

Becoming Beloved Community

WHEREAS, in our Baptismal Covenant we have promised to strive for justice and peace among all people, to seek and serve Christ in all persons, to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to respect the dignity of every human being; and

WHEREAS, the vision of Beloved Community rises from a commitment to following the Bible's most important commandments - to love God with our whole being and to love our neighbors, in whom we see the face of God. Therefore, The Episcopal Church in the United States (the Church) says that Beloved Community is the community that loves as God intends, where truth is told, and hierarchies of human value are dismantled, where each person and culture is protected and honored as an equally beloved part of the human family of God, and where we counter human selfishness - the true root of sin and racism - with the selfless love of Jesus; and

WHEREAS, the General Convention of the Church has passed no fewer than ten (10) resolutions in the last 70 years opposing racial discrimination, expressing regret for its past and present discrimination, prohibiting racial discrimination in churches, proclaiming that racism is inconsistent with the Gospel and a sin that must be eradicated, apologizing for the complicity of the Church in the slave trade and in its support and participation in the de jure and de facto segregation and discrimination for at least a century after the formal abolition of slavery in the United States, and seeking to repair these injustices "both materially and relationally;" and

WHEREAS, the Church has also passed resolutions regarding the Church's desire to remember, recognize and reconcile with indigenous peoples, and also desires to nourish, strengthen and develop disciples of Christ in the Anglican tradition within Spanish-speaking communities, a growing population within the political subdivisions that are within the Diocese of Florida (the Diocese); and

WHEREAS, the Church established an Asiamerica Ministry in the 1970s, the mission of which is to plant and grow congregations, to be courageous and loving advocates in the ministry of reconciliation, to use their gifts for all kinds of human and spiritual services, and to train their people for service; and

WHEREAS, although individual persons and parishes have been and are involved in racial healing efforts and other efforts to live into and become Beloved Community, and much Godly work has been done within the Diocese and the communities touched by it, there is much more to do on all fronts; and

WHEREAS, a Diocesan Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Commission has been appointed and is beginning its work in earnest; and

WHEREAS, current events in our divided world lead us to think anew about how God calls us to act on becoming Beloved Community; and

WHEREAS, the Church has called, and we believe that God is calling, our Diocese and the whole church to open itself to God's call to us to become Beloved Community by facing the truth about ourselves, our church, and about race, by proclaiming the dream of Beloved Community, by practicing Jesus's way of Healing Love, and by repairing the breach in society and institutions; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge and agree that we can do nothing without God's help, and accordingly, we seek God's help as we make these resolutions and promises.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the 180th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Florida declares unequivocally that the institution of slavery in the United States and anywhere else in the world, based on the ownership of some persons by other persons, was and is a sin and a fundamental betrayal of the humanity of all persons who were involved, a sin that continues to plague our common life in the church and in our culture.
2. That the Diocese expresses its most profound regret that the Church, including the Diocese, lent the institution of slavery its support and justification, and after slavery was formally abolished, the Church, including the Diocese, continued to support de jure and de facto segregation and discrimination.
3. That the Diocese formally condemns the defamation, slander, and ill will advanced toward all people because of race, religion, ethnicity, or culture.
4. That the Diocese approves and desires to support within the Diocese the action of the Church in its ministry to all races and cultures, whether Hispanic, Asian American, and otherwise.
5. That the Diocese approves and desires to support within the Diocese the action of the Church to remember, recognize and reconcile with indigenous people, and particularly encourages Episcopalians to ally themselves with the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice approved by Resolution A125 of the 80th General Convention.
6. That the Diocese hereby expresses its support for the Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Commission and authorizes and directs the Commission to undertake an effort to determine how best the Diocese can be a "repairer of the breach" (Isaiah 58:12) both materially and relationally, all for the purpose of hastening the coming of the kingdom of God by achieving racial healing and becoming Beloved Community.
7. That the Diocese hereby encourages all of the clergy within, and all of the staff of, the Diocese, to proclaim, by word and example, the need for racial healing as the Diocese and the churches therein, individually, collectively, and in conjunction with other communities of faith, strive to become Beloved Community and to encourage the people of the churches within the

Diocese to learn about the effects of slavery, defamation, segregation and discrimination on themselves and others, to share stories about their learning, and to be empowered to work to become Beloved Community.

8. That the Diocese commends the participation of the people of the Diocese in programs such as Sacred Ground, book and film studies related to racial healing and encourages all within the Diocese to find some way to learn about the matters of this resolution, and directs the Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Commission to facilitate such participation and learning.

