattan, and serves on the diocese's Reparations Committee.*

<sup>1</sup>For the full text of Pyne's sermon, see [http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/pyne\\_sermon1835.html](http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/pyne_sermon1835.html)



# The Content of Our Characters

By Margaret Diehl

*I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I reserve the right to criticize her perpetually.*

—James Baldwin (1924-1987), inducted into the American Poets Corner in 2011.

**W**hen my brothers try to draw a circle to exclude me, I shall draw a larger circle to include them.” The Rev. Pauli Murray wrote these words in 1945, when she was already a pioneering lawyer and activist, but long before she became the first African-American woman ordained in the Episcopal Church.

“We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal...” These are words that still resound in the ear, and yet the country whose independence was thus declared held men, women and children as slaves for another hundred years. Before and after that document, the original inhabitants of the continent were brutally and systematically murdered, the remnants driven and crowded into unwanted territory. In the last century, Jim Crow and WWII Japanese internment continued the story. And today, police shootings, mass incarceration, and the many recent hate crimes based on race as well as religion/country of origin/sexuality keep us agitated and dismayed. Yet the story of racial minorities in America has also been one of enormous achievement across categories, from family to pulpit to business, science, athletics and the arts.

Jazz and blues are purely American art forms that originated in the black community and continue to evolve and spread around the world. Black writers and visual artists now crowd bookshelves and museum walls. Puerto-Rican, Mexican, Asian and Native American writers and artists have also come into their own in the last thirty years. As demographics shift, and America becomes less white, it's likely this cultural contribution will expand and deepen.

Without downplaying the immense hardship racial minorities have suffered and still suffer in America, and while recognizing the many who died without the opportunity to express themselves, it is possible to be astounded and thankful at the richness of understanding of the human experience that these artists have given us. This year, the Cathedral American Poets Corner will induct Jean Toomer (1894-1967) poet of the Harlem Renaissance, a movement of black literary and visual arts spanning the 1920s to the mid-1930s. Harlem Renaissance artists Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston are also honored with stones at the Poets Corner.

Toomer's hybrid 1923 poem-novel-drama *Cane*, critically acclaimed at publication, is now considered a masterpiece. The subject is the black experience in rural Georgia and in the north; the style is modernist, imagistic, and musical, with recurrent themes and a structure Toomer described as circular. The grandson of the first person of African American descent to serve as governor of a U.S state (Pinckney Pinchback, Governor of Louisiana, December 9, 1872, to January 13, 1873), Toomer could pass for white and often chose to. He wrote, “In my body were many bloods, some dark blood, all blended in the fire of six or more generations. I was, then, either a new type of man or the very oldest. In any case I was inescapably myself. . . . If I achieved greatness of human stature, then just to the degree that I did I would justify all the blood in me. If I proved worthless, then I would betray

all. In my own mind I could not see the dark blood as something quite different and apart.”

The work of the Harlem Renaissance is still a powerful influence on young artists and thinkers, and Harlem still a vibrant community. It's a short walk from the Cathedral to the famous Apollo Theater on 125 St. between Adam Clayton Powell Jr. and Frederick Douglass Boulevards; other cultural and architectural landmarks abound, as well as startup galleries, clubs and poetry venues. The Cathedral coordinates with many Harlem cultural institutions as well as working on social and cultural issues that affect communities of color and the community of all colors. In 2016 and 2017, the Cathedral Congregation of St. Saviour offered a series of workshops, *Dialogues on Race and Religion*, which explored such topics as “Racism and Its Impact on American Society” and “Community Organizing and Community Healing.” The Cathedral has a history of such involvement: in 1956, Martin Luther King preached at the Cathedral, and in 1964, six thousand people attended an ecumenical service to support civil rights legislation and call for an end to racial segregation.

Racism, like so many other problems in America today, has become refracted through a variety of viewpoints nourished by ignorance of history and denial of the reality of others' lives. While Americans of color are speaking up in a medley of voices—with anger, with analysis, with stories of hope, love and fear—white America hears selectively, filtered through geography, political party, and age. Disadvantaged minorities are played against disadvantaged whites; anxiety about losing status and opportunity amplify unfamiliarity and difference.

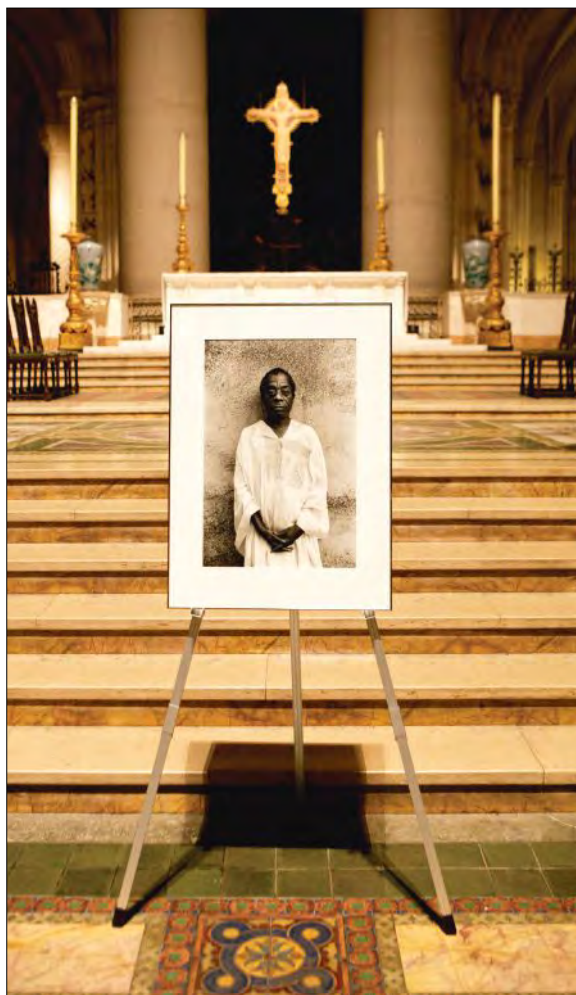
Any individual's life can be terrible, glorious or both. But as a nation—and as a Cathedral—we benefit from mirrors held up by those who are different, who are critical as well as celebratory, who have important news to share. We benefit from the risks artists take as they reveal to us that what may seem “normal” in our culture does not accord with the best or bravest in human nature. At one time, abolitionists were considered radical. At one time police descriptions of street shootings or jail cell “suicides” were rarely questioned by middle-class white citizens.

It may be that someday humans will all be the same color and share a global culture. We are lucky to not be there yet. The boundaries that are so often exclusionary, isolating and discriminatory also offer sanctuary and community and create a mosaic of tradition. We are lucky to have, as part of the

American cultural pantheon, Jean Michael Basquiat, James Baldwin, Junot Diaz, Duke Ellington, Joy Harjo, Zora Neale Hurston, Tito Puente, George Takei, and Jean Toomer—to name but a few.

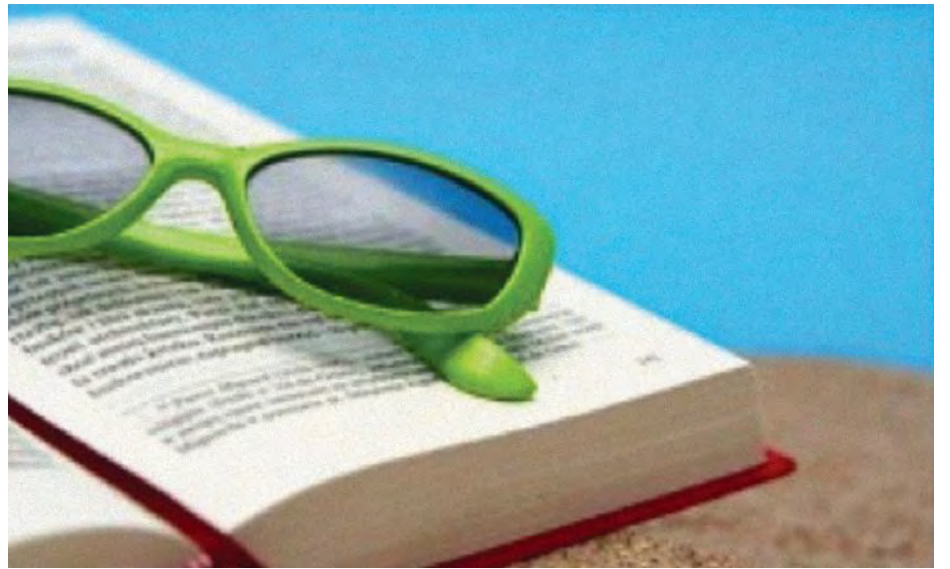
In a city where it is impossible to remain ignorant of other races, even the most worldly and empathetic among us have deep pockets of confusion, misunderstanding, and prejudice against some or many of our fellow human beings. The question of race in America is dynamic and multi-faceted, offering not only hard truths, and not only the truths of fellowship and love-thy-neighbor, but a myriad developing truths, for all that we are now and will become. The Cathedral looks forward to many more years of poetry, music, theater, conversation and services that include, celebrate and learn from people of all complexions and backgrounds, bearers of moral understanding, social invention, and the boundless gifts of the imagination.

