



The
EPISCOPAL CHURCH *in*
CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

29 May 2020

Dear Members of the Episcopal Church in Central Pennsylvania,

George Floyd.

This is the name of the latest victim of racial violence in our country- violence perpetrated against people of color in brutal and deadly ways, violence that without proportion targets black men- Eric Garner, Philando Castile, Michael Brown, and Alton Sterling to name a few- violence that is issued by people of authority in our culture whom we have been taught to trust, and violence that is born of institutional and systemic racism. Violence that has left still another dead man lying on the street. This is the mark of institutional racism.

Healing from the sin of systemic, institutional racism requires work that is long and deep. It begins with the painful coming to understand that all white people are responsible. We must look over our shoulders to those whom, since the dawn of this country, have divided men and women into categories of White and Other, we must look at how power structures in our nation have been built based on the color of one's skin, and we must own up to how the sins of white superiority and racial inequality have been kept alive- and grown- in all the parts of our society- in education, employment opportunities, housing, the legal system, prisons, and even in our churches.

Owning our place in the system as white people is the beginning. And changing it will be the work of several lifetimes.

Our (recent) attempts at anti-racism work in our diocese have been honest but ineffectual on a large scale; we have not reached enough people to create transformational change. The net has not been cast wide enough. We have gathered a few faithful souls who want to learn- Christians who want to create the world that the prophet Isaiah talked about where the lion and the lamb lie down together and peace reigns. We want to live like Jesus taught us, loving our neighbors as ourselves, and we look with hope to the day when the City of God will come down from heaven like a bride adorned for her husband, and we will live together, in unity, in a shining and glorious land that is marked by love. But we are not there yet. Our journey is long, the road is rough, and we need the whole company of faithful people to join. Only then will we stand a chance at transforming our corner of this world- the beautiful diocese of Central Pennsylvania- into a place where every person is valued, every person is welcomed and has opportunity, and no one needs be anxious to step outside of their home for fear of violence perpetrated against them simply because of the color of their skin.

Dismantling institutional racism is a tremendous task that involves the transformation of minds and hearts. Only when our minds have been turned and our hearts have been opened will we

be equipped with the passion and the power that is needed to change a centuries-old oppressive system.

Will you join me?

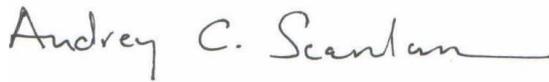
A first step is to enroll in our cost-free "*Becoming the Beloved Community*" class through the Stevenson School for Ministry. This introductory 10-week online course focuses on the sin of white supremacy and its role in creating and sustaining systemic and institutional racism. The course examines the connection between Western Christian identity, development, and white privilege in the creation of race as a means of advantaging those classified as White to the detriment of those classified as Other. Ultimately, the course examines the responsibility of communities of faith to truly demonstrate the expansive love of the Kingdom. You can register for the class at <https://diocesecpa.org/vocationalcourses/>

I will be taking the class this term and invite you to join me.

We can- through open and sincere dialogue and learning -begin the work of transformation.

Before another George Floyd, Eric Garner, Philando Castile, Michael Brown, or Alton Sterling is killed, please join me in the work to dismantle racism and to create God's dream of a peaceful, beloved community here, in the place that we call home.

In the Way of Love,



The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan
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