9. That the Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Commission shall report to the 181st Annual Convention of the Diocese, and thereafter the Diocese shall take such further action as is appropriate to accomplish the purposes hereof.

BACKGROUND for Resolution Becoming Beloved Community in the Diocese of Florida:

1. Becoming Beloved Community

a. See the 2-page summary of the Episcopal Church's Becoming Beloved Community - The Episcopal Church's Long-Term Commitment to Racial Healing, Reconciliation and Justice (footnote 1). The program, introduced in 2017, was called forth from previous resolutions of General Convention. It calls the Church to tell the truth, proclaim the dream, repair the breach and practice the way of love, all in the context of living out our baptismal covenant. A more comprehensive statement of the vision of the Church in committing to Becoming Beloved Community may be found at (footnote 2).

b. The Sacred Ground program is part of the Church's Becoming Beloved Community commitment. As described in Sacred Ground: Summary - The Episcopal Church (footnote 3):

- Sacred Ground is a sensitive, prayerful resource that creates space for difficult but respectful and transformative dialogue on race and racism.

- It invites participants to walk back through history in order to peel away the layers that brought us to today, reflecting on family histories and stories, as well as important narratives that shape the collective American story.

- It holds as a guiding star the vision of beloved community – where all people are honored, protected, and nurtured as beloved children of God, where we weep at one another's pain and seek one another's flourishing.

2. Church resolutions and actions regarding racism

a. The Church traces its awareness of racism back to a 1952 Resolution adopted at General Convention when it resolved that "we consistently oppose and combat discrimination based on

color or race in every form, both within the Church and without, in this country and internationally.”

b. Since 1952, the Church has adopted various resolutions around the topic of anti-racism. The Digital Archive of the Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism may be found at Anti-Racism Training | The Archives of the Episcopal Church (footnote 4).

c. An important Church resolution was 2006-A123 (see the full resolution at footnote 4), as amended by Resolution 2009-A143, (also at footnote 4) in which the Church declared “that the institution of slavery...based on the ‘ownership’ of some persons by other persons, was and is a sin and a fundamental betrayal of the humanity of all persons who were involved” and is “a sin that continues to plague our common life in the Church and the culture...”; expressed its regret that, and apologized for, the Church’s support and justification for the institution of slavery and continued to support segregation and discrimination for at least a century after slavery was formally abolished, and called on the Church and its dioceses to take certain actions in response thereto, including collecting information around the Church’s history and establishing a Day of Repentance for the national church and for each diocese.

d. A further series of resolutions and appropriations have followed. Among other things, the Church’s initiative Becoming Beloved Community, of which Sacred Ground is part, has been initiated.

e. The 80th General Convention of the Church established the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice as a voluntary association of Episcopal dioceses, parishes, organizations, and individuals dedicated to the work of becoming the Beloved Community (footnote 5).

3. A chronicle of Diocese of Florida undertakings provided by Canon Allison DeFoor is below. Commendable, but there is much more to do. Further initiatives have included:

a. An email dated 4/17/2012 from Vickie Haskew, on behalf of Bishop Howard, stating that the diocese’s seminarians go to anti-racism training.

b. Bishop’s Institute for Ministry and Leadership participation in annual Absalom Jones observances.

c. An Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Commission (this Commission) has been appointed to work on racial healing issues, but it is not listed among the ministries on the diocesan website and has largely been inactive since the onset of the current pandemic until recently.

4. Links to the Church’s Office of Indigenous Ministries may be found at Indigenous Ministries - The Episcopal Church (footnote 6). That link describes the resolutions of the Church regarding the Church’s involvement with indigenous people, its renunciation of the Doctrine of

Discovery, and its involvement with boarding schools to which so many children of indigenous families were sent.

5. Links to the Church's Latino/Hispanic Ministries are at Latino Ministries – The Episcopal Church (footnote 7).

6. Links to the Church's Asiamerica Ministries pamphlet are at Asiamerica Ministries – The Episcopal Church (footnote 8).