*The author is editor of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine's newsletter.*



**Photograph of James Baldwin in the Cathedral on the occasion of his induction into the American Poets Corner, November 6, 2011.** Photo: Helena Kubicka de Bragança

# Recommended Summer Reading



### **THE NEW JIM CROW: MASS INCARCERATION IN THE AGE OF COLORBLINDNESS.** *Alexander, Michelle.* 2010.

An account of the rebirth of a caste-like system in the United States, one that has resulted in millions of African Americans locked behind bars and then relegated to a permanent second-class status—denied the very rights supposedly won in the Civil Rights Movement.

### **THE PRICE OF THE TICKET: COLLECTED NONFICTION, 1948-1985.**

*Baldwin, James.* 1985.

A compendium of nearly fifty years of Baldwin's powerful nonfiction writing. With truth and insight, these personal, prophetic works speak to the heart of the experience of race and identity in the United States.

### **DEEP DENIAL: THE PERSISTENCE OF WHITE SUPREMACY IN UNITED STATES HISTORY AND LIFE.** *Billings, David.* 2016.

Part popular history and part personal memoir, documents the 400-year racialization of the United States and how people of European descent came to be called white.

### **BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME.** *Coates, Ta-Nehisi.* 2015.

#1 New York Times best seller; National Book Award winner; NAACP Image Award winner; Pulitzer Prize finalist; National Book Critics Circle Award finalist; Named one of the 10 Best Books of the Year by the New York Times Book Review.

### **THE COLOR OF CHRIST: THE SON OF GOD AND THE SAGA OF RACE IN AMERICA.** *Blum, Edward J. and Paul Harvey.* 2012.

Explains how the image of Jesus was used to reinforce racism and how that image became blonde and blue-eyed.

### **BECOMING MS. BURTON: FROM PRISON TO RECOVERY TO LEADING THE FIGHT FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN.** *Burton, Susan and Lynn, Cari.* 2017.

One woman's remarkable odyssey from tragedy to prison to recovery—and recognition as a leading figure in the national justice reform movement.

### **REST IN POWER: THE ENDURING LIFE OF TRAYVON MARTIN.**

*Fulton, Sybrina and Martin, Tracy.* 2017.

A parents' story of love, injustice, and the birth of a movement.

### **THERE IS A RIVER: THE BLACK STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN AMERICA.** *Harding, Vincent,* 1981.

### **DEAR WHITE CHRISTIAN: FOR THOSE STILL LONGING FOR RACIAL RECONCILIATION.** *Harvey, Jennifer.* 2014.

An argument for changing the paradigm from reconciliation to reparations. The book contains historical information on the Episcopal Church's journey in addressing racial divisions in the church.

### **WAKING UP WHITE, AND FINDING MYSELF IN THE STORY OF RACE.**

*Irving, Debby.* 2014.

A memoir/ recollection of her experience as a WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) American. The book addresses white privilege and the complexity of race in the U.S.

### **WHITE TRASH: THE 400 YEAR HISTORY OF CLASS IN AMERICA.**

*Isenberg, Nancy.* 2016.

A cultural and political history of an American underclass.

### **STAMPED FROM THE BEGINNING: THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF RACIST IDEAS IN AMERICA.** *Kendi, Ibrahim X.* 2016.

In this deeply researched and fast-moving narrative, Kendi chronicles the entire story of anti-black racist ideas and their staggering power over the course of American history. Winner of the National Book Award for Non-Fiction.

### **CITIZEN, AN AMERICAN LYRIC.** *Rankine, Claudia.* 2014.

The book has been described as both criticism and poetry, described by critic Michael Lindgren as having “boundary-bending potency...an innovative amalgam of genres.”

### **INVISIBLE MAN, GOT THE WHOLE WORLD WATCHING.**

*Smith, Mychal Denzel.* 2016.

An account of how, politically and culturally, the existing script for black manhood has been rewritten for the millennial generation.

### **JUST MERCY: A STORY OF JUSTICE AND REDEMPTION.**

*Stevenson, Bryan.* 2015.

Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice. #1 *New York Times* Bestseller; Named one of the Best Books of the Year by *The New York Times*; *The Washington Post*; *The Boston Globe*; *The Seattle Times*; *Esquire*, and *Time*.

### **BLACK MAN IN A WHITE COAT: A DOCTOR'S REFLECTION ON RACE.**

*Tweedy, Damon.* 2016.

A doctor's reflection on race and medicine.

### **THE WARMTH OF OTHER SUNS: THE EPIC STORY OF AMERICA'S GREAT MIGRATION.** *Wilkerson, Isabel.* 2014.

In this epic, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson chronicles one of the great untold stories of American history: the decades-long migration of black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities, in search of a better life.

## FICTION

### **THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD.** *Whitehead, Colson.* 2016.

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, the #1 New York Times bestseller from Colson Whitehead, a magnificent tour de force chronicling a young slave's adventures as she makes a desperate bid for freedom in the antebellum South.

Please let us know which books you would like to see as subjects of diocesan book discussions. Send your ideas to [ednyantiracists@gmail.com](mailto:ednyantiracists@gmail.com).



## LOCKING UP OUR OWN: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN BLACK AMERICA

BY JAMES FORMAN, JR.

FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX, 320 PAGES.

Reviewed by Tanya Rice Thompson

**A**s a black Episcopalian living in a small city in upstate New York, I can remember crime visiting our parish. A local black youth broke into our church and stole a valuable crucifix and 2 antique chalices. At the time, all I could think was that this person should have the book thrown at him. I was not thinking about what set of unfortunate circumstances would bring an individual to break into a church and steal valuable artifacts. At the time, I was just like the people James Forman, Jr. writes about in his book, *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America*—people who were tired of the crime that was becoming more and more prevalent in the mid-1970s in black and urban communities around our nation. I wanted to feel safe and wanted the drugs and guns and violence to stop. I wasn't able to see what a "lock-them-all-up" stance would mean for the future of our city or the rest of the country.

I recently went to a book signing and heard Mr. Forman speak about the book. He referred to his work as stories – stories of African Americans. His book begins with the story of Brandon, a black Washington, D.C. youth who was charged with gun and marijuana possession. He comes before a black judge, a black prosecutor, and his defense attorney, Mr. Forman, is also black. Ultimately, Brandon is sentenced to six months in jail. The story is heartbreaking because Brandon is so young and seemingly deserving of a second chance; it is also eye-opening. Not only were the judges and attorneys black but so were the court reporter, court officers, the police who arrested Brandon, the police chief of D.C. and the mayor. Blacks were in control of their local justice system. Forman's book examines "a story that gets ignored or elided when we fail to appreciate the role that blacks have played in shaping criminal justice policy over the past forty years." What happened in D.C. during this time eventually affected blacks all around the U.S.

This non-fiction work by author and former public defender Forman explores how black leaders, black religious figures, black citizens, and black policy makers came to support "tough-on-crime measures" that led us to a system of mass incarceration. He does this by using the unique circumstance of the city of Washington, D.C., which was once called the "urban mecca for civil rights"—the one city where at least 80 per cent of the population was black. Both the issues of marijuana (and ultimately others drugs) and guns were plaguing black communities of the era. The constituents of elected black officials received numerous letters asking for the problem of crime to be addressed. The members of the city council were aware that in order to tackle the problems of crime, and drugs and guns that plagued the D.C. community, urban problems like the need for more jobs, quality education and better health care would need to be addressed. Without the necessary resources to do more, they focused on crime. The leaders sought to solve the crime problem with tough laws and better and stronger policing, by the new predominantly black D.C. police force.

Forman describes the factors that contributed to the devastation of mass incarceration that might have been avoided. If only hindsight were 20/20, black peo-

ple who could have made a difference might have made different choices in the policies they supported 40 years ago. For instance, Forman writes that in D.C. in the 1970s, there was a big push to legalize marijuana. Though all the data pointed out that marijuana was "less dangerous than other drugs," the policy makers at that time did not see that criminalizing people for possessing marijuana would later do more harm than good. Because of the crime wave that was sweeping the city, black leaders advocated for a hard stance on all drugs, and so the first nail in the construction of a criminal justice system that would harm black people for the next 40 years was struck. Additionally, black D.C. decision makers thought that another solution to the problem of crime was to ban all guns, totally disre-

garding the history of guns as a "practical tool for self-defense and a symbol of Black self-determination." Unfortunately, the tough on crime approach, advocated for by blacks in D.C. and other areas without tackling social problems, led to an increasing number of people of color imprisoned and more drugs and guns than were ever imagined inundating black communities and our inner cities.

