

**RACIAL  
JUSTICE  
AUDIT**  
*of*  
**EPISCOPAL  
LEADERSHIP**

FROM 2018 TO 2020

A Joint Venture of The Mission Institute  
and The Episcopal Church

JANUARY 2021

[www.episcopalchurch.org/racial-justice-audit](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/racial-justice-audit)



MISSION  
INSTITUTE

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH 



To those who have lost their lives to the violence of racism;

to those who have given their lives to justice;

and in memory of Diane D'Souza (1960-2020),  
founding Director of The Mission Institute.

*O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.<sup>1</sup>*

Dear Sibling in Christ,

Thank you for choosing to read this report.

This work is not ours alone. We rest on the efforts of countless saints on Earth who, for the sake of their love of God and of God's Church, have worked tirelessly to advance the cause of racial justice in their lifetimes. We rest on the efforts of all those who have known that the church is not immune to the racism in our world, and that it stings even deeper in this community of God, where all are called to be known and loved. We rest on the efforts of the abundance of lay persons, clergy people, theologians, scholars, activists, seekers, students, and others who have asked questions, looked to the margins, and sought to manifest Love more fully within this community.

To them, and to all others on whose labor our work rests, we extend a profound offering of gratitude.

In these pages you will find the culmination of nearly two years of research. This report is not an academic paper or a scientific study, but rather an attempt at conveying some of the multitudes of truths that exist in the Church. It is also an exercise in narrative recording. Christianity was born into a tradition of storytelling, passed down through generations. We participate in that tradition in these pages, conveying and interpreting the words and stories of over 1,300 Church leaders. It is an enormous privilege to be bestowed with this responsibility.

We hold an abiding belief that we are called to know not only with our minds, but also with our bodies and hearts. We invite you to step into your full being, knowing that God has bestowed each of us with wide and deep intelligences. You might take a few moments in grounding practice, or simply lift your head from these pages and take a few deep breaths, slowly and intentionally.

This report is not a destination, but rather a stepping stone on the path towards Beloved Community. Ours is the opportunity and the responsibility to be co-creators of that realm of Love, in which things that were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and...all things are being brought to their perfection. May God bless you greatly on this journey.

In God's abundant blessing,

Luke Abdow, Donna Bivens, Rev. Katie Ernst, Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Magill, and Rev. Ema Rosero-Nordalm  
*The Mission Institute*

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<sup>1</sup> [https://episcopalchurch.org/files/book-of-common-prayer-2006\\_0.pdf](https://episcopalchurch.org/files/book-of-common-prayer-2006_0.pdf)

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# BACKGROUND

The work of racial justice in The Episcopal Church is not new to this triennium or the previous, nor to the Church's current leadership. Please see the Historical Context of this Racial Audit section for a fuller account of the history of the movement towards racial justice in The Episcopal Church.

This racial audit was born out of General Convention 2015 Resolution A182: Address Systemic Racial Injustice. In this Resolution, the 78th General Convention urged, “the Executive Council to conduct its own internal audit to assess to what extent, if at all, racial disparities and systemic racial injustices exist within the Church.”<sup>2</sup>

Also in 2015, the General Convention passed Resolution C019: Work for Racial Justice and Reconciliation. In this Resolution, the Convention requested that, “the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$1.2 million for the Triennium for the implementation of this resolution.”<sup>3</sup> It also charged Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and House of Deputies President Gay Clark Jennings with leading the Church in this critical work.

Working with these two resolutions, church leadership and a host of partners birthed “Becoming Beloved Community: The Episcopal Church’s Long-Term Commitment to Racial Healing, Reconciliation, and Justice” (BBC). This vision document and related resources invited Episcopalians to approach the lifelong journey of racial healing as if walking a labyrinth that moves through four quadrants: Telling the Truth about the Church and Race, Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community, Practicing Jesus's Way of Healing Love, and Repairing the Breach in Society and Institutions.<sup>4</sup>

In 2018 the Mission Institute was contracted by the offices of the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies to complete a racial audit of Episcopal Church leadership. This audit is a response to the first discipline of Becoming Beloved Community: Telling the Truth about the Church and Race. Episcopal leadership first approached the Mission Institute about this project because of similar racial audit and research work previously conducted in the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Thus, the research completed and the subsequent report have focused on exposing truths within the Church. The central questions have been, who comprises the leadership of The Episcopal Church, and what is their experience of race and racism in their leadership roles?

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<sup>2</sup> [https://episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\\_resolution.pl?resolution=2015-A182](https://episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=2015-A182)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\\_resolution-complete.pl?resolution=2015-C019](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution-complete.pl?resolution=2015-C019). A total of \$2 million was ultimately allocated and later spread across two triennia.

<sup>4</sup> [https://episcopalchurch.org/files/becoming\\_beloved\\_community\\_summary\\_0.pdf](https://episcopalchurch.org/files/becoming_beloved_community_summary_0.pdf)

# PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The goal of this research has not been to determine whether or not systemic racism exists in The Episcopal Church, but rather to examine its effects and the dynamics by which it is maintained in the Church structure. It was critical to approach this objective with openness, rather than starting with pre-existing assumptions and conclusions. To this end, we have employed the guiding tools of grounded theory<sup>5</sup> and the theoretical framework of critical race theory<sup>6</sup>.

This racial audit has attempted to magnify the voices of People of Color<sup>7</sup> (POC) in the Church, while also maintaining a spotlight on the systems and structures created and maintained by the white dominant culture<sup>8,9</sup>.

This research is situated in a particular moment in the history of the Church, and in the sociopolitical realities of the world. It attempts to offer a snapshot of the truth of race and racism in The Episcopal Church from 2018 to 2020. Any claims made in these pages come with an understanding that, as our communities and institutions change and evolve, so must our tactics in the pursuit of justice and liberation.

While statistics are important to this research and speak to some truth about the state of the Church, they do not tell the entire story. In particular, statistics can work to mask People of Color's experience, by transforming human reality into a set of numbers that privileges majorities and averages. The researchers maintained a commitment in their methodology to looking towards the margins and hearing stories. This is motivated in part by a biblically grounded belief in the power and truth of storytelling, and its importance in the process of telling the truth about the Church and race.

The audit was conducted in two sections: a survey tool, to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, and a series of interviews, to collect additional qualitative data. These two distinct data collection tools were used with different leadership bodies of The Episcopal Church: the House of Bishops, the House of Deputies, the Executive Council, staff of the Episcopal Church Center, and leaders from a sampling of dioceses from across the denomination, including several in Latin America.

The surveys were designed by a multi-racial team and were offered in both Spanish and English. The surveys were designed by the Mission Institute, and then edited in consultation with The Episcopal Church's Racial Reconciliation staff team and with leaders in each of the bodies to be surveyed, primarily for matters that concerned the ecclesial authority and particularities of each body. The surveys were released to the appropriate bodies successively by the Racial Reconciliation staff team, with an invitation letter from either or

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<sup>5</sup> For more information on grounded theory, see Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*.

<sup>6</sup> In short, critical race theory is a social and theoretical framework that understands race as a lens through which to seek understanding of the world. It insists, like critical theory at large, that social problems are created by structures and institutions, rather than by individuals. Numerous scholars have contributed to the work of critical race theory, including Derrick Bell, Kimberle Williams Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, and others.

<sup>7</sup> The phrase People of Color was intentionally chosen to describe a group of diverse people who do not identify as white. There was considerable conversation by the researchers on whether People of Color or Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) should be used. Please see the *Tensions* and *Glossary of Terms* sections for more reasoning.

<sup>8</sup> Refer to the *Tensions* section to explore why the researchers chose to not capitalize white and to capitalize Black and People of Color.

<sup>9</sup> Throughout this report, the terms “white dominant culture”, “white dominating culture”, and “white supremacy culture” are used interchangeably. We have chosen to favor white dominant/dominating culture to more accurately try to describe what is taking place: an active dominating of other peoples and cultures. Whichever phrase is used is trying to convey the same principle. Please see the *Glossary of Terms* for a definition.



both the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies, depending on the particular leadership body.

Regarding the representative sampling of dioceses, *three dioceses in each of the Church's nine provinces* were initially invited. The dioceses were selected in close consultation with the Church Pension Group, giving careful attention to a range of factors, including diocesan size, geographic location, socioeconomic environment, urban and rural contexts, and more. Within each diocese, surveys were sent to members of the diocesan staff, Diocesan Council, Trustees, Commission on Ministry, Standing Committee, or the equivalent bodies. After some adjustment due to participation rates, the following group of dioceses actually participated in the survey and interview process:

Arizona	Minnesota
California	Mississippi
Central New York	North Carolina
Colombia	Northern Michigan
Colorado	Northwest Pennsylvania
Connecticut	San Joaquin
Convocation of Churches in Europe (volunteered)	South Dakota
Honduras	Southeast Florida
Indianapolis	Southern Virginia
Kansas	Spokane
Long Island	Texas
Los Angeles	Vermont
Maryland	Western Massachusetts
Milwaukee	Western New York

Across the previously named churchwide leadership bodies and also in the above dioceses, the survey was sent to nearly 3,000 people. In total, 1,326 individuals completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 45%.<sup>10</sup>

The survey addresses a variety of demographic categories, including race, age, order of ministry, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class background, current socioeconomic class, education, and ability. These data provide important insight into the makeup of Church leadership. The survey also asked a number of questions about experience with racism and other forms of discrimination, both personally and as a witness.

