

Form Name: Inventory of Episcopal Racial Reconciliation and Justice Ministries, including Truth and Reconciliation Processes
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Inventory of Episcopal Racial Reconciliation and Justice Ministries, including Truth and Reconciliation

Introductory Info

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Diocese	Southwestern Virginia
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Please identify whether you are answering this survey as a representative of an entire diocese or as a church or institution: Entire Diocese

Section One: Telling the Truth About Our Churches and Race, including Truth and Reconciliation Processes (TRUTH)

Check all the Truth-telling ministries with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged over the last 12 months:

- Racial Justice Audit of Episcopal Leadership (produced by Mission Institute, published January 2021) or other survey of experiences of diocesan leadership around race and racism
- Historic study of diocesan and/or congregational participation in systemic oppression of Indigenous, Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander peoples and other people of color
- Intentional efforts to increase proportion of people of color among clergy
- Intentional efforts to address racial disparities in treatment of leaders across the diocese, congregation or institution

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

We have had some churches in the Diocese complete the Racial Justice Audit

A priest in the Diocese has done a historic study of Diocesan participation in the systemic oppression of people of color

The Diocese financially assisted a parish hiring an assistant, a priest of color, and she will be working with the Diocese on our Becoming Beloved Community initiatives

Has your diocese, congregation or institution or entity in recent years engaged in a Truth and Reconciliation process, understood to be: (please check all that apply)

Investigating the organization's historic role in racial injustice;

Please describe these Truth and Reconciliation process efforts:

The priest who did the historical look at racial injustice in the Diocese has been a speaker for several churches in the Diocese on this topic and with participants of Sacred Ground, as well.

Is there a staff person and/or volunteer who serves as point person for diocesan racial reconciliation and justice ministries?

Yes

Name

Pattie Ames

Email

Are they a staff member or volunteer?

Staff

Would you like to identify another leader?

Yes

Name

Marisa Sifontes

Email

Are they a staff member or volunteer?

Staff

Has your diocese, congregation or institution organized a commission, working group or other regular meetings to work on a Truth and Reconciliation process?

Yes

If yes, please summarize and provide the name of the commission/group, and a contact person with name and email address.

Rev. Nina Salmon, chair of our Diocesan Becoming Beloved Community Guiding Team

Please indicate the types of entities in your diocese that have engaged or are now engaging in a Truth and Reconciliation process.

Congregation

Please describe the Truth and Reconciliation efforts related to the boxes checked above, including names of congregations or institution, if known:

Book study groups
Sacred Ground Circles
Allyship Training by Service Never Sleeps
Convocation gathering on the Truth and Reconciliation process

Have Episcopal entities pursuing Truth and Reconciliation hosted events and webinars or produced any documents, testimonials, reports or other content?

Yes

If your diocese, congregation or institution has not begun to pursue a Truth and Reconciliation process, have leaders expressed interest in starting such work?

Yes

Section Two: Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community (PROCLAMATION)

Check all the Proclaiming the Dream ministries with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged during the last 12 months: (check all that apply)

Host a Listening and Learning Session around race in partnership with neighbors, faith partners, civic groups, schools, etc
Offer public witness (editorials, public speaking, protests and vigils)
Participate in local or regional efforts to examine the history of race and racism
Participate in efforts to generate a local or regional vision for racial healing

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

We have parishes in discussion with other churches, predominately black, in their area on race relations.
We have small groups and individuals talking with neighbors and people in the community about racial reconciliation and healing.
We have professors in the area talking the history or race and racism and some of those are posted on our website.
Many people across the Diocese have participated in protest and vigils over the past year.

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Proclaiming the Dream?

Information on ways to connect in the community that are helpful and productive

Section Three: Practicing Jesus's Healing Way (FORMATION)

Check all the Practicing the Way ministries with which your diocese or entity has engaged during the last 12 months: (check all that apply)

Sacred Ground dialogue circles
Anti-racism or dismantling racism training
Preaching on race and racism
Storytelling circles, including Beloved Community Story Sharing

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

We have had several Sacred Ground Circles in our Diocese and new ones starting this fall.
We have had 5 cohorts, of 15 people each, in Allyship training provided by Service Never Sleeps and will have 2 more cohorts this fall.
The Bishop and some clergy in the Diocese have preached on racism.

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Practicing the Way?

Any new resources are always helpful. Our Guiding team is curating resources to share with the Diocese and in particular looking for ways for people to be active participants in Practicing the Way in our communities

Section Four: Repairing the Breach in Institutions and Society (JUSTICE)

Check all the church-wide Repairing the Breach efforts with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged during the last 12 months:

Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN) or the Office of Government Relations
Poor People's Campaign

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Reimagining Policing and Criminal Justice Reform"?

Learning

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Prison Ministries or Re-entry Ministries," that is, supporting persons re-entering community following incarceration?

Learning
Local engagement

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Refugee Ministries"?

Learning
Local engagement

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Immigration Reform"?

Learning

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Education Equity," including support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and partnering with under-resourced schools primarily serving students of color?

Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Housing Equity" for/with communities and People of Color?

Learning

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Economic Opportunity" for/with communities and People of Color?

Learning

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Environmental Racism and Eco-justice”?

Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Reparations for Racial Justice”?

Learning

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

This is an area of focus for our Deacons and they in turn are sharing their learnings and information with the Diocese and parishes

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Repairing the Breach?

Any resources in these areas would be helpful

Conclusion

Is there anything else you wish to share about your diocese, congregation or institution and its engagement with racial reconciliation and justice ministries, overall?

Becoming Beloved Community is a priority of our Diocese as seen in the Bishop's Mission Action plan. Our Diocesan Convention speaker in January focused on racial reconciliation and being allies in that process. The Bishop established a Guiding team with representatives from every convocation to curate resources, go to parishes to talk about programs that they can participate in and design programs and/or pilgrimages for the Diocese. We are also working with the Rev Masud Syedullah, Roots and Branches, on program for the Diocese entitled "My Neighbor: A Gift of God".