Forman writes that when we think about the "War on Drugs," tough on crime initiatives and mass incarceration, we need to acknowledge that "racism shaped the political, economic, and legal" policy that created criminal justice policy and mass incarceration. But he also explicitly points out that black folks had a hand in why we find ourselves in the place we do today. Because of the choices that were made, we find ourselves with same problems as 40 years ago: urban areas flooded with drugs, guns, gangs. Reading this book has reminded me how and why I could have once felt the way I did. Today, I feel so differently and clearly about how the solutions to those problems were the wrong ones. Why did we buy into a system that would have as devastating effect as crime had on our community? As Christians should we now not be more forgiving? Are we not as responsible for locking up our own (our fellow man) as the blacks in DC were? What can we (blacks, Episcopalians, citi-

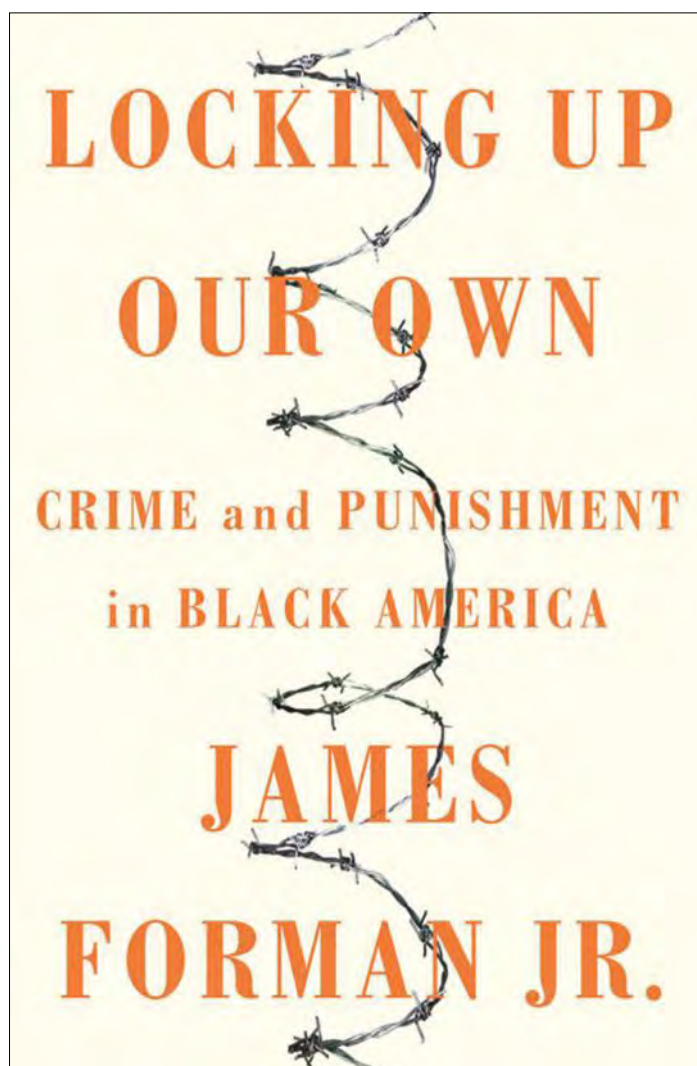
zens) do now to help fix what has become untenable: mass incarceration of black and brown citizens?

When thinking about these questions, I am reminded of hymn 587 from our Episcopal Hymnal 1982:

*O Spirit, who dost bind our hearts in unity,  
Who teachest us to find the love from self set free,  
In all our hearts such love increase, that every home, by  
This release, may be the dwelling place of peace.*

The epilogue of this book includes the story of Dante, another youth faced with jail and a pretty dismal future in light of that. Dante catches a break and never returns to jail. Mr. Forman comes in contact with him years later and is delighted that Dante fared so well. Clearly, mass incarceration is not an answer to the problems that exist in our society. Forman closes his book by offering a solution—that we dismantle the system of mass incarceration the way it came about: that the "series of small decisions, made over time" will have "to be undone in the same way." I think that with love and understanding it can be done and we can reach that "place of peace" we sing about on Sunday morning.

*The author is a member of St. George's Church, Newburgh.*





# Views and Reviews

## ARTS AND LITERATURE

### EXHIBITION REVIEW~DIVINE ENCOUNTER: REMBRANDT'S ABRAHAM AND THE ANGELS, 1646 THE FRICK COLLECTION, CABINET GALLERY 1 EAST 70TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY THROUGH AUGUST 20TH, 2017

Reviewed by Pamela A. Lewis

Encounters between mortals and immortals have been a long-favored subject in European iconography. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, a major component of the story of Abraham in the book of Genesis is the patriarch's numerous encounters with God and his angels. For artists, these human and divine interactions presented special pictorial challenges. In this small, focused exhibition, visitors see the ways Rembrandt interpreted the nature of divine presence and how one particular human being experienced it.

For artists working in the predominantly Calvinist society of the Dutch Republic, especially after the publication in 1637 of the Dutch States Bible (a government-sponsored translation with extensive explanatory notes), the accounts of Abraham's encounters with God and his angels were popular subjects. In 1635, Rembrandt had produced a monumental painting depicting the episode in Genesis 22 in which God tests Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his son Isaac. (This work is presently in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.) Two years later, and repeatedly over the next two decades, Rembrandt took up the Abraham story, concentrating on the psychological and emotional experiences of the patriarch, as those of a father confronting great blessings, enormous losses, and his extraordinary contacts with the otherworldly.

On loan from a private collection and on public view for the first time in more than ten years, *Abraham Entertaining the Angels*, executed in 1646, is the centerpiece of this exhibition. The painting depicts the account in Genesis 18 where the foretelling of the birth of Isaac is made to the elderly Abraham and his wife Sarah. While the passage begins by explicitly stating that the Lord appeared to Abraham, it continues by describing the visit of three strangers, who, according to a note in the Dutch States Bible, were the Lord and two angels in the guise of travelers. Intrigued by this episode of false appearances, Rembrandt took on the challenge of representing it in the 1646 work, and would later explore it in other media, examples of which are included in this show.

The size of this radiant oil on oak panel work—a little more than 6 by 8 inches—does not diminish its drama. Rembrandt, working within dimensional, as well as coloristic limits, succeeds nonetheless to convey the momentous event unfolding before Abraham and the viewer.

Rembrandt handles the Genesis narrative with subtlety and originality. Inspired rather than hampered by Calvinism's rigid proscriptions against corporeal representations of God, the artist performs a near sleight-of-hand depiction of the celestial visitors as physical beings whose signs of divinity are concealed within the scene, and which are only gradually perceived and understood by Abraham and other family members. The angel closest to the picture plane is still in his shadowy guise as a traveler, his wings tucked behind his back; to his left, a second angel raises his wings and receives more light; he is also eating, not having completely shed his earthly body. His wings fully outspread, the central and largest of the three angels reveals himself in all of his luminous glory. Relaxed and with his feet up, this angel gently raises his right hand as he conveys the great news to a surprised Abraham and a curious Sarah, partially hidden in the doorway. Through the use of light and a single gesture, and within a still and serene setting, Rembrandt has represented mystery and wonder.

The selection of etchings and drawings from American and international collections accompanying the panel painting provide further opportunities to explore Rembrandt's long engagement with his Old Testament subject and with the central themes of his work as a history painter: divine intervention, revelation, and prophecy. The drawings (notably two striking examples from Dresden), executed in a few deft strokes, and the etchings, with their sharp lines and hatchings, combine to tell the same story but in different pictorial languages. These works from the 1650s (such as, for example, his etching of *The Sacrifice of Isaac*) reveal a shift in Rembrandt's approach to biblical subject matter, and where we see the portrayal of Abraham's other life experiences. Through these drawings and etchings Rembrandt explores his subjects' fleeting emotions and the psychological transformation occasioned by the presence of the divine.

This is the first exhibition to bring together all of these materials and to offer a new consideration of Rembrandt's evolving approach to the depiction of the divine across various media and of his connection with the iconographic, theological and philosophical questions about sight and perception. There is still much to learn about Rembrandt and his representational approach, and this exhibition teaches us very well.

The author is a member of St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue.

Rembrandt (1606–1669), *Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1655, Etching and drypoint, only state, 6 1/8 x 5 1/8 inches (15.6 x 13.1 cm), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Ida Kammerer, in memory of her husband, Frederic Kammerer, M.D., 1933 (33.79.13)  
Photo courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Rembrandt (1606–1669), *Abraham Entertaining the Angels*, 1646, Oil on oak panel, 6 3/8 x 8 3/8 inches (16.1 x 21.1 cm), Private collection  
Photo: Michael Bodycomb



## Ordination of Deacons

Bishop Dietsche flanked by four newly-ordained deacons, at the Cathedral Saturday, May 13.