Upon completion of the survey, participants were invited to express their willingness to participate in an interview with a team from the Mission Institute. This self-selection was digitally separate from the survey itself, thus maintaining the anonymity of survey respondents. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, interview teams from the Mission Institute traveled to gatherings of three of the five leadership bodies researched: the meeting of the House of Bishops in Minneapolis on September 2019, the meeting of the Executive Council in Montgomery, Alabama, in October 2019, and The Episcopal Church offices in New York City in December 2019. After the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, interviews were transferred to Zoom, and conducted by a two-person team from the Mission Institute. The diocesan leadership interviews were conducted on Zoom. Interviews with members of the House of Deputies were also taken from research of a similar nature previously conducted by the Mission Institute at the meeting of the General Convention in 2018. This decision was made in consultation with the Church's Racial Reconciliation staff.

<sup>10</sup> See “Beloved Community, Who Are We?” for a more detailed breakdown of response rates by leadership body.

When self-selecting to be interviewed, participants only shared their name, location, and whether or not they identified as a Person of Color. More people self-selected to be interviewed than were able to be interviewed. In selecting interviewees, the Mission Institute placed an emphasis on maintaining racial diversity.

Interviews were intended to surface stories and patterns about race and racism across the Church, as well as difficult or surprising truths. Interviews lasted for 45-60 minutes. Relying on grounded theory, the interviews posed open-ended questions. The researchers' goal was not to impose their own understandings of systemic racism, but to listen deeply and get a sense of how each individual understands racism and its meaning for the Church. They invited participants to reflect upon how they understood and defined racism, and where they saw it playing a role within their Church leadership context.

Aspects of grounded theory, community-based participatory research practices, and complex adaptive systems theory supported the analysis of the collected data. Foundational theological statements of The Episcopal Church, such as the Baptismal Covenant and the Catechism, also helped to guide the analysis. The initial raw data collected by the survey tool were presented to a group of colleagues from across The Episcopal Church; the insights and discussions informed the analytical directions of the research team. Certain stratifications of the data proved particularly useful and insightful, including stratifying by race, order of ministry, and leadership body.

The Mission Institute team used the tool of adaptive action<sup>11</sup> to see and understand data from the interviews and the write-in, descriptive sections of the survey. This included going through the qualitative data, paying attention to what showed up most often, rather than what was interesting to the researchers. Over 50 patterns emerged, and these were narrowed to a group of nine of the most frequent and dominant patterns. The team proceeded to ask certain questions about the patterns:

- How do these patterns show up?
- Why might these patterns exist?
- What do the patterns reveal about who has access to key decision-making and power and who does not?
- Where might previous patterns possibly be changing?
- What claims might we make about the church in response to these data?
- What questions are we left with?
- What are the theological implications of these data?

To come to a deeper understanding of what was emerging, a number of resources and conceptual frameworks proved useful. Please see the *Dominant Patterns: Frameworks and Theories* section for further details.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information on adaptive action, see <https://www.hsdinstitute.org/resources/adaptive-action.html>

# THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Hope is forged out of the biblical call to dig deep into our innards to tell the truth of what we see, feel, hear, and experience. And it reminds us that we must always show up in the face of relentless evil, particularly in such times when it appears so normal and natural in our midst.<sup>12</sup>

We are not alone. We do not come to this place out of nowhere. We have our ancestors, our traditions, our stories, our rituals, our sacraments, our enfleshed God made known through Jesus, and we have our collective hope. Theologically speaking, hope is complicated. Hope, especially in white dominant spaces, has been used to soothe weary souls; it has been used to escape painful realities; it has been used as a promise to pacify truth tellers and prophets. It has also been used as an agent of transformation, resilience, and the promise of God's faithfulness. The latter is the hope we seek to move from and lift up in the following pages.

Hope is paradoxical in nature. While we must hope, we are afraid to hope. Hope is full of possibilities and yet brimming with dangers. Hope interrupts the mundane and the comfortable while protesting prophetic fury. Hope is that which scares us and yet prepares us to confront the atrocities of life.<sup>13</sup>

It is from this paradoxical place that we speak of hope. It is hope filled with tension. The women who followed Jesus knew it well. With him, they experienced hope in the flesh - a hope that performed miracles, fed thousands, healed the sick, and raised the dead. It was a hope rooted in the promises of God's providence and deliverance out of bondage and death. Hope enabled the women to watch and sit at the foot of our crucified God, who was their child, their friend, and their family. Being with Jesus in his life, practicing a discipline of hope,<sup>14</sup> prepared them to stay near to the pain of suffering and death. It was this discipline and promise that propelled them to the tomb, to tend and care for Jesus' body. Once there, the women yet again witnessed the promise that life conquers death, love casts out fear, and another reality is possible.

With their yearning cries of lament and hope and cries for freedom and redemption - they created a bridge that extended back to the cries of Hagar and Hannah, to Deborah and Moses, to Job and John the Baptist. The bridge propels forward to the cries of Mamie Till<sup>15</sup>, and mothers separated from their children at the U.S.-Mexico border, to Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr., to Ida B. Wells and Verna Dozier. We hear the cries and the hopes today in the voices of those who fill the street seeking justice and in the silence of the breaking of the bread.

The same hope brings us, the Church, to this moment and this racial justice audit. Taking a cue from the women who surrounded Jesus in his life, death, and resurrection, we turn and face the reality of injustice and liberation in our midst. The women at the cross not only resided with Jesus in his pain, they also shone a light on the tools of empire, evil, and sin that killed him. Likewise, the following pages lift up personal stories of racial injustice and harm done and felt in the Church, and they also point us to the very system (practices, behaviors, and values) that perpetuates harm and white supremacy. The women were rooted in love for Jesus, the one with whom they had experienced power, miracles, dignity, and transformation. So too the stories you will read speak of power, leadership, and joy even in the face of difficult truths.

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<sup>12</sup> Townes, E. M. (1970, January 01). "Lament and Hope: Defying This Hot Mess." Retrieved November 23, 2020, from <https://reflections.yale.edu/article/resistance-and-blessing-women-ministry-and-yds/lament-and-hope-defying-hot-mess>.

<sup>13</sup> Crawford, A. E. (2002). *Hope in the holler: A womanist theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

<sup>14</sup> An idea inspired by Prison-Industrial Complex abolitionist Mariame Kaba

<sup>15</sup> Mother of Emmett Till, a Black teen lynched in 1955

Hope empowers us to keep on keeping on, even in the face of disappointment. It gives us strength and yet exposes us to vulnerability. Hope charges us to risk something for the sake of transformed life for ourselves and our communities. Hope refuses to acquiesce to the status quo or powers that be by answering life with life.<sup>16</sup>

Hope, known through Jesus, began when Mary felt her child, soon to be born out of wedlock, leap inside of her. Hope began in the dirt-filled manger, amidst the animals, to a family on the run seeking refuge. Hope continued to cry out through Jesus's tears at the news of his friend's death. It was manifested in the Syrophenician women challenging Jesus and in Jesus changing his mind. Hope was made known with every loving and truth-filled challenge of the empire and local religious officials. It poured out through Jesus's lament in Gethsemane as his disciples slept. Hope was manifested in the women at the cross and in Thomas's doubt. Hope is enfleshed in death not having the final word. Hope charges us to risk something for the sake of a transformed life for ourselves and our communities.

It is our sincere longing that you will hear these stories from a place of paradoxical and tension-filled hope. This report is hope in the flesh. Among these stories you will discover power and beauty. There is pain and rage. There are examples of transformed systems and systems doing harm. Deep, abiding joy and love are woven throughout. May our hope create a bridge that extends back into ancestral times and extends forward into a transformed reality yet to be known, a beloved community we create together.

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<sup>16</sup> Crawford, 2002

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THIS RACIAL JUSTICE AUDIT

Episcopalians of Color have been, in one way or another, fighting and demanding that the institution and white leaders recognize their dignity and gifts since the establishment of The Episcopal Church. However, the first formal resolution brought to the Convention floor instructing the Church to look into internal issues of racial justice occurred in 1958, asking Episcopalians to “work actively to eliminate racial discrimination in the life of our Church...”<sup>17</sup> Since then many pastoral letters, various trainings, and resolutions have been published, funded, and voted on. As a result, leaders have engaged a host of actions, including designing anti-racist programs, exploring and implementing policies that prioritize the hire and appointment of People of Color, and speaking honestly about how Native American communities, Black communities, and Asian communities experience racism.

