

Call for the Diocese of Tennessee to Dismantle Racism

(General Resolutions Committee: Adoptions with amendment)

Whereas, the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church meeting in 2015 passed resolution 2015-A182, which urges dioceses and parishes to create and find productive ways to address the sin of racism on many levels; and

Whereas, the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee has engaged in activities and efforts towards dismantling the sin of racism through the creation of a diocesan commission called “Beloved Community: Commission on Racial Reconciliation,” which was formally known as the Anti-Racism Task Force,

Whereas, on the night before He suffered and died, our Lord Jesus Christ commanded His disciples to “love one another” (Jn13:34), and

Whereas, everyone is diminished when the dignity of any human being, created in the image of God, is compromised; and

Whereas, our call to live now as we will live “in the life of the world to come: is informed by a vision of people gathered “from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Rev. 7:9); now be it

Resolved, that the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee seeks to meet the urgings of 2015-A182 to *empower clergy and laypersons* to confront the sin of racism when encountered in our churches, diocesan institutions and communities; and be it further

Resolved, that The Beloved Community: Commission on Racial Reconciliation strongly urges all persons in the diocese to commit themselves in prayer, study and dialogue about the sin of racism, that include, but are not limited to, book studies, film viewings, special liturgies and Bible studies; and be it further

Resolved, that each worshipping community report their activity to the Beloved Community: Commission on Racial Reconciliation no later than November 1, 2018.

Explanation

“Dismantling racism is about working on your internal self to the degree that we are willing to let ourselves be set free to be more willing to take down the structures that are keeping people from being free.”

Catherine Meeks, Founding Executive Director, Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing

The 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church issued resolutions urging The Episcopal Church to focus our efforts on dismantling racism and to report on these efforts. “Call for the Diocese of Tennessee to Dismantle Racism” hopes to answer our church’s call to dismantle racism by encouraging the Diocese of Tennessee to take seriously the sins of racism by offering programs in local churches. These programs may just get the conversation started or they may lead to plans that bring about racial healing. Wherever you begin, know that this process of addressing and dismantling racism, while challenging, is a practice that will lead us all toward greater wholeness, toward deeper holiness.