

WHAT DOES IT REQUIRE OF US?

Fostering authentic and deeply-rooted transformation around race requires an understanding of the systems that uphold racism and our place in them. This involves looking critically at the systems of which we are a part, including our church and our community.

It also requires an ongoing process of personal and corporate commitment to spiritual growth, which we need in order to live into our baptismal promises.

It includes exploring our parish's history of white privilege and our individual and collective - often unexamined - attitudes and actions related to race. For white people this means addressing racial blindness, which hurts people of color - people we love.

Our desire is to live as a beloved community in every aspect of parish life, fostering loving relationships and engaging in prophetic action -- with God's help.

"THE END IS REDEMPTION"

St. Martin's has learned that racism is not something that can be planned or strategized away. Undoing racism is a community journey. It is a challenging, ongoing and sometimes painful effort in which our best intentions cry out for the grace of God and the love of Christ.

In the words of Dr. King: "...the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the Beloved Community."

FOR REFLECTION

- ***What signs of beloved community have you experienced at St. Martin's? What indicates there is still work to do?***
- ***How might the call to become beloved community impact areas where you are involved at St. Martin's?***
- ***What does the call to Become Beloved Community require of you personally - at church, at home, and at school or work?***

BECOMING BELOVED COMMUNITY AT ST. MARTIN'S

*A conversation
starter*



WHAT DOES BECOMING BELOVED COMMUNITY MEAN AT ST. MARTIN'S?

The phrase *Becoming Beloved Community* is not unique to the Church of St. Martin in-the-Fields. *Beloved Community* was an image that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. often used to describe the unifying goal of all efforts to transform poverty, injustice, racism and violence.

The Episcopal Church uses the phrase to describe the journey of racial reconciliation that it has called all of its members to embark upon.

At St. Martin's we use the phrase to describe the parish's ongoing work of inclusion, transformation and public witness aimed at undoing racism.

The full version of this document, including information about the *Becoming Beloved Community* Team, as well as the *BBC Strategic Plan*, can be found at StMartinEC.org



The commitment to *Becoming Beloved Community* flows out of our baptismal covenant: “to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being.”

It also resonates with the ritual of baptism itself, which involves dying to an old life and being raised into a new one in which we live as the *Body of Christ*.

The *Body of Christ* is another way of saying *Beloved Community*.

WHY FOCUS ON RACISM?

Why is this effort focused specifically on addressing racism? Because the wound of racial oppression in the United States was formed at the very founding of our country and has affected the development of our Episcopal Church from its earliest days.

Its effects are felt daily by people of color, who do not experience the same physical safety, economic opportunity, access to health care and legal protections as white people. Racial and ethnic disparities continue to pervade our social structures, but remain largely invisible to white people.

The practice of naming and addressing racism as a sin teaches us much about the life of repentance and reconciliation that we're called to live as people of faith.

The practice of radical welcome, hospitality, and mutuality teaches us how to live as the *Body of Christ*.