7. Actions for the Commission to consider:

a. Compile a history of Diocesan condoning of slavery and de jure and de facto segregation and discrimination. Such a history is a way that the Diocese can tell whether and how it has been complicit in slavery, segregation, and discrimination. The Dioceses of Alabama, Mississippi, and Western North Carolina have prepared such histories.

b. Review the 2021 Survey, the link for which is at TEC Diocese Survey Results 12_10_2021 (footnote 9) and determine how best to respond and implement in our Diocese suggestions made therein.

c. Review the relationship and support by the Diocese of HBCUs historically supported by the Episcopal Church and also those (Florida A&M University and Edward Waters University) located within the Diocese.

d. Develop, evaluate, and recommend curricula for use with children, youth, adults, vestries, and other appropriate persons that will foster becoming Beloved Community.

e. Encourage and develop programs for the use of storytelling, story tables, and other ways for people of different views and with differing perspectives on our history, economy, and politics to talk with each other and build relationships and understanding, and to find common ground.

f. Establish procedures encouraging all persons to have equal opportunities to find positions of employment and responsibility in our Diocese, including churches, businesses, and other organizations.

Footnotes containing referenced web links:

1. https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/01/becoming_beloved_community_summary.pdf
2. https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/08/becoming_beloved_community_commitment_and_plan.pdf#:~:text=That%20vision%20%E2%80%93%20titled%20%E2%80%9CBecoming%20Beloved%20Community%3A%20The,end%20is%20the%20creation%20of%20the%20Beloved%20Community
3. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground/about/>
4. <https://www.episcopalarchives.org/anti-racism/training>
5. <https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/198?house=HD&lang=en>
6. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/indigenous-ministries/#:~:text=As%20an%20institution%2C%20The%20Episcopal%20Church%20recognizes%20and,launching%20a%20decade%20of%20“remembrance%2C%20recognition%20and%20reconciliation.”>
7. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/latino-ministries/>
8. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/asiamerica-ministries/>
9. https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/12/RR-TEC-Diocese-Survey-Results-12_10_2021.pdf

Race Relations and The Episcopal Diocese of Florida

When asked to answer the work of the Diocese of Florida on race relations, the two questions that quickly come to mind are: in which century and how much time do you have to listen?

It is a pleasure to respond to the inquiry of The Episcopal Church as to activities in the Diocese of Florida on the issue of race relations. As we sat down to look at our history in this regard, it was necessary to try and come to terms first with just how long and deep this effort has been in our Diocese. Some of this is due to the fact that the Diocese of Florida really only began a period of growth and influence in this region following the Civil War, though our involvement in this area may stretch back as far as the 1700's during the British Period (1763-1784). Herein the tale.

The Prologue to the Diocese of Florida may be said to have been taking place during the time of Zephaniah Kingsley. He settled in Florida with the land grant during the British Period. He published in London work that predicted that the racial divides in the world would dissipate

due to intermarriage over the generations to come, A Treatise on the Patriarchal, or Co-Operative System of Society. Quite radical for his day, he lived in this premise, marrying Anna Kingsley, who was an African princess brought to the New World as a slave. She, and their descendants exercised control of Kingsley's large estates both before and after his demise, at one point relocating to the Haitian Republic, mistrustful of American assurances of due process for freed slaves attendant to Spanish transfer of Florida to the U.S. In any event Kingsley's radical notions and behavior set down quite a marker.

The Diocese of Florida was barely a going concern going into the Civil War and less of a going concern coming out of it. Thus the main story begins in 1867 with the arrival of Bishop John Freeman Young from New York, Trinity Wall Street to serve as Bishop. Young was creative. He translated "Silent Night" from German into English and introduced Gothic architecture on a broad basis to the Diocese for new churches, borrowing the ideas of his friend Richard Upjohn, the architect of Trinity Wall Street itself. He opened many churches, and ordained 9 African-American clergy.

Young got involved in many things as Florida recovered from the war, but the thread that carries us right to the day-to-day is that of universal quality education for all races. His wife began this effort with an orphanage in Fernandina Beach, one of the major cities of the time. By the time he died in 1885, the Diocese had created nine African-American Episcopal churches in north Florida.

Then another major player comes upon the scene. Harriet Beecher Stowe, having retired on the proceeds of her novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin, the most popular book in the world except for the Bible in its day, moved to Mandarin, Florida and attended locally the Church of Our Saviour. She would ultimately honor Church of Our Saviour with a Tiffany window commissioned by her as a love gift for her parish when she returned to the north.

She envisioned a free education system for the State of Florida, that would allow young children of color access to high-quality education. Her dreams were state-wide, and she got her brother posted as Education Commissioner for the State of Florida. His design of the system of education for our state remains in place until this day. Key elements of his structure remain today in both independence (Covid masking issues) and size (larger local school districts).