In 1991 a racism audit was conducted of nearly 1,500 bishops, deputies, Episcopal Church Women delegates, and visitors. The audit concluded that a clear pattern of institutional racism existed at every level of the Church.<sup>18</sup> This realization led the Presiding Bishop at the time to request that all resolutions on racism be prioritized, resulting in the following resolutions:

- 1991-A085 Instruct Interim Bodies to Examine Effects of Forms of Discrimination
- 1991-D113 Address Institutional Church Racism in the Next Three Triennia
- 1991-A199 Urge Each Diocese to Conduct an Audit on Institutional Racism
- 1991-D043 Urge Dioceses to Commit to Ending Racism
- 1991-A082 Require Racial and Ethnic Representation on Interim Bodies
- 1991-A090 Reduce Discrimination in Clergy Deployment
- 1991-B051 Call for the Removal of Racism from the Life of the Nation

A pastoral letter declaring racism a sin was sent out by the House of Bishops in 1994. In response a new covenant addressing racism was adopted by the 1994 Convention. Even with all this momentum, these initiatives were not implemented churchwide, resulting in a rather dispirited recommitment in 1997. The 2000 General Convention renewed a commitment to addressing racism for another triennium. In 2006 the Executive Council was tasked to develop study material, resulting in the *Seeing the Face of God in Each Other* manual. Dioceses were encouraged to look at the legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery and the ways The Episcopal Church and its many institutions benefited from slavery. By 2009 churchwide efforts to address racism stalled, in part because of budget and staff cuts that made it difficult to sustain the program. Recommitment to training and the effects of racism was affirmed in 2012.

Between the General Conventions in 2015 and 2018, more than 25 Acts of Convention addressed various forms of racism and engagement in anti-racism work. These covered areas like police violence, incarceration, youth curricula, reconciliation, internal audit, immigration, and environmental racism. As mentioned in the *Background* section, our mandate to conduct this racial justice audit came from the 2015 Resolutions A182 and C019. Situating the current racial justice audit in this context reveals a few patterns.

1. Mandates and resolutions addressing internal racism have been consistent for over 60 years.
2. Even though we have come far in addressing racism within the Church, we still have a long way to go.
3. Finally, our approach to addressing racism has overwhelmingly been one of education and eradication.

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<sup>17</sup>[https://www.episcopalarchives.org/sites/default/files/anti-racism/anti-racism-training/ResRep\\_Anti-RacismTraining\\_AEC03202015.pdf](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/sites/default/files/anti-racism/anti-racism-training/ResRep_Anti-RacismTraining_AEC03202015.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

This last pattern is not bad in and of itself; however it is clear that white supremacy and racism are embedded in the history and DNA of The Episcopal Church. The history of engaging this work beckons us to engage going forward in a way that is systematic and non-linear, and in a way that moves beyond education and formation. Further exploration of next steps and recommendations are addressed in the *Where Do We Go from Here* section of the report.

# BELOVED COMMUNITY: WHO ARE WE?

Below is a summary of the quantitative data collected in the survey. As you read this section, consider the following questions:

- What stands out to you? What is important in these data?
- What questions does it leave you with?
- What patterns do you see?
- What are the implications of these data for racial justice work? For The Episcopal Church as a whole?

## Response Rate

The overall response rate to the survey was 45%. The breakdown of the different leadership bodies was as follows:

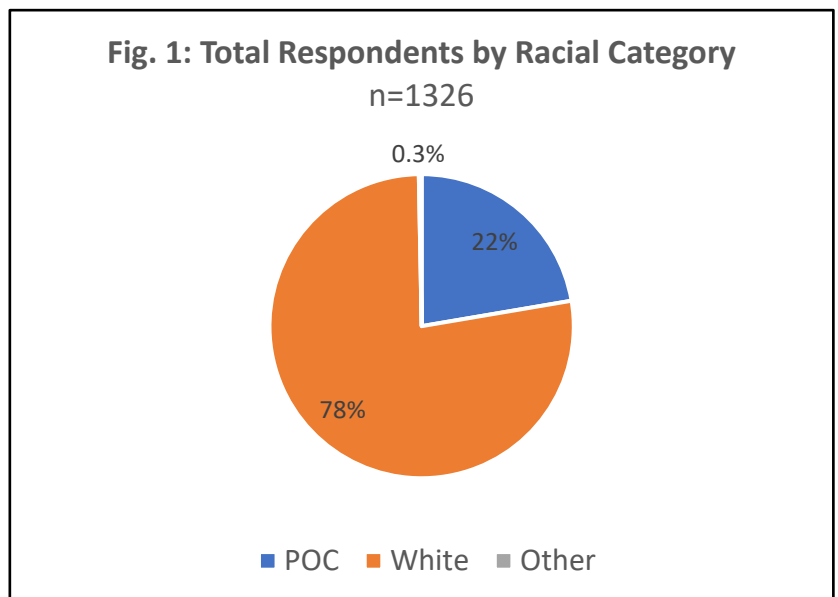
- House of Bishops had a 32% response rate
- House of Deputies had a 26% response rate
- Executive Council had a 78% response rate
- The Episcopal Church Center Staff had a 51% response rate
- Diocesan Leadership - which included members of Diocesan Staff, Standing Committees, Commissions on Ministry, Trustees, Diocesan Councils or the equivalent bodies in a total of 27 dioceses - had an average response rate of 60%

## Overarching Demographics

### Race

The survey respondents are predominantly white: 77% identify as white and 22% as People of Color (see Figure 1).<sup>19</sup> There is a vast racial diversity within leaders of Color who responded (see Figure 2). When asked which racial identifies they hold, leaders of Color selected<sup>20</sup>:

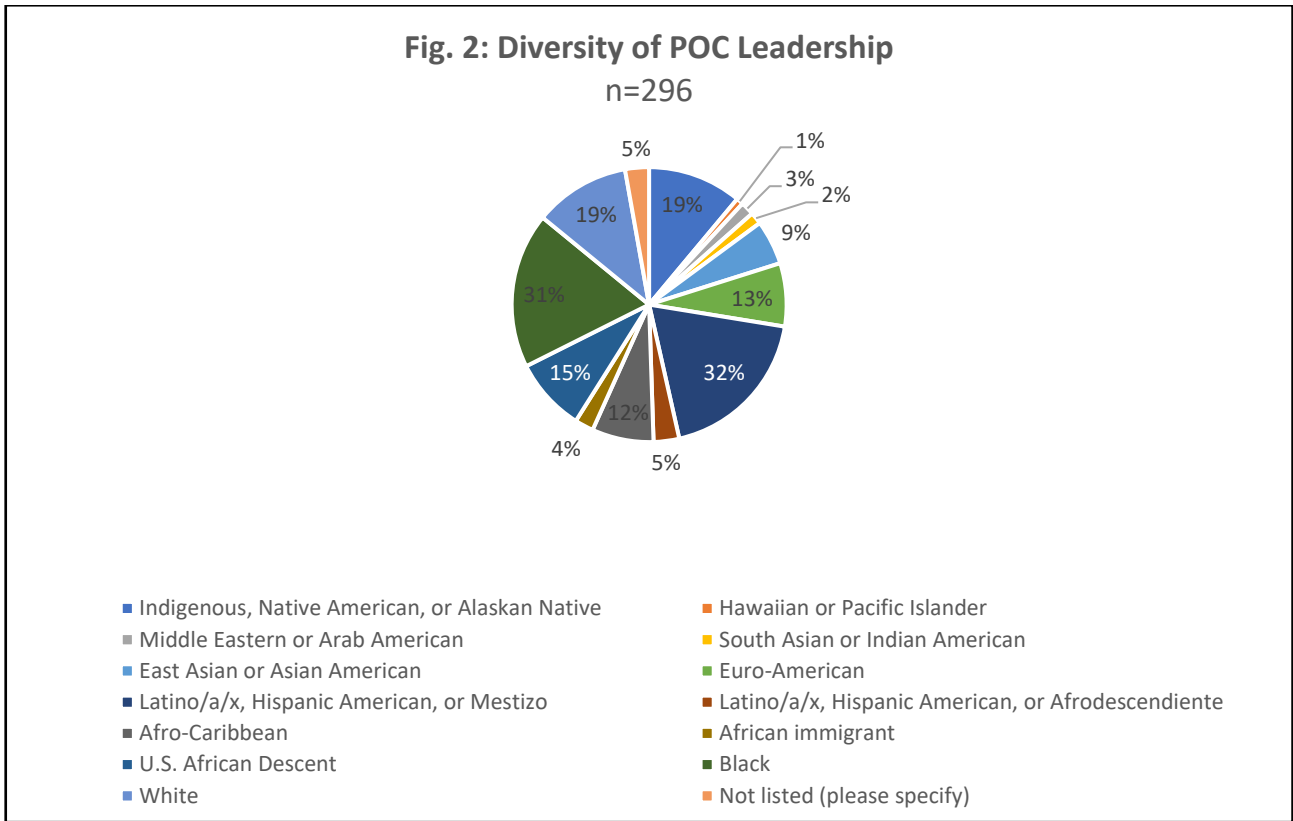
- Latino/a/x, Hispanic American, Mestizo or Afrodescendiente (37%)
- Black (31%)
- U.S. African Descent (15%)
- Afro-Caribbean (12%)
- African Immigrant (4%)
- Indigenous, Native American, or Alaskan Native (19%)
- East Asian or Asian American (9%)
- South Asian or Indian American (2%)
- Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (1%)
- Middle Eastern or Arab American (3%)
- Euro-American or white (31%)



<sup>19</sup> Around 1% of respondents did not identify as either People of Color or white, thus the total does not add up to 100%.

<sup>20</sup> Respondents were asked to select all choices with which they identify. The percentages will not add up to 100 because many people selected multiple responses.