Front row left to right: The Rev. Canon Charles W. Simmons; The Rev. Deacon Chisara Rose Alimole; The Rev. Deacon Shiane Marlena Lee; The Rt. Rev. Andrew M.L. Dietsche; The Rev. Deacon Jacqueline Marie Sanchez-Shabazz; The Rev. Deacon Richard Paul Limato; The Rev. Deacon Eugene Alphonse Bourquin; and The Rev. Canon Constance C. Coles. Back row left to right: The Rev. Deacon George Diaz; The Rt. Rev. Clifton (Dan) Daniel; The Rev. Deacon Kenton J. Curtis; The Rev. Deacon Paulette Rempel; The Rev. Deacon Denise LaVetty; and The Rev. Deacon Hyacinth Lee.

Photo: Alito Orsini

## Two “Lucys” for the Diocese

**O**n May 12th, Assistant Bishop Mary D. Glasspool accepted, from the New York Landmarks Conservancy on behalf the Diocese of New York, a coveted Lucy G. Moses Award—considered the “Oscars” of building renovation and preservation—for the Diocesan Property Support Program. In an auditorium at the main branch of the New York Public Library packed with dignitaries, with representatives of some of the year’s most acclaimed preservation projects, and with the country’s most respected architects, craftspeople, consultants and contractors, Bishop Glasspool thanked the non-profit New York Landmarks Conservancy for its years-long advocacy for religious properties, and eloquently highlighted not only the geographic breadth of the diocese and its architectural landscape, but its commitment to the people of New York.

Noting the work that the Property Support Committee has accomplished over many years, Peg Breen, President of the Landmarks Conservancy stated: “The issues that historic religious properties face are universal, but this is the only denomination that is responding so proactively.”

Barbara W. Pettus, the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer of St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, together with Julie Sloan, one of the nation’s most-respected stained glass consultants, were also present to accept a “Lucy” for the extraordinary restoration for St. Thomas’ stained glass—which was, unquestionably, one of this country’s most important ever stained-glass projects: the multi-million-dollar undertaking involved craftspeople from across the nation in the repair and restoration of some 9 million pieces of glass.



Bishop Glasspool, Ms. Franny Eberhart, Chair of the diocese’s Property Support Committee, and Michael Rebic, Director of Property Support.

Photo: New York Landmarks Conservancy



## Episcopal Charities Awards \$337,000 in Youth Opportunity Grants

Episcopal Charities' Board of Directors is pleased to announce 39 Youth Opportunity Grants, totaling \$337,000. The total represents a 6 percent increase over last year.

Youth Opportunity Grants support parish-based outreach efforts to create opportunities for the next generation. Programs include children's arts, academic enrichment, summer recreation, and health and wellness projects.

Parishes and programs awarded funding through the 2017-18 Youth Opportunity Grants cycle are listed below. For more information, visit [episcopalcharities-newyork.org/who-we-are/our-programs/](http://episcopalcharities-newyork.org/who-we-are/our-programs/).

Cathedral of St. John the Divine	ACT After School Program
Christ Church, Bronxville	Young at Arts
Christ Church, Poughkeepsie	Summer Camp
Christ Church, Staten Island	Community After School Programs
Church of St. Luke in the Fields, Manhattan	Art and Acceptance at St. Luke's
Church of St. Luke in the Fields, Manhattan	The Go Project at St. Luke's
Church of St. Matthew & St. Timothy, Manhattan	Angels Basketball Program
Church of the Incarnation, Manhattan	Incarnation Camp - Pioneer Village
Church of Our Savior, Manhattan	Jubilee Enrichment Programs
Grace Church, Manhattan	The GO Project
Grace Church, Millbrook	EPIC Regional Youth Leadership Program
Grace Church, Nyack	Amazing Grace Circus! Summer Camp
Grace Church, White Plains	Brighter Futures Summer Camp at Lifting Up Westchester
Grace Church, White Plains	Brighter Futures Mentoring Program at Lifting Up Westchester
Holy Trinity, Inwood	The Pied Piper Children's Theatre
Holy Trinity, Inwood	The Pied Piper Children's Theatre Summer Program
Holyrood Church, Manhattan	Washington Heights Choir School
Iglesia Memorial San Andres, Yonkers	Summer Program
Iglesia Memorial San Andres, Yonkers	After School Program
Manhattan North Inter-Parish Council	Summer Educational Project
Ss. John, Paul & Clement, Mt. Vernon	Summer Vacation School
St. Andrew's Church, Bronx	Summer Camp
St. Andrew's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. Ann's Church, Bronx	Freedom School Summer Program
St. Ann's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. Edmund's Church, Bronx	Summer Camp
St. Edmund's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. George's Church, Newburgh	Voices of Hope Children's Choir
St. George's Church, Newburgh	Girl Power Program
St. Gregory's Church, Woodstock	Horticultural Therapy Garden for Young People
St. John's Church, Monticello	Nesin Cultural Arts Academic Year Program
St. John's Church, Monticello	Nesin Cultural Arts Summer Music Academy
St. Margaret's Church, Bronx	Summer Day Camp
St. Margaret's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. Mary's Church, Harlem	Summer Program
St. Paul's on-the-Hill, Ossining	After School Music Program
St. Peter's Church, Bronx	Cephas Arts Program
St. Peter's Church, Port Chester	Summer Program
St. Peter's Church, Port Chester	Learning Center

## Advocating for Dalit Rights

By the Rev. Michael Shafer

Will racism gain another foothold in our church? I can't see it coming: Look at our Presiding Bishop, at the staff of this diocese!

Ever since 1963, when on a winter field period from Bard College I was graciously invited to sing in the choir of St. Philip's, Harlem, I have seen the blessed increase of our color blindness. Lately I have been with a small and lively rural congregation in Chester, N.Y. that welcomes us through their brochure to "enjoy the fellowship of a diverse community." Indeed they are totally color blind, it seems, from wardens to godly playmates.

This is not so in our national life. Nor is it so in many countries whose Christian mission we share. It is important that we bear witness to the healthy life God has been building here; and so in solidarity with the churches of North and South India the members of our diocesan India Network have offered a resolution against caste and descent-based discrimination that has been adopted by our diocesan convention and is being prepared for presentation at the next General Convention.

Caste and descent-based discrimination has much to do with skin color. In India both Dalits and people of African descent are cruelly treated. As in the days of our own civil rights movement, these people, many of whom have become our friends and colleagues, are beginning to press for change. This last spring Anne Gorrissen and Johanna Shafer, Network members, joined a demonstration against racism at the embassy in New York.



Johanna Shafer and Anne Gorrissen of the diocese's India Network on the streets to protest racist violence in India.



Bishop Dietsche and fellow Episcopalians atop the diocesan float at the New York City LGBT Pride March, Sunday June 25. For a slideshow, please visit [www.diocesenyny.org/mission-and-outreach/social-concerns/lgbt-concerns](http://www.diocesenyny.org/mission-and-outreach/social-concerns/lgbt-concerns).

Photo: Kara Flannery.



## New Rector at St. Bart's



Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry, Bishop Wolfe, and Bishop Dietsche at Bishop Wolfe's institution as rector of St. Bartholomew's Church, Manhattan. Photo: Kara Flannery.

Following a stirring sermon on Christian witness by Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry, the Rt. Rev. Dean E. Wolfe, who has served as vice-president of the House of Bishops since 2009, was formally instituted June 6 as rector of St. Bartholomew's Church in Manhattan by Bishop Dietsche.

Lectors at the service, included the Rev. Stephanie Spellers, canon to the presiding bishop for Evangelism, Reconciliation and Creation, and Pastor Amends Derr, senior pastor at St. Peter's Lutheran Church. The Gospel was read by Archdeacon Monte C. Giddings of the Diocese of Kansas, where Wolfe served as bishop for 14 years prior to his call to St. Bart's.

The service also included the presentation of gifts from members and friends of St. Bart's representing the diverse programs and ministries housed in the landmark church on Park Avenue. These included the feeding program and shelter run by Crossroads Community Ministry, the St. Bart's Preschool, and the welcome, liturgical, prayer and music ministries. St. Bart's Director of Music William K. Trafka composed a new hymn to mark the occasion, "Lord, we have come at your own invitation," with words by F. Pratt Green (1903–2000) that were selected by Wolfe, who also received Canons of the Church from the Rev. Erika Meyer, dean of the diocese's Mid-Manhattan Clericus and a New Jerusalem Bible from Monsignor Robert T. Ritchie, rector of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The service was livestreamed in a four-camera production with live commentary by Patrick Hornbeck, chair of the Theology Department at Fordham University.