Tangible successes occurred quite demonstrably here in Jacksonville, and right along the St. Johns River. Working with the Freedman's Bureau, the only place that an African-American child could receive a high school education, public or private, was in Jacksonville, Florida.

Bishop Young was succeeded by another maverick, the Rt. Rev. Edwin Gardner Weed. The efforts begun by Bishop Young continued on in the episcopacy of Bishop Weed, who ordained five black priests in Florida, even though the Diocese newspaper stated, "We do not favor the ordination of colored men to the priesthood." An interesting historical artifact attributing to this fact is found in one of our oldest wood frame Gothic churches, on Fleming Island. There the Fleming family built a family and community chapel, and in it is a stained-glass window

portraying Bishop Weed and Margaret Fleming, educating young black and white children together.

The fruits of these collaborations particularly in education changed the face of the United States in race relations for the next hundred years. The names are quite a roll call. Highlights are below.

As background, it should be remembered that Jacksonville was occupied by the Union Army throughout almost all of the Civil War. It remained a majority African-American city until the advent of legislative segregation across the nation. After the Civil War, it was hoped that the races could meet together. By 1882, these efforts had become “separate” but not equal, yet not insignificant. By 1892, 8 missions, 2 black clergy and 3 white clergy became devoted to these missions. and the eugenicists at Princeton, led by Woodrow Wilson began to have their sway in the nation.

Out of this mix came most prominently, James Weldon Johnson. The first African-American member the Florida Bar, he was raised in Jacksonville by Bahamian- American parents who had been Anglican in Nassau, where his father was the first African-American member of the Bahamian Parliament. Family relationships with the church and Jacksonville were divided between Episcopal and A.M.E. churches.

Johnson became the principal of Stanton High School in Jacksonville, a public school started at the Freeman’s Bureau after the Civil War. He and his brother wrote, “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing”.

During the Jim Crowe Era, many African-Americans in Jacksonville relocated to New York. This educational and cultural foundation became the bedrock of the Harlem Renaissance. Teddy Roosevelt appointed James Weldon Johnson as United States Consul to Puerto Cabello, Venezuela. Johnson served there with such distinction that President Taft later appointed him Consul to Nicaragua. Johnson then returned to New York to become the first executive officer of the NAACP (1920-1930). He would also be the first African-American member of the faculty at New York University and a key player in the Harlem Renaissance. But there are more to follow.

The second African-American Suffragan Bishop in The Episcopal Church, Henry Beard Delaney, was educated at a high school in Fernandina Beach, funded by the Freedman’s Bureau and taught by missionaries. He was sponsored by St. Peter’s, to St. Augustine College, a new Episcopal college for freed slaves in North Carolina. He stayed on faculty, was later ordained, and was elected Suffragan Bishop of North Carolina in 1918, serving African-American parishes on behalf of the Bishop of North Carolina.

A. Philip Randolph was the next prominent name to come out of this mix of educators. He became the organizer of the March on Washington. As head of the Sleeping Car Porter’s Union with the railroads, he was also the man who suggested giving the speech opportunity to Martin

Luther King Jr., which produced the “I Have a Dream” speech for which King is known worldwide.

Also passing through the educational portals was Howard Thurman. Thurman would subsequently room with Martin Luther King, Sr. in college in Atlanta. Thurman would later travel to India, while on faculty at Howard University. Ghandi gave to Thurman the suggestion that passive resistance would be the form of resistance most effective for the African-American community in dealing with the white power structure, citing India’s success with battling the British Empire. Martin Luther King, Sr. asked Thurman to take care of his son while he went to college in Boston, where Thurman was then teaching, and Thurman became King Jr.’s major professor during his dissertation days. The introduction of satyagraha (passive resistance) and its impact upon American social, political life and faith life can be traced directly back to the work of the Diocese in creating education opportunities.

A story worth telling is that of representative Jack Orr, Jr., an Episcopalian who in 1956, when segregation laws were advancing in Florida and much of the South took to the floor in the House of Representatives and stated “This is wrong, and I don’t care if I’m the only person to vote against it, nor if it costs me the next election. It is simply wrong.” Unfortunately he was the only person to vote against it and it did cost him the next election, though he would later return as the Mayor of Miami-Dade County. Orr was a member of St. Stephen’s in Coconut Grove, a sister diocese in Florida. The Diocese of Florida took the lead in making sure that the representative was honored for his stand posthumously and nominated him for the Florida Bar Medal of Freedom. We were also able to quietly advance the posthumous restoration of office to Judge James Dean, wrongfully removed from office in Key West in the 1800’s, by Executive Order of Gov. Jeb Bush, advanced by Diocesan members in the administration.