Therefore, leadership of Color is not a monolith; it holds complexity, particularity, and diversity within itself.





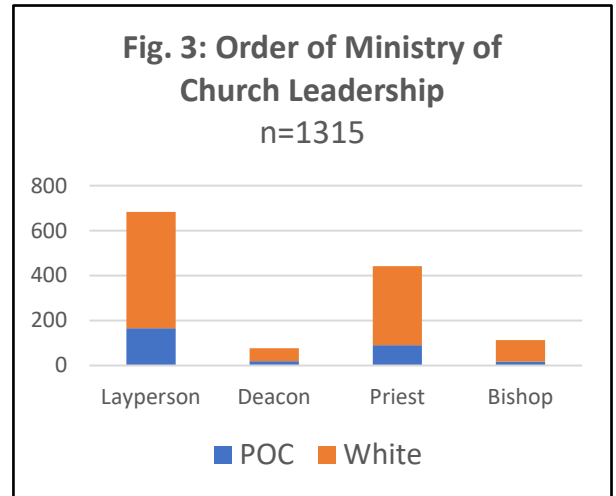
## Order of Ministry

Leadership is shared by lay persons and clergy. Some 49% of the leaders who took the survey identify as members of the clergy (6% Deacon, 34% Priest, 9% Bishop) and 51% as laypeople. If you break this leadership down by race, more white people are in seats of power and paid ministry, while People of Color are somewhat over-represented in volunteer, less advantaged roles (see Figure 3).

→ Breakdown by race overall:

- ◆ Lay: 24% People of Color // 76% white
- ◆ Deacon: 24% People of Color // 74% white
- ◆ Priest: 20% People of Color // 80% white
- ◆ Bishop: 16% People of Color // 84% white

Another trend is that - of the group that responded to the survey – lay leaders of Color make up a higher proportion of all leaders of Color (57%) than white lay leaders do of all white leaders (51%). In other words, leadership of Color skews towards lay leadership, whereas white leadership is closer to an even distribution of leaders who are clergy and laity. This might have implications, as ordained leadership often has greater formal and informal power in the Church, and usually includes financial compensation and greater agency.



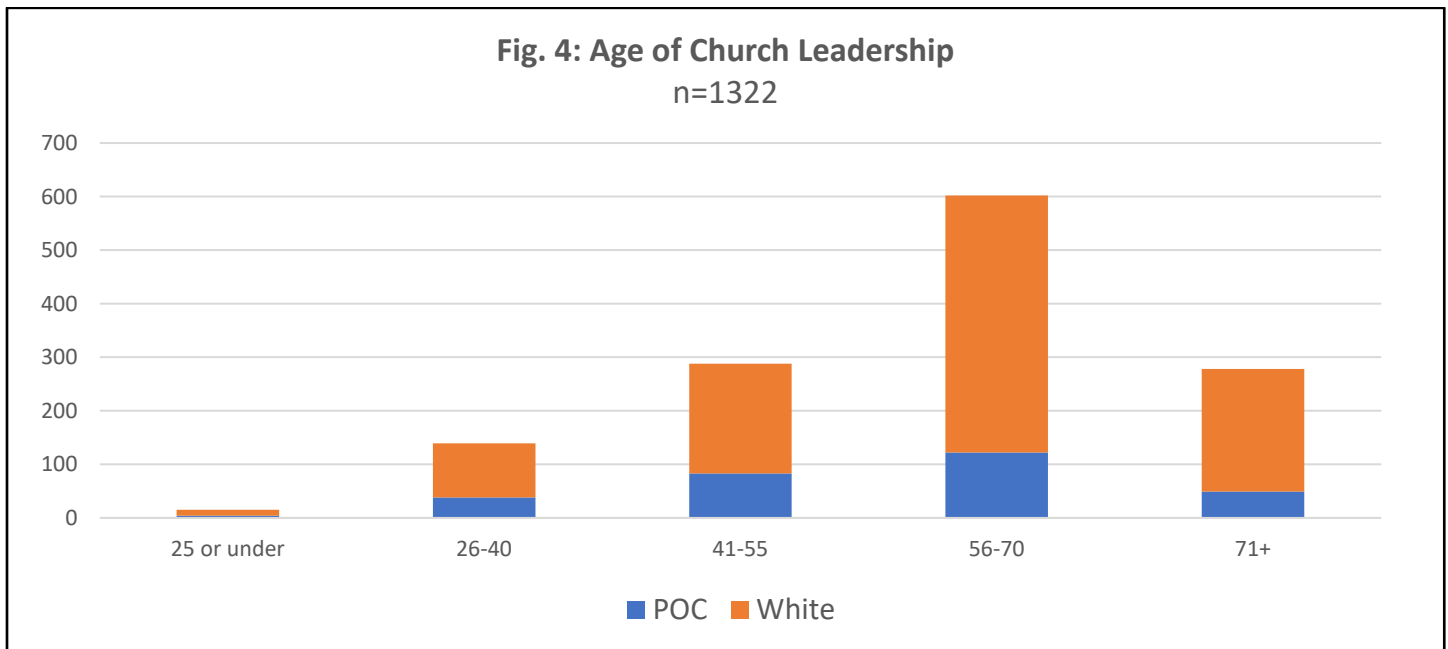
## Age

The respondents are predominantly 56-70 year olds (45%), followed by those older than 71 (21%) and 41-55 year olds (21%). Ten percent of the leadership is between 26-40 years of age. Around 1% of leadership who responded to the survey falls below the age of 25 (see Figure 4).

→ Breakdown by race:

- ◆ 25 and under: 27% People of Color // 73% white
- ◆ 26-40: 27% People of Color // 72% white
- ◆ 41-55: 29% People of Color // 71% white
- ◆ 56-70: 20% People of Color // 80% white
- ◆ 71+: 18% People of Color // 82% white

Furthermore, we see that leadership of Color skews younger, with 48% of leaders of Color being under 55, as compared to 31% of white leaders.



## Gender

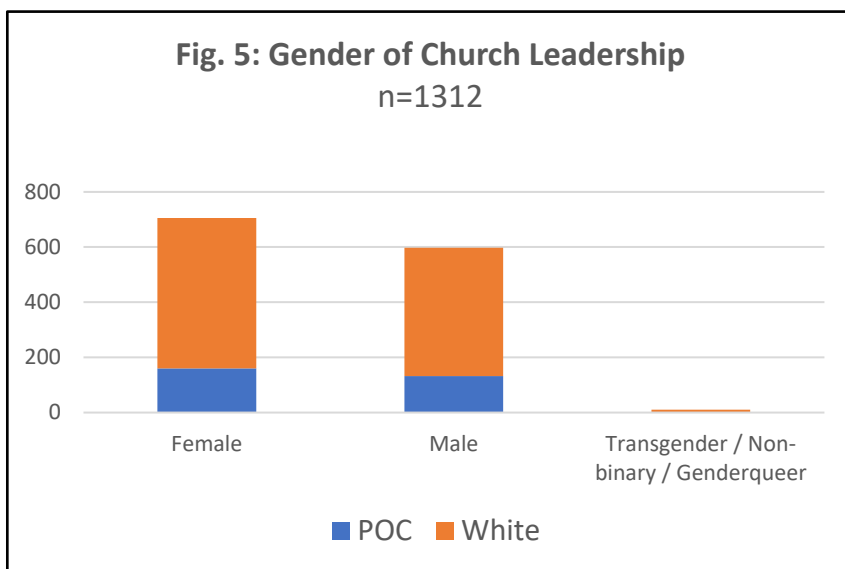
The leaders who responded lean slightly heavily towards female at 54%, with 46% identifying as male. Only .76% identify as transgender, non-binary, or genderqueer. When looking at the breakdown by race, the difference remains relatively static (see Figure 5).

- People of Color:
  - ◆ 55% female
  - ◆ 45% male
- White:
  - ◆ 53% female
  - ◆ 46% male
  - ◆ 1% trans, non-binary, genderqueer

When looking at the individual breakdown of gender representation by leadership bodies, some statistics stand out. Executive Council and Episcopal Church Center staff appear to have a higher percentage of female members. The House of Bishops stands out, as only 20% of respondents are female, which is 33% less than the average across total surveyed leadership. Therefore, even though females represent a majority in most leadership bodies, they are drastically underrepresented in the House of Bishops.

- Breakdown by leadership body:
  - ◆ Dioceses: 56% female // 43% // .79% transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer
  - ◆ Executive Council: 62% female // 39% male // 0% transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer
  - ◆ Episcopal Church Center staff: 62% female // 33% male // 3% transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer
  - ◆ House of Deputies: 52% female // 47% male // .44% transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer
  - ◆ House of Bishops: 20% female // 79% male // 0% transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer

When looking at gender breakdown between lay and ordained leadership, males make up a higher percentage of ordained leaders, with 10% more ordained males than ordained females. Lay leadership has a higher percentage of females than males; lay females make up a 25% larger share of the total surveyed leadership. It appears that gender representation skews more male as one moves into traditional places of power, financial resources, and agency (ordained ministry overall and particularly bishops).