## Seamen's Church Institute's 40th Annual Silver Bell Awards Dinner Honors Three, Raises Nearly \$800,000



Bishop Dietsche at the Blessing of the Fleet preceding the SCI's Silver Bells Awards Dinner, surrounded by (l to r) the Rev. James Kollin, SCI Port Chaplain for Port Newark; Bishop Shin; the Rev. David M. Rider, SCI's President and Executive Director; and Bishop Glasspool. Photo: Seamen's Church Institute

At its 40th Silver Bell Awards Dinner held June 8 at Chelsea Piers in Manhattan, the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) presented its Silver Bell Award to Dr. James S.C. Chao of Foremost Group shipping company, in recognition of his "his commitment to education, as well as his long and abiding dedication to quality ship owning, crew welfare, and his significant charitable services." SCI's Distinguished Service Award went to Richard (Rick) Calhoun of Cargill, in recognition of his leadership in the industry and commitment to improving the infrastructure for inland waterway transportation, and its Lifetime Achievement Award to Joseph Cox for his outstanding contribution to the maritime industry and commitment to seafarer welfare over the course of his career at Chamber of Shipping of America. The Silver Bell Awards Dinner was preceded by the traditional "Blessing of the Fleet", attended by vessels from the USCG, Kirby Corporation, McAllister Towing & Transportation, Moran Towing Corporation, Bouchard Transportation, Dann Marine, and one of the Sandy Hook Pilot Boats.

## Church Club of New York Presents 4th Annual Young Adult Service Award to Mohegan Lake Parishioner

More than 60 Church Club of New York members and guests were on hand at its June 14 Annual Meeting and Barbecue at Manhattan's Church of the Transfiguration to hear President Nancy Fisher report terrific growth in club membership, with 40 new members since last fiscal year, including 6 clergy (compared with 18 new members the previous year), and to elect new trustees and officers.

Following the business part of the meeting, Bishop Suffragan Allen K. Shin presented the Church Club's Fourth Annual Young Adult of the Year Service Recognition Award to Christopher Wilson of St. Mary's Church, Mohegan Lake for his work raising funds and writing grants to rebuild, furnish, and provide books and supplies to Hatsavan School in Armenia. (For more information about Hatsavan School visit: [www.gofundme.com/hatsavan](http://www.gofundme.com/hatsavan).) Mr. Wilson was selected from a group of six outstanding nominees; he and St. Mary's each also received checks for \$500.

With official business concluded, members and guests enjoyed great weather, food, and fellowship in Transfiguration's outdoor garden and courtyard.



Young Adult Service Awardee Christopher Wilson of St. Mary's, Mohegan Lake, with Bishop Shin. Photo: Christopher Lovell



## Diocesan Global Women's Fund Announces Bishop Catherine S. Roskam Scholarship for Theology

The Global Women's Fund of the diocese recently announced its 2017 grant recipients for scholarships and seminars, with Elisa, a theology applicant from Mexico, receiving the new award named in honor of Bishop Roskam, who founded the Fund in 2004. Seven individual scholarships and four seminars were funded during this grant cycle.

### INDIVIDUAL SCHOLARSHIPS

**Elisa:** Mexico – Master's Degree in Estudios Teológicos en Ministerios Latinos en Español

**Judi:** Philippines – Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Education.

**Mary:** Kenya – Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration.

**Megie:** Philippines – Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Education.

**Sarah:** Uganda – Certificate in Records Management Information.

**Sunshine:** Philippines – Bachelor of Theology

### SEMINAR GRANTS

**Ghana:** Training in income-saving and income-generating skills.

**India:** Empowering Women's Leadership in Mission.

**Myanmar:** Seminar for community health workers and traditional birth attendants.

**Philippines:** ECW of St. Francis of Assisi Economic Development.

We invite you to learn more about our work by visiting our web page <https://www.diocesen.org/gwf/> and we encourage you to join us in this important global mission by donating online at <https://www.diocesen.org/dn/gwf-give/>.

*Submitted by Judi Counts, Chair, The Global Women's Fund of EDNY*

### EXTRAÑOS EN SU TIERRA (continuo de la paginacion 5)

En 1917, el Congreso promulgó una ley que creó una "Zona Asiática Prohibida" y luego aprobó la Ley de Exclusión Asiática de 1924, que limitó severamente la inmigración y naturalización asiática. En 1923, los inmigrantes indios, que habían sido naturalizados antes debido a su herencia "aria", fueron oficialmente reclasificados como "no blancos" y retroactivamente despojados de su ciudadanía. A los indios nativos americanos, mientras tanto, se les permitió ser naturalizados por la Ley de Ciudadanía India en 1924.

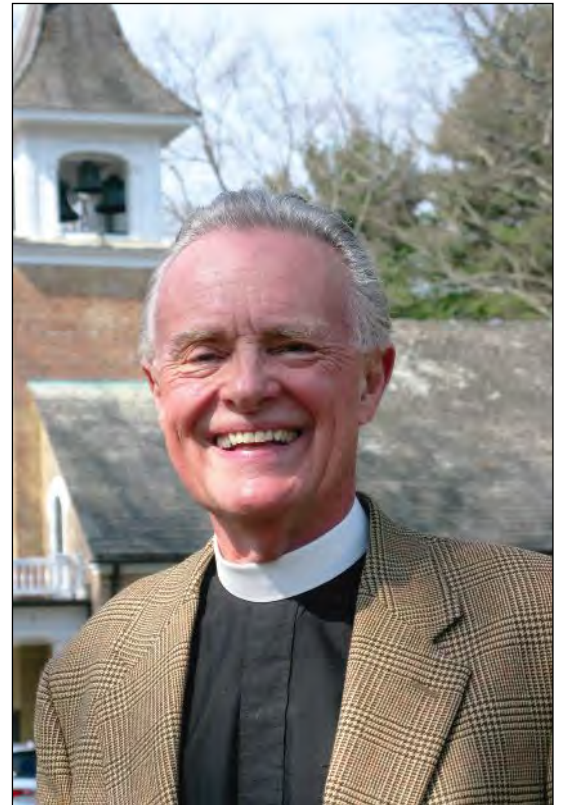
Después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, comenzamos a ver un cambio lento en las políticas de inmigración. En el auge del Movimiento por los Derechos Civiles, el sistema de cuotas quedaba mal parado, con la Ley de Inmigración de 1965 admitiendo a los inmigrantes en base a su relación con ciudadanos estadounidenses o residentes o empleadores estadounidenses. Según el informe del censo de 2012, los asiáticos son el grupo de minorías étnicas de más rápido crecimiento en la actualidad.

A veces me preguntan: "¿Por qué eres cristiano y no budista?" Viniendo de una familia de cuatro generaciones de cristianos, nunca sé cómo responder a esto. A menudo me preguntan: "¿De dónde eres?" Como inmigrante coreano, la respuesta para mí es sencilla en un nivel. Pero después de haber vivido en los Estados Unidos durante 45 años, este es mi hogar, no Corea. Por otro lado, para aquellos asiáticos americanos que nacieron en los EE.UU., como mi sobrina, esta es una pregunta bastante difícil de tratar. Tal pregunta parece estar diciendo: "Ustedes no son realmente americanos porque son asiáticos". Esta actitud, creo, tiene sus raíces en las políticas anti-asiáticas de inmigración y naturalización de los siglos pasados, que nunca permitieron a los asiáticos sentirse como en su tierra.

+ *Alba*

## St. Matthew's, Bedford Rector Retires

At ceremonies in early June marking the retirement of St. Matthew's Bedford rector, the Rev. Terence L. Elsberry, parishioners celebrated 23 years of strong leadership, church growth and achievements. "He led us with his spirit," says Senior Warden Dan deMenocal, "He was inspiring to everyone and provided a stimulus, a motivation that filled not only the parish but also the community." During Elsberry's time at St. Matthew's, the church experienced a 75% growth in total membership, built a beautiful stone Children's Chapel and started St. Matthew's School for pre-school ages. Meanwhile, activity levels and volunteerism expanded dramatically, with a marked increase in participation in a wide variety of church programs and both adult and child education.



Many people will remember Elsberry best for helping them through difficult times with the power of prayer. "For many parishioners, like me, Terry provided much comfort and support during some of our darkest and unhappiest days," says Cindy Dwyer, a long-time St. Matthew's member, "Terry wasn't just our minister but our dear friend and our rock... he inspired us to be the best person possible."

In addition to being a strong spiritual leader, Elsberry made sure that the parish was always a fun, welcoming place. With a big smile on his face, he was always front and center at the many church events—Mardi Gras, the annual picnic, the Christmas brunch and even the Haunted Hike on All Hallows Eve. At the same time, the church continued to be a cultural leader in the community with its Bedford Chamber Concert series, annual Art Show Bedford, and well-known Bedford Spring Antiques Show. In May, the Bedford Chamber Ensemble performed a composition written by the director of the Chamber Concert series, Dr. Newman, in tribute to the retiring rector based on Elsberry's favorite Psalm 27.

St. Matthew's under Elsberry was also strong on outreach: 1996 saw the launch of the Bedell Fund, based on a bequest from Hope Bedell, which has helped many diocesan churches in need, as well as others around the country. In 2005, Elsberry started a five-year program to help two churches, one in Mississippi and one in Alabama, rebuild after Hurricane Katrina; and then in 2007, he led a drive that joined St. Matthew's together with the Antioch Baptist Church in Bedford Hills, to ensure the success of their major "Raise The Roof" expansion program.