As Jim Crowe captured much of the country after the turn of the century and set off the diaspora of African-Americans from this region to the North, things fell into sleepy, predictable and bad patterns. When the stirrings of change began in the 1950’s and 60’s the Episcopal Church in this State and Diocese were fully engaged.

As the winds of change began to blow across the nation, the church was in the forefront locally. Those activities took many forms. In Tallahassee, the rectory at the student center at Ruge Hall became the Safehaven Headquarters for the protest sit-in movement in Tallahassee in 1960. In St. Augustine, Trinity Parish became the place of refuge as rioters sought to beat African-American students who had sit-ins at the local drugstore. Bishop West overrode local attempts to stay segregated, and brave priests stood with him, at cost.

In Jacksonville, the local business leaders lead a quiet, one way conversation that desegregated the lunch counters in that city, forcing the compliance of the mayor and the city council not so inclined previously. This took place within two weeks of the local white riot dubbed “Ax Handle Saturday” in 1960. The quiet leadership were Episcopalians, at both the student and businessperson level.

The Diocese has three historically African-American parishes which remain active and vibrant in the cities served. These include St. Michaels and All Angels in Tallahassee, St. Philip's in Jacksonville (designed by the first female architect in both Florida and Georgia in the early 1900's), and St. Gabriel's in Jacksonville. A small family mission also exists with St. Mary's in Palatka.

As the inner cities began to experience white flight in the 1960's, the response of Dean Parks at St. John's Cathedral in Jacksonville was to build three large housing towers downtown. This work drew national attention, which resulted in his going to New York to become Dean of Trinity Wall Street.

In 2013, Bishop Samuel Johnson Howard took a bus full of diocesan youth on a multi-day bus tour to educate them on the historical sites of the Civil Rights movement in our diocese. An itinerary and description of this effort is attached.

Also in 2013, the Diocese hosted the 45th Anniversary meeting and conference of the Union of Black Episcopalians.

Throughout the past 60 years, the Diocese has maintained what is perhaps the most vibrant and active prison ministry of any diocese in any denomination, anywhere. A total of over a dozen churches are open on Sundays in churches throughout the diocese, in a system where 85% of the inmates are African-American. These are fully functioning churches and not a Potemkin Village. Bishop Curry discovered this to his pleasure during his own visit to Wakulla Correctional Institution and St. Theresa Church inside in 2019.

Not content with taking care of the situation in the context of prisons, the next question is what happens when a citizen returns to the community? The founding of Operation New Hope in Jacksonville was aimed at linking jobs and returning citizens from prison. It has been wildly successful.

The Diocese has also been active in generating intellectual capital necessary to understand and implement reforms in the justice area. The Center for Accountable Justice at Florida State University has a very successful 10-year effort to generate the data to sustain efforts to change the justice system in positive directions both in Florida and nationwide.

The Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) has a very active chapter in Jacksonville, the seat of the Diocese. The Sidney B. Parker Chapter of the UBE consists of a membership from several churches in the wider Jacksonville area and the events sponsored by the chapter are often well attended by clergy and laity from churches across the city. The chapter is active at the regional and national level and a past president has served as regional director of UBE recently. Last year a UBE chapter was established in Tallahassee, the second largest city in the Diocese.

In recent years, the Bishop's Institute for Ministry and Leadership has partnered with the Father Sidney B. Parker Chapter of the UBE to provide educational opportunities to

promote racial harmony and healing. The Bishop's Institute was founded by Bishop John Howard in 2015 to co-ordinate educational ventures; formation for ordination candidates and continuing education for the clergy and lay leaders of the Diocese. It is headed by the Rev. Canon Douglas Dupree, Rector.

- In 2019, in observance of Absalom Jones Day, the UBE and the Bishop's Institute hosted a panel discussion at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Jacksonville on the theme of Becoming the Beloved Community, chaired by Ms. Alma Flowers, sometime Regional Head of the UBE. In the aftermath of this observance, the leadership team of UBE in Jacksonville took part in two Lenten programs offered by the Bishop's Institute--- the first of which was led by the Rt. Rev. Jacob Owensby, Bishop of Western Louisiana and the second by the Dr. Stephen Cherry, Dean of King's College, Cambridge who has written widely on the theology of forgiveness.

- In 2020, the same two groups partnered to host a day's workshop at St. John's Cathedral, led by Dr. Catherine Meeks, head of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing in the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta. This workshop was well supported by clergy and laity from a number of parishes.