- Breakdown between lay and ordained:
  - ◆ Lay: 62% female // 37% male // 1% transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer
  - ◆ Ordained: 45% female // 55% male // .48% transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer

### **Sexual Orientation**

Overall, the leadership bodies of The Episcopal Church are predominately straight, with 87% of respondents identifying as straight/heterosexual and 13% identifying as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer). There is a slight increase of straight/heterosexual representation in leadership of Color, with 89% identifying as straight and 11% identifying as LGBTQ.

→ Breakdown by race:

- ◆ Lesbian/Gay/Homosexual/Bisexual/Queer (13% of total): 18% People of Color // 82% white
- ◆ Straight/Heterosexual (87%): 23% People of Color // 77% white

### **Level of Education**

Of Episcopal Church leaders who responded to the survey, 69% have a master's or doctoral degree and 22% have bachelor's degrees. When looking at the breakdown by race, we see that 57% of leaders who are People of Color have master's or doctoral degrees compared to 73% of white leadership.

→ Breakdown by race:

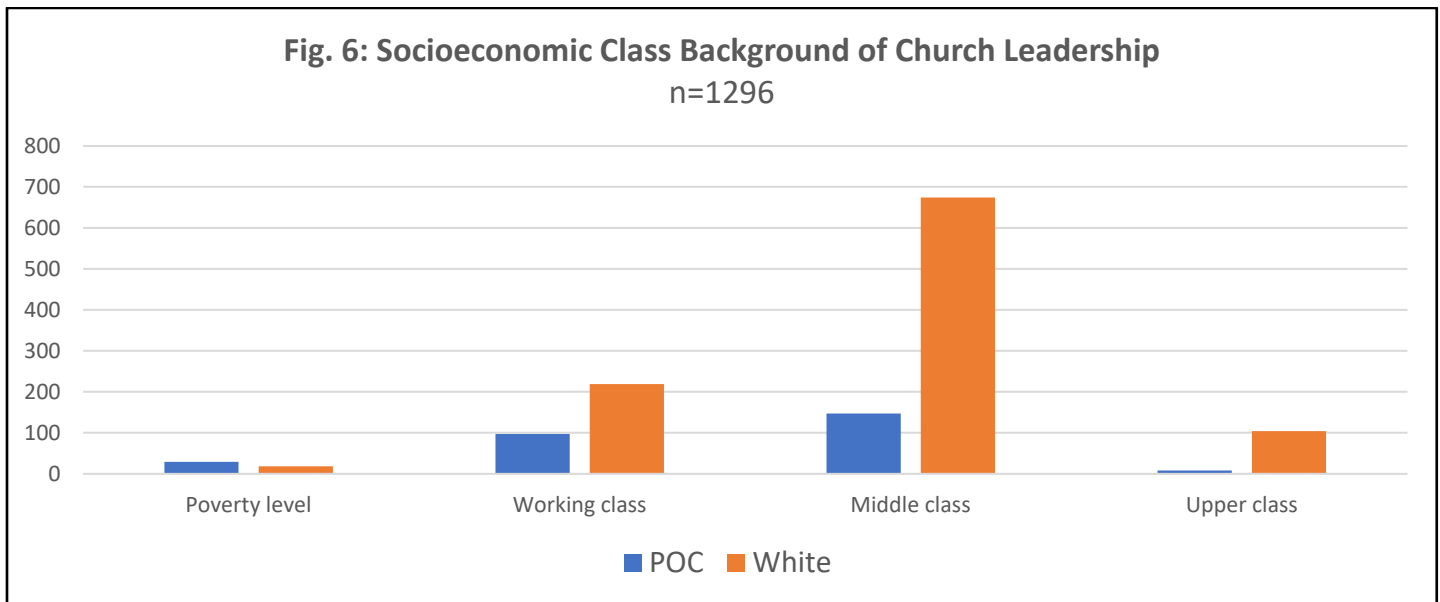
- ◆ High school diploma or equivalent (1% of total): 33% People of Color // 67% white
- ◆ Trade/technical/vocational training (1%): 40% People of Color // 60% white
- ◆ Some college (5%): 31% People of Color // 69% white
- ◆ Associate's degree (2%): 36% People of Color // 64% white
- ◆ Bachelor's degree (22%): 30% People of Color // 70% white
- ◆ Master's degree (52%): 19% People of Color // 80% white
- ◆ Doctorate (18%): 16% People of Color // 84% white

### Socioeconomic Class Background

Of Church leaders who responded to the survey, 63% self-identify as having grown up middle class. 82% of those who grew up middle class are white and 18% are People of Color. Overall, only 4% of Church leaders self-identified as having grown up in poverty. Leaders of Color makeup 62% percent and white people make up 38% of those who identified as having grown up in poverty. There is a general downward trend of representation of People of Color in higher socioeconomic classes (see Figure 6).

→ Breakdown by race:

- ◆ Poverty level (4% of total): 62% People of Color // 38% white
- ◆ Working Class (24%): 31% People of Color // 69% white
- ◆ Middle Class (63%): 18% People of Color // 82% white
- ◆ Upper Class (9%): 7% People of Color // 92% white



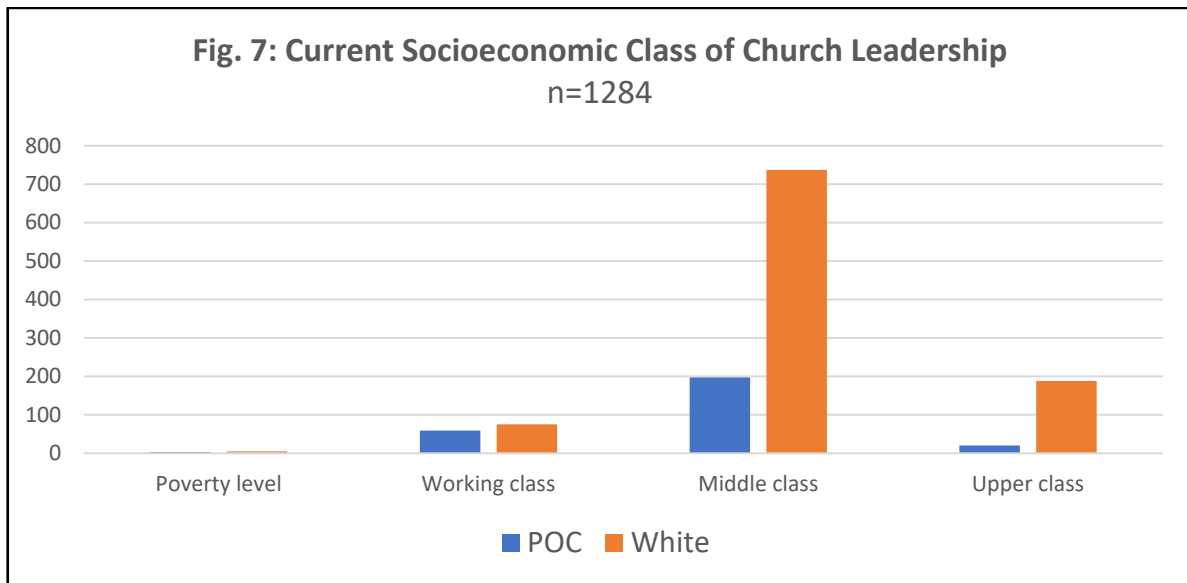
### Current Socioeconomic Class

72% of The Episcopal Church leadership surveyed *currently* identifies as middle class, 9% more than identify as having been raised middle class. There is a general trend overall and also within People of Color and white people of upward mobility. However, there is a higher percentage of People of Color who are currently working class, making up 43%, while 21% of People of Color identify in the middle class. In other words, 2 of 10 survey respondents who identify currently in the middle class are People of Color. Furthermore only 1 out of 10 people who identify as upper class are People of Color.

When we look at socioeconomic class difference within racial groups, we see that the majority of People of Color identify as middle class (71%). The same is true for white people, the majority of whom identify as middle class (73%). Of leadership of Color, 21% place themselves in the working class compared to 7% of white people. Further, 7% of leadership of Color place themselves in the upper class category, compared to 19% of white leaders. Therefore, it appears that white people skew towards higher socioeconomic class categories and People of Color skew towards lower socioeconomic class categories (see Figure 7).

#### → Breakdown by race

- ◆ Poverty Level (.62% of total): 37.5% People of Color // 62% white
- ◆ Working Class (10%): 43.7% People of Color // 56% white
- ◆ Middle Class (73%): 21.05% People of Color // 79% white
- ◆ Upper Class (16%): 9.62% People of Color // 90% white



## **Immigration and Family History**

Of leaders of Color who responded to the survey, 34% were not born in the US, representing 58% of total leadership born outside of the US. Also amongst leaders of Color, 60% were born in the US, representing 16% of total leadership born in the US. These data demonstrate that a high proportion of leaders born outside of the US are People of Color. Simultaneously, leaders of Color born in the US represent a small proportion of total leaders born in the US, when compared to the proportion of leaders of Color overall.

It is important to note here that The Episcopal Church is an international denomination, and leaders were surveyed from across all nine Provinces, including some dioceses located outside of the US. Of respondents who live in dioceses outside of the US, 62% are People of Color. Of those who immigrated to the US during their lifetime, 66% are People of Color.