He leaves St. Matthew's strong and thriving. Elsberry led two large capital campaigns, the first in 1999, which expanded the Parish House, doubling the size of the previous facility and upgrading the Rectory. The second campaign, just completed, will fund major renovations to the structure of the church.

"He gave us our church mission statement – 'To Know Christ and to make Him known'." says deMenocal, "and filled our parish with a very deep sense of spirituality and Christian community."



# Lutheran Bishop Rimbo Addresses Church Club's 130th Annual Dinner

**M**ore than 130 members and guests were at the Yale Club May 16 to attend the Church Club of New York's 130th Annual Dinner Gala, which commemorated the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's Reformation.

The highlight of the evening was the address by the Church Club's honored guest, the Rev. Dr. Robert A. Rimbo, Bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod (MNYS) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), who was introduced by Bishop Dietsche.

Bishop Rimbo offered his perspective on what it means for Episcopalians and Lutherans, today, to be "Called to Common Mission," through the full communion with one another that was established in 2001.

"We are called together, called by God to engage in God's mission for the life of the world," he said. "As our synod's strategic plan keeps saying to us, we are called for such a time as this. And, we can do far more together, in witness to Christ, than either of our denominations can do apart from one another."

Bishop Rimbo pointed out the Church Club banner on the podium, noting its inscription, " 'One Lord, One Faith, One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church', we are all part of this together."

"This one holy and apostolic church is all about relationships," he said. "And, wow, do we need them...In these difficult days in our society, we need each other. We need to bear witness to a strong, intelligent, literal Christianity...We need each other, brothers and sisters. Can we strengthen our call to common mission by continuing to work together, to engage in theological dialogue, and to worship together? Can we, together, advocate for better schools and for civilized health care for all? Can we, together, engage one another in working for the common good in this season of darkness? Can we, together, address immigration and sanctuary and the



**Left to right: Church Club Executive Director Susan Ridgeway, Dinner Co-Chair Jean Savage, Church Club President Nancy Fisher, Guest Speaker Bishop Robert Rimbo, Bishop Dietsche, Retired Bishop Suffragan Catherine Roskam, Bishop Andrew St. John.**

Photo: Church Club of New York

ever-present racism in our society?"

The Bishop concluded his remarks with the following, "My friends, there is such a crying need for our witness to the living and loving presence of Jesus Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world. So, I invite you, dare I say it, I call you to common mission for such a time as this."

*For a video of Bishop Rimbo's address, and more about the Church Club of New York, go to [www.churchclubny.org](http://www.churchclubny.org).*

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# Menu of Hope



In response to numerous recent calls for assistance, Rural & Migrant Ministry staff, board members and allies have recently developed a Menu of Hope to direct allies towards resources, strategies, and sparks for creative action.

The Menu includes sections on human rights, legal and civil rights, pastoral activities and scripture - welcoming the foreigner, and loving your neighbor - and sections on how to help bring systemic change to your community, sanctuary efforts, engaging in coalitions, training and educational opportunities, and more.

To receive your copy of the Menu of Hope, please visit <http://ruralmigrant-ministry.org/en/immigration>.

## BISHOPS' VISITATION SCHEDULE

### SEPTEMBER 10 (14 PENTECOST)

**Bishop Dietsche:** St. George's, Newburgh

**Bishop Shin:** Grace, Port Jervis

**Bishop Glasspool:** St. Clement's, Manhattan

### SEPTEMBER 17 (15 PENTECOST)

**Bishop Dietsche:** St. Thomas', Mamaroneck

**Bishop Glasspool:** Trinity, Morrisania, Bronx

### SEPTEMBER 24 (16 PENTECOST)

All at House of Bishops

### OCTOBER 1 (17 PENTECOST)

**Bishop Dietsche:** Cathedral

**Bishop Shin:** St. Francis & St. Martha's, White Plains

**Bishop Glasspool:** St. Nicholas, New Hamburg

### OCTOBER 8 (18 PENTECOST)

**Bishop Dietsche:** CSI Congregation

**Bishop Shin:** St. Mary's, Mohegan Lake

**Bishop Glasspool:** San Juan Bautista, Bronx

### OCTOBER 15 (19 PENTECOST)

**Bishop Dietsche:** Trinity, Saugerties

**Bishop Shin:** Mediator, Bronx

**Bishop Glasspool:** St. Francis', Montgomery

### OCTOBER 22 (20 PENTECOST)

**Bishop Dietsche:** St. John's, New City

**Bishop Shin:** St. Paul's and Trinity, Tivoli

### OCTOBER 28 (SATURDAY)

**Bishop Shin:** Our Savior, Manhattan

### OCTOBER 29 (21 PENTECOST)

**Bishop Shin:** St. Simeon's, Bronx

## BISHOP BARBARA HARRIS (continued from page 37)

wing. We were part of a group from Episcopal Community Services known as the St. Dismas Fellowship, in memory of the penitent thief. We called ourselves the Dismal Damsels. But I noticed that most of the male inmates at Holmesburg Prison were black, and the volunteers—except for me and Rosalie—were white. So once a month I would go to the Holmesburg Prison to visit the men as well.

In March of 1965, I boarded a plane to Montgomery, Alabama, with a group of people to join the march from Selma led by Dr. Martin Luther King. Our flight had been chartered by the AME Preachers' Association in Philadelphia. We did the last part of the march into Montgomery. I remember white women lining the sidewalks, some with babies in their arms and toddlers at their side, shouting profanities at the marchers, particularly at the Roman Catholic nuns who were participating. They accused the nuns of sleeping with the black men who were marching.

As the day wore on, it got warmer and warmer, and the women of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church – Dr. King's former church – filled big half-gallon mason jars with cold water, and we passed the jars from person to person on the street. People were thoughtful enough to wipe the rim of the jar before passing it on to somebody else, much as we wipe the rim of the chalice. And a rabbi standing there said, "We have just had Eucharist in the middle of Dexter Avenue."

When the march was over, we were gathered on a street corner, waiting for a bus to take us back to the airport. I noticed a car with several black marchers and a white woman at the wheel, and I said, "Who is this down here with a Michigan license plate? They're a sitting duck!" It happened to be Viola Liuzzo, the woman who was killed by the Ku Klux Klan as she was transporting three young men to the airport. I saw her just before she was killed, but I didn't know this until I got back to Philadelphia that night.

As the senior warden at the Church of the Advocate, I was the crucifer at the ordination service for the Philadelphia Eleven in July of 1974. Much of the planning for the service took place in the living room of Suzanne Hiatt, one of the eleven women who would be "irregularly" ordained. I was present for the planning, but I didn't really have that much input. Mostly I spent a lot of time emptying ash trays.

Bishop Robert DeWitt, one of the ordaining bishops, saw what I was doing and said to me, "Why are you acting like Martha?"

"Well, I can't be Mary," I replied.

He said, "You never tried."

I didn't realize it then, and I didn't act on it then, but he may have planted a seed. I didn't have any ideas yet about my own ordination. At the time I was steeped in this role as a public relations executive for a major oil company. I was their first woman executive and their first black executive. But a couple of years later, I began to discern that perhaps God was calling me to a different dimension of ministry.

*Excerpted and edited by Verne Becker from talks given at Christ Church/San Marcos, Tarrytown, and Grace, Nyack*