- In 2021, due to COVID restrictions, the same two groups hosted an Absalom Jones Day observance with a panel discussion by Zoom entitled: BECOMING A BELOVED COMMUNITY BY REMEMBERING, FORGIVENESS, HEALING AND ACTION. The panel included Dr. Tammy Hodo, the Jacksonville based diversity educator who specializes in Race, Class, Gender, and Ethnicity.

A number of Episcopal laity in Jacksonville, including the Canon to the Ordinary, Allison DeFoor, has supported the Jacksonville Urban League and the League's programs to work for racial harmony and reconciliation.

The Diocesan Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida voted unanimously at a meeting in the summer of 2020 to establish a Diocesan Commission for Anti-Racism and Reconciliation (ARRC) and Bishop John Howard called together a group of clergy and laity from across the Diocese to form this commission. The commission is still in the process of defining and furthering its work for the Diocese.

In April 2021 the Diocese of Florida, the Episcopal Church of Our Saviour in Mandarin and the Bishop's Institute partnered with the Jacksonville Historical Society to host a public lecture: Scrub-Palmetto and Orange: Harriet Beecher Stowe's Florida delivered by Dr. Michelle Currie Navakas.

St. John's Cathedral and a goodly number of individual churches across the Diocese have followed the national Church curriculum encouraged by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to study and hold workshops on racial reconciliation Becoming the Beloved Community.

An account of St. John's Cathedral's Truth and Reconciliation Initiative 2020 – 2021 is found in this report by Owene Courtney, Lay Minister, in the August issue of the Bishop's Institute Newsletter for August 2021:

"Following the lead of the National Episcopal Church's Becoming Beloved Community, the Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation and justice in our personal lives, our ministries and our societies, St. John's Cathedral launched the Truth and Reconciliation Initiative in June 2020 beginning with a Faith Forum featuring an interview with Dr. Catherine Meeks and J. Chester Johnson. Dr. Meeks is the Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing and Chester Johnson is a poet and writer and most recently the author of *Damaged Heritage: The Elaine Race Massacre and A Story of Reconciliation*. Dr. Meeks and Chester Johnson discussed Johnson's book and his struggle to come to terms with his family's part in the Elaine Race Massacre, and then the conversation was opened to participants. The interview was recorded and put on the Cathedral website.

The following week, the Cathedral began a series of Truth and Reconciliation conversations moderated by Khalil Osiris, a formerly incarcerated man who has done extensive work around the world in racial healing and reconciliation. Five conversations were held, with two to three participants at each one. The men and women who participated were from various walks of life around Jacksonville, multiracial and from various socioeconomic groups. Each of the sessions was recorded and posted to our website.

In August, three Sacred Ground groups started, meeting virtually for 10 sessions. The Sacred Ground program is part of Becoming Beloved Community. At this point, the Cathedral has sponsored seven groups and out of those groups have come several long-term commitments to continue the work of racial healing and reconciliation in our community and around the country. Sacred Ground groups are extremely sensitive and confidential, so they are not recorded.

Two of the Sacred Ground groups have included members from St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Jacksonville, and conversation has begun about how to bring the two congregations together in a way that will continue the work of racial healing and reconciliation. Members from St. Philip's will be invited to the Wednesday evening offerings at the Cathedral in the fall. The Dean has begun conversations with the leadership at St. Philip's. The youth of St. Philip's and the Cathedral have been gathering on Wednesdays at the Cathedral since the beginning of the summer."

A Tallahassee lay person, Mr. Byron Greene, and his Episcopal church, St. Michael And All Angels, Tallahassee, have been actively involved in a project that was four years in the making. This project was a culmination of 45 partners consisting of religious and community organizations in the Tallahassee area. St. John's Episcopal Church, Tallahassee took the lead with St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church and First Presbyterian churches Tallahassee becoming the nucleus of the project.

The goal of the project was to acknowledge the recorded victims of lynching atrocities in the Tallahassee area. There are of course more known victims (some taken from Tallahassee to Lake City), but these are victims for which we have recorded documentation. Here is a link to the dedication of a historical marker in Tallahassee to acknowledge the recorded victims:

<https://ejournal.org/news/historical-marker-dedicated-in-tallahassee-florida/>

In sum, this diocese has been very active in this area for many, many generations. For us, the answer to “what have you been doing in this area?” is simply, for a long time and we do not anticipate changing except to increase our efforts.