In total, 28% of leaders of Color surveyed either do not live in the US or immigrated to the US after birth (14% do not live in the US, and 15% immigrated after birth). This is compared with 5% of white leaders who either do not live in the US or immigrated to the US after birth. Overall among leaders of Color, 60% were born in the US. Among white leaders, 92% were born in the US. The data show that People of Color in Episcopal leadership are a diverse group both racially and geographically. The high percentage of leaders of Color who live outside the US or are immigrants to the US is significant, as the Church charts the path forward towards Beloved Community.

## **Definition of Race**

Within Episcopal leadership, 41% of respondents define race as a combination of biology/genetics, physical characteristics, human made categories of people, and ethnicity or culture. Amongst the overall leadership, 20% define race solely as biology/genetics. Similarly, 21% define race solely as a human made category. Notably, a higher percentage of white people (24%) define race as a human-made category, as compared to only 12% of People of Color who define it that way.

## **Definition of Racism**

Overall, 77% of The Episcopal Church leadership surveyed define racism as a combination of racial prejudice or discrimination, a system that grants power to one social group, and racialized violence or hatred. The vast majority of Episcopal leadership appears to share the same definition of racism. This is crucial and shows that leadership can clearly define the complexity of racism both systemically and interpersonally. Often a foundational barrier to the work of anti-racism is the basic differences of understanding/defining racism. This shows that, at least intellectually, Church leaders have a similar understanding of racism.



## Experiencing Discrimination

**To what extent have you experienced the following things in your time as a Church leader?  
(all respondents)**

	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently
<i>You were treated with less courtesy or respect than other Church leaders.</i>	778 // 62%	434 // 34%	49 // 4%
<i>You did not feel supported in your ministry and leadership.</i>	809 // 64%	381 // 30%	68 // 5%
<i>You received feedback on how you speak, dress, or interact with people.</i>	954 // 76%	272 // 22%	35 // 3%
<i>People acted as if they thought you were not smart.</i>	962 // 77%	263 // 21%	32 // 3%
<i>People acted as if they were afraid of you.</i>	1044 // 83%	198 // 16%	17 // 1%
<i>People acted as if they thought you were dishonest.</i>	1147 // 91%	100 // 8%	12 // 1%
<i>People did not have knowledge about or were not curious about your culture and context.</i>	805 // 64%	351 // 28%	97 // 8%
<i>You were called names or insulted.</i>	1140 // 91%	100 // 8%	17 // 1%
<i>You were intimidated, harassed, or suppressed.</i>	1078 // 86%	151 // 12%	25 // 2%
<i>People acted as if you knew less about finances.</i>	979 // 78%	228 // 18%	46 // 4%

**To what extent have you experienced the following things in your time as a Church leader?  
(People of Color only)**

	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently
<i>You were treated with less courtesy or respect than other Church leaders.</i>	166 // 60%	98 // 36%	12 // 4%
<i>You did not feel supported in your ministry and leadership.</i>	175 // 64%	76 // 28%	21 // 8%
<i>You received feedback on how you speak, dress, or interact with people.</i>	196 // 71%	70 // 25%	9 // 3%
<i>People acted as if they thought you were not smart.</i>	193 // 71%	67 // 25%	11 // 4%
<i>People acted as if they were afraid of you.</i>	225 // 82%	43 // 16%	6 // 2%
<i>People acted as if they thought you were dishonest.</i>	237 // 87%	29 // 11%	7 // 3%
<i>People did not have knowledge about or were not curious about your culture and context.</i>	120 // 44%	113 // 42%	39 // 14%
<i>You were called names or insulted.</i>	245 // 90%	23 // 8%	4 // 1%
<i>You were intimidated, harassed, or suppressed.</i>	228 // 84%	36 // 13%	7 // 3%
<i>People acted as if you knew less about finances.</i>	197 // 73%	59 // 22%	15 // 6%

**To what extent have you experienced the following things in your time as a Church leader?  
(white people only)**

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Frequently</b>
<i>You were treated with less courtesy or respect than other Church leaders.</i>	626 // 64%	319 // 33%	36 // 4%
<i>You did not feel supported in your ministry and leadership.</i>	649 // 66%	288 // 29%	45 // 5%
<i>You received feedback on how you speak, dress, or interact with people.</i>	761 // 77%	195 // 20%	26 // 3%
<i>People acted as if they thought you were not smart.</i>	779 // 79%	182 // 19%	21 // 2%
<i>People acted as if they were afraid of you.</i>	817 // 83%	154 // 16%	10 // 1%
<i>People acted as if they thought you were dishonest.</i>	911 // 93%	66 // 7%	5 // 1%
<i>People did not have knowledge about or were not curious about your culture and context.</i>	692 // 71%	231 // 24%	54 // 6%
<i>You were called names or insulted.</i>	898 // 92%	71 // 7%	11 // 1%
<i>You were intimidated, harassed, or suppressed.</i>	855 // 87%	107 // 11%	17 // 2%
<i>People acted as if you knew less about finances.</i>	782 // 80%	167 // 17%	29 // 3%

**Some highlights:**

- Overall, 43% of leaders of Color cite race, ethnicity, or national origin as the main reason for their experience. This is compared with white leaders who attribute their experience primarily to gender or sex (30%) or age (12%) but less so their race (11%).
- Even though white people do not generally attribute these experiences to race or ethnicity, it is worth exploring the frequency at which white people experience discrimination. This context of occasional and frequent discrimination is important in considering how the white dominant culture of the Church sets norms, enforces behavior, and maintains power structures.
- Compared to white leaders, leaders of Color are twice as likely to frequently experience the following: people treating them as if they weren't smart, people acting as if they are afraid of them, and people acting as if they know less about finances.
- Leaders of Color are nearly three times as likely as white people to frequently experience people not having knowledge or curiosity about their culture.

## Witnessing Discrimination

**To what extent have you witnessed the following things in your time as a Church leader?  
(all respondents)**

	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently
<i>A Person of Color being treated with less courtesy or respect than other people.</i>	892 // 72%	311 // 25%	36 // 3%
<i>A Person of Color receiving less support than other people in a similar role.</i>	907 // 74%	275 // 22%	46 // 4%
<i>A Person of Color receiving feedback on how they speak, dress, or interact with people.</i>	1036 // 84%	175 // 14%	21 // 2%
<i>People acting as if they think a Person of Color is not smart.</i>	960 // 78%	245 // 20%	33 // 3%
<i>People acting as if they are afraid of a Person of Color.</i>	1024 // 83%	189 // 15%	16 // 1%
<i>People acting as if they think a Person of Color is dishonest.</i>	1105 // 90%	113 // 9%	10 // 1%
<i>People not having knowledge about or not being curious about a Person of Color's different culture and context.</i>	655 // 53%	452 // 37%	127 // 10%
<i>A Person of Color being called names or insulted.</i>	1146 // 93%	74 // 6%	10 // 1%
<i>A Person of Color being intimidated, harassed, or suppressed.</i>	1065 // 87%	146 // 12%	17 // 1%
<i>People acting as if a Person of Color knows less about finances.</i>	1025 // 84%	172 // 14%	29 // 2%

**To what extent have you witnessed the following things in your time as a Church leader?  
(People of Color only)**

	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently
<i>A Person of Color being treated with less courtesy or respect than other people.</i>	169 // 62%	86 // 32%	18 // 7%
<i>A Person of Color receiving less support than other people in a similar role.</i>	168 // 62%	81 // 30%	21 // 8%
<i>A Person of Color receiving feedback on how they speak, dress, or interact with people.</i>	206 // 76%	51 // 19%	13 // 5%
<i>People acting as if they think a Person of Color is not smart.</i>	178 // 65%	79 // 29%	15 // 6%
<i>People acting as if they are afraid of a Person of Color.</i>	203 // 76%	56 // 21%	8 // 3%
<i>People acting as if they think a Person of Color is dishonest.</i>	215 // 81%	45 // 17%	6 // 2%
<i>People not having knowledge about or not being curious about a Person of Color's different culture and context.</i>	135 // 50%	99 // 37%	36 // 13%
<i>A Person of Color being called names or insulted.</i>	236 // 87%	26 // 10%	8 // 3%
<i>A Person of Color being intimidated, harassed, or suppressed.</i>	215 // 80%	44 // 16%	10 // 4%
<i>People acting as if a Person of Color knows less about finances.</i>	195 // 73%	59 // 22%	14 // 5%

**To what extent have you witnessed the following things in your time as a Church leader?  
(white people only)**

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Frequently</b>
<i>A Person of Color being treated with less courtesy or respect than other people.</i>	721 // 75%	224 // 23%	17 // 2%
<i>A Person of Color receiving less support than other people in a similar role.</i>	737 // 77%	193 // 20%	24 // 3%
<i>A Person of Color receiving feedback on how they speak, dress, or interact with people.</i>	828 // 86%	122 // 13%	8 // 1%
<i>People acting as if they think a Person of Color is not smart.</i>	781 // 81%	164 // 17%	17 // 2%
<i>People acting as if they are afraid of a Person of Color.</i>	820 // 86%	131 // 14%	7 // 1%
<i>People acting as if they think a Person of Color is dishonest.</i>	889 // 93%	65 // 7%	4 // 0.4%
<i>People not having knowledge about or not being curious about a Person of Color's different culture and context.</i>	520 // 54%	351 // 37%	89 // 9%
<i>A Person of Color being called names or insulted.</i>	907 // 95%	47 // 5%	2 // 0.2%
<i>A Person of Color being intimidated, harassed, or suppressed.</i>	848 // 89%	101 // 11%	6 // 1%
<i>People acting as if a Person of Color knows less about finances.</i>	828 // 87%	112 // 12%	14 // 1%

There is a discrepancy between what white people witness and what People of Color experience. When witnessing discrimination, white respondents name that ancestry, national origin, or race was the main reason for the discrimination 48% of the time, while leaders of Color name it 51% of the time. But when we look at rates of frequently and occasionally experiencing discrimination, People of Color consistently respond with frequencies of discrimination that are higher than that which white people report to witness. The data would suggest that acts of racism are going unnoticed by white people.