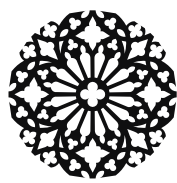
## CLERGY CHANGES

	FROM	TO	DATE
<b>The Rev. Hilario Albert</b>	Priest-in-Charge (CSP), St. Peter's, Port Chester	Priest-in-Charge (CSS), St. Peter's, Port Chester	January 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Theodora N. Brooks</b>	Vicar (CSP), St. Margaret's (Longwood), Bronx	Priest-in-Charge (CSS), St. Margaret's (Longwood), Bronx	January 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Nils Chittenden</b>	Priest-in-Charge, St. Stephen's, Armonk	Rector, St. Stephen's, Armonk	January 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Matthew J. Oprendeck</b>	Interim Priest-in-Charge (CSP), St. James' (Fordham), Bronx	Priest-in-Charge (CSS), St. James' (Fordham), Bronx	January 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Alejandra Trillos</b>	Priest-in-Charge (CSP), Iglesia San Andres, Yonkers	Priest-in-Charge (CSS), Iglesia San Andres, Yonkers	January 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. William Will P. Peyton</b>	Associate Rector, St. James', Manhattan	Rector, St. Paul's, Charlottesville, VA	February 22, 2017
<b>The Rev. Gladys Diaz</b>	Interim Pastor, Holyrood, Manhattan	Latina Missioner, Bronx Team Ministry	April 9, 2017
<b>The Rev. Allison S. Moore</b>	Interim Pastor, St. Mark's Church-in-the-Bowery	Interim Pastor, St. Barnabas, Irvington-on-Hudson	April 27, 2017
<b>The Rev. Sarah C. Stewart</b>	Rockwell Fellow, St. James', Manhattan	Associate Rector, St. James, Wichita, KS	June 2017
<b>The Rev. James (Jay) W. Gardner III</b>	Ordained Transitional Deacon May 13 (Diocese of Alabama)	Assistant Rector, Calvary - St. George's, Manhattan	June 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Canon Bruce W. Woodcock</b>	Interim Pastor, St. Mary's, Tuxedo Park	Partnership officer for Asia and the Pacific	June 15, 2017
<b>The Rev. Deacon Shiane M. Lee</b>	Ordained Deacon May 13 (Diocese of NY)	Deacon, St. Mary the Virgin, Chappaqua	June 21, 2017
<b>The Rev. Bradley C. Dyche</b>	Rector, St. Augustine's, Croton-on-Hudson	Diocese of Fort Worth	June 25, 2017
<b>The Rev. Patrick J. Williams</b>	Interim Pastor, St. Philip's, Manhattan	Canon for Evangelism and Community Engagement, St. Mary's Cathedral, Memphis, TN	June 25, 2017
<b>The Rev. Zachary R. Thompson</b>	Rector, Our Saviour, Atlanta, GA	Associate Rector, St. James', Manhattan	July 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Eva Suárez</b>	Ordained Priest June 17 (Diocese of Washington)	Rockwell Fellow, St. James', Manhattan	July 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Alissa G. Anderson</b>	Ordained TD January 28 (Diocese of Indianapolis)	Curate, St. John's, Larchmont	July 2, 2017
<b>The Rev. Trevor R. Babb</b>	Rector, St. Simon of Cyrene, Lincoln Heights, OH	Rector, Christ Church (New Brighton), Staten Island	August 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Canon Patricia Sobers Mitchell</b>	Canon Missioner, Mount Vernon Episcopal Ministry	Canon for Pastoral Care, Diocese of Long Island	August 1, 2017
<b>The Rev. Richard J. Robyn</b>	Rector, Trinity Church Oxford, Philadelphia, PA	Rector, St. Mary's, Tuxedo Park	August 13, 2017
<b>The Rev. Richard A. Kunz</b>	Rector, Associate, Grace / La Gracia, White Plains	Retirement	October 31, 2017



# Cathedral Calendar

## AUGUST-OCTOBER 2017



### The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine

1047 Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street  
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For details of ongoing programs, tours and workshops at  
the Cathedral please visit [www.stjohndivine.org](http://www.stjohndivine.org).

#### SUNDAY SERVICES

8 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Eucharist  
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
11 a.m. Choral Eucharist  
4 p.m. Choral Evensong

#### DAILY SERVICES

Monday–Saturday  
8 a.m. Morning Prayer  
8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Tuesday & Thursday only)  
12:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist  
5 p.m. Evening Prayer

#### TICKETS AND RESERVATIONS

Unless otherwise noted events do not require tickets or reservations. Tickets for all performances other than free or “suggested contribution” events may be purchased directly from the Cathedral’s website, [stjohndivine.org](http://stjohndivine.org), or by calling (866) 811-4111.

#### ONGOING PROGRAMS, TOURS, WORKSHOPS

##### The Great Organ: Midday Monday

Cathedral organists provide a 30-minute break for mind, body and spirit at 1:00 pm with an entertaining and informative demonstration of the Cathedral’s unparalleled Great Organ.

##### The Great Organ: It’s Sunday

*The Great Organ: It’s Sunday* invites established and emerging organists from across the U.S. and around the world to take their turn at the Great Organ and present a free 5:15 pm concert.

#### PUBLIC EDUCATION AND VISITOR SERVICES, TOURS AND CHILDREN’S WORKSHOPS

Public Education & Visitor Services offers Cathedral Highlights, Vertical, and Spotlight Tours. All tours meet for registration at the Visitor Center inside the Cathedral entrance, at 112th Street and Amsterdam Avenue. Highlights Tours: \$12 per person, \$10 per student/senior. Vertical Tours: \$20 per person, \$18 per student/senior. Spotlight Tours: \$15 per person, \$12 per student/senior. For more information about Highlights Tours, Vertical Tours, Spotlight Tours and Medieval Birthday Parties visit [www.stjohndivine.org](http://www.stjohndivine.org).

#### HIGHLIGHTS TOURS

**Mondays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 2 – 3 p.m.**  
**Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.**  
**Select Sundays, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.**

Explore the many highlights of the Cathedral’s history, architecture, and artwork, from the Great Bronze Doors to the seven Chapels of the Tongues. Learn about the Cathedral’s services, events, and programs that welcome and inspire visitors from around the world. \$14 per person, \$12 per student/senior. No prior reservation necessary. Meet at Visitor Center.

#### VERTICAL TOURS

**Wednesdays & Fridays, Noon – 1pm;**  
**Saturdays, Noon – 1 p.m. & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.**  
On this adventurous, “behind-the-scenes” tour, climb more than 124 feet through spiral staircases to the top of the world’s largest cathedral. Learn stories through stained glass windows and sculpture and study the grand architecture of the Cathedral while standing on a buttress. The tour culminates on the roof with a wonderful view of Manhattan. \$20 per person, \$18 per student/senior. All participants must be 12 years of age and older and reservations are recommended. For reservations visit the Cathedral website or call (866) 811-4111. Bring a flashlight and bottle of water. Meet at Visitor Center.

#### SPOTLIGHT TOURS

**Select Saturdays and Sundays**  
Spotlight Tours are specially created by Cathed-

ral Guides to give visitors a closer look at unique aspects of the Cathedral’s extraordinary architecture, artwork, and history. \$18 per person, \$15 per student/senior, unless otherwise noted. Space is limited and reservations are recommended. For reservations visit the Cathedral website or call (866) 811-4111. Meet at Visitor Center.

#### NIGHTWATCH

The Nightwatch series offers two exciting and innovative programs: Nightwatch Crossroads and Nightwatch Dusk & Dawn. For more information visit [stjohndivine.org](http://stjohndivine.org) or contact: (212) 316-5819/ [nightwatch@stjohndivine.org](mailto:nightwatch@stjohndivine.org).

#### ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN TRUST (A.C.T.)

To learn about the many nurturing year-round programs for young people offered by A.C.T., please call (212) 316-7530 or visit [www.actprograms.org](http://www.actprograms.org).

#### CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY CARES (CCC)

Please visit [www.stjohndivine.org](http://www.stjohndivine.org) for more information on CCC programs, which include health screenings at the Nutrition, Health and Clothing Center, the Clothing Closet, Sunday Soup Kitchen, SNAP/Food Stamps Program, and Walking Club.

#### SELECTED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### AUGUST

#### A SUMMER OF SCULPTURE

**On view through September 10**

This summer we celebrate Artist in Residence Greg Wyatt’s iconic Peace Fountain by immersing the Cathedral in three exhibitions of world-class sculpture. The National Sculpture Society presents *A Blessing of Animals*, a juried exhibition of monumental animal sculpture featuring the works of 26 this country’s leading animal sculptors. Rounding out the exhibitions on view, the Art Students League of New York offers a retrospective of their Model to Monument program, which has placed works by international artists in outdoor spaces since 2010.

#### WITHIN THE WALLS: EXPLORING HIDDEN SPACES

**Saturday, August 5, 10:30 a.m. & 1 p.m.**

This extended vertical tour features “behind-the-scenes” climbs in both the eastern and western ends of St. John the Divine. In the east, descend into the unfinished crypt and then ascend Rafael Guastavino’s beautiful spiral staircase to incredible views high above the altar. The western climb presents an amazing view down the entire length of the world’s largest cathedral. \$25 per person, \$20 per student/senior. Participants are responsible for carrying all belongings throughout the tour. Photography is welcome, though tripod use during the tour is prohibited. If you have concerns regarding claustrophobia, vertigo, or a medical condition, please call (212) 932-7347 before purchasing tickets. Must be 12 years of age or older. Flashlight and bottle of water recommended.

### SEPTEMBER

#### BIDEAWE MOBILE ADOPTIONS

**Saturday, September 2, 12 p.m.**

In conjunction with the National Sculpture Society’s *A Blessing of Animals*, Bideawee’s Mobile Adoption Van will be parked on the Close with adorable dogs and cats available for adoption. Their experts will help find you the right pet to match your lifestyle. All animals are spayed/neutered, vaccinated, behaviorally-tested and ready to become the newest addition to your family. For more information on pet adoptions, visit [bideawee.org](http://bideawee.org).