There is a general trend of both experiencing and witnessing people not having knowledge or curiosity about a different culture or context, often at rates of 40% or higher. This would seem to indicate that we often fail in relationships with one another. Engaging across difference and building relationships of mutuality and respect are fundamental to the work of racial justice and healing, but we appear to lack them in our actual relations with one another. This is notable considering that much of The Episcopal Church's recent anti-racism formation has focused on building relationships across differences and having difficult conversations.

**A few snapshots from particular leadership bodies:**

**House of Bishops**

- Of bishops surveyed in the House of Bishops, 16% are People of Color, all of whom are active
- Of the bishops of Color, 36% of them were not born in the US, which is much higher than the overall rate of 13% of leaders born outside of the US, but it is consistent with the statistic of 34% of People of Color across all respondents being born outside of the US.
- In general, white bishops have been serving for longer than bishops of Color:
  - ◆ 72% of bishops of Color have been serving for ten years or less
  - ◆ 29% of bishops of Color have been serving for more than ten years
  - ◆ 59% of white bishops have been serving for ten years or less
  - ◆ 41% of white bishops have been serving for more than ten years.
- During the process of becoming a bishop, navigating diocesan culture and structure proves particularly difficult for People of Color. The survey asked respondents to identify whether they felt included, neutral, or marginalized in this process. Of bishops of Color, 64% say that they felt either neutral or

marginalized in this navigation, while only 36% said they felt included. Only 29% of white bishops said they felt neutral or marginalized in this, while the rest report they felt included.

### ***The Episcopal Church Staff***

- 32% of The Episcopal Church staff surveyed are People of Color
- Among those surveyed, there is a higher rate of ordained staff members of Color than white staff. 33% of staff of Color are ordained, as compared to 22% of white staff.
- Respondents were asked if they felt either included, neutral, or marginalized in the process of becoming a member of the staff. There isn't a significant difference in the experience of People of Color and white staff persons; if anything, in certain experiences, white people report higher rates of marginalization.
  - ◆ White staff persons surveyed report higher rates of marginalization in the following experiences:
    - Finding the job posting
    - Interview process
    - Orientation and training
    - Support from supervisor and other staff members
  - ◆ People of Color surveyed report higher rates of marginalization in the following categories:
    - Submitting job application
    - Communication with hiring team
    - Transition to new position
    - Navigating the churchwide culture and structure
  - ◆ While the report didn't demonstrate great variation in the experience of outright marginalization, we do see greater difference in reports of inclusion, with higher rates of white people expressing feeling included in the process of being hired for The Episcopal Church staff.

### ***House of Deputies***

- 19% of deputies surveyed are People of Color<sup>21</sup>
- Of the deputies of Color who responded, 70% are laypeople and 30% are ordained. Of the white deputies, 50% are lay people and 50% are clergy.
- Two experiences of discrimination stand out for deputies of Color
  - ◆ *People acted as if you were not as good as they are*
    - 45% of People of Color said "occasionally" or "frequently"
  - ◆ *People did not have knowledge or were not curious about your culture or context*
    - 68% of People of Color said "occasionally" or "frequently"

### ***Executive Council***

- 61% of Executive Council member of Color who responded said that they felt either "marginalized" or "neutral" about the mentoring and support provided during the election process. 78% of white members said that they felt "included".
- It is interesting to note that when asked about forms of discrimination that they have witnessed against People of Color, white respondents never chose "frequently", whereas at least one (and up to three) People of Color respondents chose "frequently" in all but one category. In that singular category - a Council Member of Color being called names or insulted - two People of Color said they had witnessed it "occasionally." All of the white respondents selected "not at all".

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21 The House of Deputies also maintains reports regarding the demographic makeup of its membership. We encourage further analysis that takes these self-reported facts about this large leadership body into account.

- ◆ Presuming that the Executive Council respondents have been at the same meetings and gatherings of the Council, the data demonstrate a difference in perception and noticing of the same occurrences of discriminatory behavior. This is consistent with the findings of the disparities between People of Color experiencing discrimination and white people witnessing discrimination in the overall leadership.

# NARRATIVE INTERVIEWS DEMOGRAPHICS

<p><b>Total Interviews:</b> 64 narrative interviews across different leadership bodies</p>	<p><b>Race:</b> People of Color - 47 (73%) White - 16 (25%)</p>
<p><b>Breakdown by leadership bodies:</b> Dioceses - 25 (39%) House of Deputies - 16 (25%) Executive Council - 5 (8%) House of Bishops - 12 (19%) The Episcopal Church Churchwide Staff - 6 (9%)</p>	<p><b>Gender:</b> Female - 27 (42%)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 19 People of Color (70%)</li> <li>● 8 white (30%)</li> </ul> Male - 36 (56.25%)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 28 People of Color (78%)</li> <li>● 8 white (22%)</li> </ul> </p>

## DOMINANT PATTERNS<sup>22</sup>: FRAMEWORKS & THEORIES

As we engaged the dominant patterns, the following theories and frameworks accompanied our approach and are the foundation to our analysis.

### **Baptismal Covenant and Catechism<sup>23</sup>**

Racism is pervasive and fundamental to the context and location of those we interviewed and surveyed. Whether it showed up through anti-blackness, colonization, and/or xenophobia, racism was present, insidious, and sinful. Therefore, we look to the Baptismal Covenant as a foundational covenant that calls Episcopalians to treat all human beings with respect and dignity and to pursue peace and justice in the footsteps of Jesus. It also calls us to repent and turn back to God *when* (not *if*, but *when*) we sin.

According to The Episcopal Church's Outline of the Faith (or Catechism), sin is seeking “our own will instead of the will of God, thus distorting our relationship with God, with other people, and with all creation.”<sup>24</sup> Racism profoundly distorts our relationship with God, with others, and with all of Creation. This sin and distortion leads to oppression and loss of liberty, and it leaves all of us in need of redemption.

Understanding racism as a sin means that racism is something that is inevitable and is embedded in our very structures, consciousness, and practices. Furthermore, if racism is a sin, we understand that it isn't a matter of *if* but *when* we will fall short and enact behaviors and beliefs rooted in racism. We do not assume that we will never sin, for sin is part of the human condition. We are careful to walk gently and to do no harm, but we are only human and will ultimately fall short of our hopes and desires. It is then that we repent, turn back to God, and repair the harm done. Prophets have a special role in this dynamic, as they call us back to God and remind us of our collective need for redemption, the kind that sets us free from evil, sin, and death.

### **White Dominating Culture or White Supremacy Culture<sup>25</sup>**

Oftentimes what keeps harmful systems and behaviors in place are the hidden norms and standards that get passed off as normal, respectable, good, and *just the way things are*. These hidden norms are what make up white dominating culture. In anti-racism work, attention is often given to the harmful effects of these behaviors and beliefs. This is important, but if it is done without looking at the very behaviors and practices that dominate and harm, then the work will ultimately be less effective or not have a lasting effect. Therefore, we choose to enter anti-racism work through a lens that is keenly aware of how and where white dominating culture operates and sustains racism explicitly and more importantly implicitly. White dominating culture values some ways – ways that are more familiar and come more naturally to those from a white, Western tradition – of thinking, behaving, deciding, and knowing, while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways. And it does this without ever having to explicitly say so.<sup>26</sup>

### **Complex Adaptive Systems**

Racism is a complex adaptive system with multiple individual parts that affect the whole. On their own these parts can seem like individual “bad apples” but in fact they operate out of collective system of culture, practices, and behavior that is often chaotic and complex. Therefore, one's approach to engaging racism requires a a complex and agile response with multiple approaches, influences, and pattern recognition. Once patterns are lifted up and recognized, particular attention is placed on making sense of these patterns, asking *so what* then moving on to *what now*, focus is put on areas of influence within the system. Complex adaptive

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<sup>22</sup> Refer back to the process section for how the researches arrived at these dominant patterns.

<sup>23</sup> <https://episcopalchurch.org/baptismal-covenant>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.bcponline.org/Misc/catechism.html>

<sup>25</sup> See the *Glossary of Terms* section for a definition of White Dominant/Supremacy Culture.

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/2\\_Gulati\\_AB3.pdf](https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/2_Gulati_AB3.pdf)



systems like racism require us to continue this engagement in a cyclical approach which names the *what*, *so what*, and *what now*, again and again.