#### METTAWEE RIVER THEATER COMPANY: BEFORE THE SUN AND MOON

**Friday, September 8 – Sunday, September 10, 7:30 p.m.**

The Mettawee River Theatre Company, led by Cathedral Artist in Residence Ralph Lee, creates original theater productions which incorporate masks, giant figures, puppets and other visual elements with live music, movement and text, drawing on myths, legends and folklore of the world’s many cultures for its material. *Before the Sun and Moon* is drawn from an ancient Korean folktale, in which a husband and wife discover the power of love and devotion through a series of wild adventures, finding clever solutions to unexpected and outrageous challenges. The show will incorporate a range of masks, puppets and other visual elements. This outdoor performance will take place on the Cathedral Close. Tickets will be available for purchase the day of the show.

#### ORDINATION OF PRIESTS

**Saturday, September 9, 10:30 a.m.**

Visit [dioceseny.org](http://dioceseny.org) for more information.

#### CONGREGATION OF ST. SAVIOUR HOMECOMING SUNDAY

**Sunday, September 10, 12:45 p.m.**

Join the members of the Congregation of Saint Saviour for the Annual Homecoming Lunch in Cathedral House. This is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with old friends and meet new members as well as find out how to join this Cathedral congregation, and receive information about fall programming and volunteer opportunities year-round.

#### GATEWAY TO THE NEW JERUSALEM

**Saturday, September 17, 10:30 a.m.**

The Cathedral’s western facade provokes much comment and curiosity as well as the occasional conspiracy theory. This stimulating one-hour tour decodes the thematic programs underlying its art and architecture. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide Tom Fedorek.

#### THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT: SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

**Sunday, September 18, 1 p.m.**

The Cathedral spurred the growth of Morningside Heights into becoming one of Manhattan’s most unique neighborhoods. Go back in time on an illustrated walking tour of the neighborhood and its historic architecture and institutions, and learn about its development into the “Acropolis of Manhattan.” The tour begins at the Cathedral and ends at Riverside Church. Led by Cathedral Guide Bill Schneberger. Must be 12 years of age or older. This tour requires extensive outdoor walking and use of stairs. Bottle of water recommended.

#### I LOVE NY: SPOTLIGHT ON THE CITY

**Saturday, September 24, 10:30 a.m.**

Celebrate New York City and its indomitable spirit with a special tour of the Cathedral. Learn how the Cathedral and City serve as places of diversity, tolerance, and human achievement. Hear stories of New York’s immigrants, inventors, and artists who have helped shape the City and the world. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide John Simko.

#### WITH ANGELS AND ARCHANGELS: SPOTLIGHT ON ANGELIC IMAGES

**Saturday, September 24, 1:30 p.m.**

Discover images of angels in the Cathedral’s glass and stone. Learn about the role of angels in the Hebrew, Christian and Islamic scriptures, the angelic hierarchy and how to identify angels by their field marks. The tour concludes with an ascent to the triforium for a birds-eye view of the breathtaking Archangels Window. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide Tom Fedorek. Must be 12 years of age or older for ascent to triforium level. Binoculars recommended.

### OCTOBER

#### THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS AND BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

**Sunday, October 1, 11 a.m.**

The Cathedral welcomes you to join us for our 33rd annual Feast of Saint Francis festivities! Paul Winter and Paul Halley’s beloved *Missa Gaia* brings together a massed choir of hundreds of voices, a dance performance by Forces of Nature, and musical performances by the Paul Winter Consort, all in celebration of the beauty of the animal kingdom. The service concludes with the Procession of the Animals, a silent parade of creatures great and small down the Nave of the Cathedral. Passes for the service can be reserved at [stjohndivine.org](http://stjohndivine.org) after Labor Day weekend, and are available on a first-come basis the morning of October 1. Interested in supporting this beloved annual service? Visit our website for more information!

#### WITHIN THE WALLS: EXPLORING HIDDEN SPACES

**Saturday, October 8, 10:30 a.m.**

See details for August 5.

#### THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT: SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

**Sunday, October 9, 1 p.m.**

See details for September 18.

#### OPEN HOUSE NEW YORK WEEKEND

**Saturday, October 15, and Sunday, October 16, 2 – 6 p.m.**

The Cathedral is thrilled to be participating in Open House New York weekend once again! Visit the Open House website at [ohny.org/weekend/](http://ohny.org/weekend/) for information on the whole weekend of tours, events and programs.

#### THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT: SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

**Sunday, October 23, 1 p.m.**

See details for September 18.

#### MUSICA SACRA: SCHÜTZ, BRAHMS, BRUCKNER

**Wednesday, October 25, 7:30 p.m.**

Visit [musicasacrany.com](http://musicasacrany.com) for more information.

#### ANNUAL HALLOWEEN EXTRAVAGANZA

**Friday, October 27, 8 and 10 p.m.**

The Cathedral’s annual Halloween celebration returns! Join us for the screening of a classic silent film with live organ accompaniment. Following the film, the full stretch of the Cathedral’s Nave is at the disposal of Ralph Lee’s Mettawee River Theater Company’s fantastic creatures of the night. Visit [stjohndivine.org](http://stjohndivine.org) for all the chilling details!

#### CRYPT CRAWL: SPOTLIGHT ON HALLOWEEN

**Saturday, October 28, 4 and 5 p.m.**

**Sunday, October 29, 1, 2, 3, and 4 p.m.**

Shake your spirits loose this Halloween season! Hear the stories of the entombed, learn the origins of Halloween as a Celtic New Year celebration and later transformation into All Hallow’s Eve, and creep into the Cathedral’s crypt. Space is limited and participants must be 12 years of age or older. \$25 per adult, \$20 per senior/student.





# High Cotton

*By the Rev. Thomas Faulkner*

**A**s there is a narrative structure to many of my sculptures, people often ask me for the origins of my creative vision. What follows is an attempted explanation of a recent piece, *High Cotton*, pictured above. The sculpture is shaped hexagonally—a reference to iconic windows in my childhood parish church.

I am a racist. It is impossible not to be such, raised as a white boy in an advantaged New York City suburb in the 1950s and 60s. I have spent most of my adult life, nurtured by my Christian faith, working against my racist tendencies. It takes a demanding effort, realizing that I am unaware that much of what I do and say is racist. I'm always on a learning curve towards greater insight.

The inspiration for “High Cotton” comes from my early life experiences. While in grammar school I traveled with my parents to Florida every winter for a family vacation. We would drive Route 1 through landscapes fascinating and mysterious the further south we went. In Georgia we passed winter cotton fields—rich, dark earth with occasional unpicked cotton bolls on withered plants. Scattered on the edge of the fields were tarpaper shacks. Numerous children played outside, running between drying laundry. My father told me that they were Pickaninnies. Only later did I learn that this was a derogatory racist term growing out of the antebellum south. My father also found these landscapes to be dangerous, having us lock the car doors when passing through black townships.

It was during grammar school that I started to see that things in my culture were often at odds with the values with which I was raised. In third grade, Lady Eugene, a classmate, invited me to her apartment after school. She had previously pointed out its frilly white curtains from our school playground. She wanted me to see her doll collection. In asking my mother if I could go after school, her tense response was “No.” She said my father (a prominent businessman) would not approve of my going to a colored girl’s home in “that” part of town. I never got to see Lady Eugene’s prized dolls.

After grammar school I didn’t return south until 1965, for the last day of the Civil Rights March into Montgomery from Selma. Many black citizens lined the march

route fearfully unable to join us, and in other neighborhoods furious whites hurled insults and spat at us. As we marched into town, the fields and shacks were still there but something clearly was changing.

In the 1980’s during one of my many cross-continental road trips, I stopped in Belle Fourche, South Dakota, to have lunch. I bought the two dolls central to High Cotton in a second-hand store. The shop owner said they were “fetish dolls.” They in fact exhibited a powerful aura. They are not quite Golliwog dolls, nor traditional black rag dolls. One has no eyes and the other has a black vinyl skirt and boots. I found them hauntingly racist, purchased in a town that is over 90 percent white.

I now live in the Upper East Side of Manhattan. On Madison, Lexington and Third Avenues there are numerous shops that specialize in children’s clothing—all of natural fibers. If they are made of cotton from United States farms, the cotton is not hand picked. But if from Turkey, India, China and Africa, most is still hand picked in the painful, arduous methods used on southern plantations decades ago. The dress selected for High Cotton has a label of that name.

In a sepulcher at the bottom of the sculpture is a bone—just any old bone. It represents the thousands of blacks, even now and into the preceding centuries, who were hanged, beaten, set on fire, and emasculated. The abuse of black citizens continues to this day with the black population of our prisons exceeding 34 percent (US prisons house 21 percent of the world’s prisoners) and juries unwilling to convict policemen of the evident murder of black citizens. Plantations and prisons are both manifestations of oppression.

I placed the dolls and cotton purposefully in a drawer. Though we always need to be in discussion of our national sin of racism at all times, our culture pulls the racism drawer open when we want to discuss it and then shuts it back when it is time to move on to other “more pressing” issues.

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*The author is a nationally recognized artist and vicar of Christ Church, Sparkill.*