### **Dysconsciousness**

As we listened and tried to understand the disparities between white people's assessment of anti-racism and that of People of Color, we drew on the work of Dr. Joyce King. Dr. King puts forth the observation that systemic racism in the US is not simply plagued by unconsciousness about racism but also struggles with dysconsciousness. She defines dysconsciousness as "an uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the given order of things as a given."<sup>27</sup> In other words, racist behavior goes unexamined because it is just normal behavior or respectable. This is done with little regard or knowledge about the racist history and culture that created it.

### **Embodiment of Racialized Trauma**

One other concept that was critical as we sought to better understand what we were hearing was the idea of embodiment, especially its relationship to racialized trauma and to theological education. For this, we consulted the work of Resmaa Menaken<sup>28</sup> and Sonya Renee Taylor<sup>29</sup> as well as pioneering and contemporary work on embodiment by feminist, womanist, other white, BIPOC, LGBTQ etc. theologians.

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<sup>27</sup> King, J. (1991). Dysconscious Racism: Ideology, Identity, and the Miseducation of Teachers. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 60(2), 133-146. doi:10.2307/2295605

<sup>28</sup> Menakem, R. (2017). *My grandmother's hands: Racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and bodies*. Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery Press.

<sup>29</sup> Taylor, S. R. (2018). *The body is not an apology: The power of radical self-love*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

# NINE DOMINANT PATTERNS OF SYSTEMIC RACISM

In writing this section we used an adaptive action format:

- Each section begins with identifying a dominant pattern that emerged from our research.
- This is followed by direct quotes from those we interviewed and surveyed.<sup>30</sup>
- Then a reflection is offered on what we observed, trying to make meaning of it.
- After going through all nine patterns, we focused on key questions that can be engaged to go deeper with the patterns and to ultimately influence the system of racism and to make meaningful impact to move closer to Beloved Community.

As you read this section, we invite you into this adaptive action format. Observe with us and reflect on what you notice. Circle back, rest, and pray, as needed. Hold onto the hope and promises of God.

You might consider holding the following questions:

- What patterns resonate with you or are you seeing?
- What sense do you make of these patterns?
- What can be done to influence these patterns and bring the Church closer to becoming the Beloved Community it strives towards?



<sup>30</sup> In order to respect the anonymity of individuals we have removed any identifying markers and only list people's leadership group and whether they identify as a Person of Color or white.

## ***Dichotomy of Racism: Hyper-Visibility vs. Invisibility***

One of the primary patterns that arises is a tension of People of Color being simultaneously hyper-visible and/or all together invisible. For People of Color hyper-visibility specifically shows up as being tokenized, e.g., being the “only Person of Color” on a committee, in a room, or pigeonholed into work that revolves around diversity, anti-racism, or global mission. People of Color experience invisibility by being overlooked for certain positions, it being assumed that they are “new” to being Episcopalian, or by being placed on a committee for representation or diversity but not having equitable influence or voice in the space.

For white people, having People of Color in the room is proof that racism is being addressed or a non-issue. There is a pattern of simultaneously enacting this pattern by using People of Color as proof of the lack of racism and being unable to recognize and see more subtle forms of racism and dominance. White people are less likely to identify racism in predominantly white or all white spaces. White people often don’t see the diversity within People of Color and lack knowledge of and curiosity about various People of Color’s cultures.

### **Quotes**

“I notice that I’m very often the only Person of Color in the room, and in some occasions me and the janitors or the kitchen help. The thing about being an African American leader is that it’s always a tedious task of trying to account for, but not be dominated by, the issue of race and leadership, right? My white brothers and sisters don’t have to account for [it]. It’s wise for me to account for, ‘Now, where is sister coming from here? Is she working out ...’ Then you got to find yourself in a relationship with overcompensating liberals or obstreperous racial conservatives, it’s just always in the room.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“But I even notice in the House of Bishops, sometimes if, say maybe there are three white bishops, and [they’re] just kind of hanging around me and I’m standing there. But they’re talking, they’re not even making eye contact with me. I’m just kind of right here. And I call that the invisibility thing.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I don’t feel like clergy. I feel like a commodity. So I feel as a Black priest in this diocese, that I bring a certain commodity and a certain currency in a negative way, such that I’m on these leadership groups so I can check a box or the leaders can check a box. It is ‘diverse’ because a Black person is here.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I was trying to figure out why I was put on the social justice committee to start with. I didn’t volunteer for it, I didn’t ask to be on it, but when I looked around the room, all the African-Americans were on the social justice committee. And then we were told that, ‘Oh, we really don’t need a definition for social justice. We don’t even need social justice, it’s no big deal.’”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“The Episcopal Church has to stop being so white. That’s not who God has called us to be. When I walk around a church and I see people walking in the street that are People of Color speaking different languages, and then I go there on a Sunday morning and it’s all white and I’m thinking, ‘What are you doing? What are you doing?’ - it’s crazy.”

- *White, Churchwide Leader*

“Occasionally you hear ‘why didn’t you come to the meeting last night?’ What meeting? I didn’t know about the meeting. ‘Oh you should have been there. We talked about this and we talked about that.’ There are old songs, old, old themes that I thought might have disappeared by now, that are still with us. Yes, People of Color are in many ways invisible. Yet if you come and just see this church experience from a distance it all

looks all very, very well and in order: equitable, fair, inviting. But when you delve down deeply, it's there. And it hurts. Because there's something about the church that almost invites vulnerability. We are spiritual beings and we're wide open in these spaces. We're bared spiritually, intellectually. And so when disappointment and hurt happens, it's far more devastating and painful than one would imagine."

-*Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

"Just as an example, when I raised my hand for a vote, it was not counted! Invisible!"

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

"The clergy directory would not show their names. People would say to me, when I went, we talked to them about their congregation. We don't have any children. And I'd see these little brown people running around. It's 'excuse me, five little kids just ran through those rooms', but 'they are not our children.'"

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

### **Reflection**

- There is an assumption that white people themselves are not "raced" and that the system of racism in the US has not shaped them or impacted their lives, their roles and the Church. The reality is that everyone and every place, including all- or predominantly- white spaces, is racialized.
- The Church's racial segregation mirrors the segregation patterns and history of the United States. This is most evident when white people say something along the lines of, "There are no People of Color in leadership which reflects our larger demographics of our community." Often these statements are said with little awareness of why or how their communities have become so white. Even more so, white people are not seeing these predominantly or all white spaces they inhabit as being highly racialized space, albeit white.
- There is a tension between wanting the Church to be a refuge and wanting it to be a place called to change, growth and transformation. There is an unexamined element of holding these as either/or exclusives, rather than as a tense polarity. White people then do not track the racial dynamics of that tension as People of Color must.
- In a system of racism and white supremacy, People of Color sometimes mistake white people's inability to see them as their own invisibility, inadequacy, and lack of power. This is how internalized racism<sup>31</sup> operates systemically in a white dominant culture. The myth of colorblindness feeds this systemic internalized racism cyclically: when rendered invisible by a colorblind white dominant system, some People of Color internalize this diminished status, then feeding back into the very system that created the condition of invisibility in the first place.
- Tension is manifest, especially with white people, by only really being able to speak to acts of discrimination or racism when it is obvious or in one's face. White people often lack the ability to name the systemic nature of racism in their context and their own environment. This alludes to the idea that either racism is obvious or it doesn't exist. This accentuates the tension that leaders of Color experience as either feeling hyper-visible or invisible. Systemic racism flourishes when there is an inability to see nuance and the non-obvious ways that racism functions.

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<sup>31</sup> For more on internalized racism, see [https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/What\\_is\\_Internalized\\_Racism.pdf](https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/What_is_Internalized_Racism.pdf)

## **Leverages of Power & Impact on Anti-Racism Work**

One pattern of systemic racism that emerges is the ease or difficulty one has navigating the power structure of The Episcopal Church, whether on the churchwide level as staff, Executive Council, House of Bishops, House of Deputies, or the local diocesan level. People lift up concerns about formation of leaders and opportunities to move upwards, and that People of Color often have less access or support navigating the system.

Questions arise about formation and the anti-racist competency of those who appoint positions or of the competency of committee members once appointed. People point to current leadership as a major point of leverage to make change systematically and without clear leadership, the commitment fades.

Additionally, People of Color speak about the ability to navigate the power structure of The Episcopal Church as a point of survival. Leaders lift up the importance of having multiple People of Color in leadership positions actively supporting others as they are being formed in their own leadership. The need for mutual support to and from other leaders of Color is often cited. Without that, a barrier of systemic racism remains in place and goes unchallenged.

Finally, white people and People of Color speak about the power of money and the ways money is used to harm or help anti-racism work. Particularly notable are the fear of raising certain issues and alienating donors, the unspoken power dynamics about who is involved with the larger economics of the Church, and the power of expressing resistance to anti-racism work by withholding financial support. Furthermore, stories arise stating that no matter how their ministries thrive, clergy of Color who lead parishes and missions of Color that aren't bringing in significant money are considered second tier to white, wealthy parishes. Finally, issues of disparities in pay between People of Color and white people, as well as the inordinate cost of traveling to and time required to attend General Convention, limit the participation of People of Color and working class/poor people across the board in church leadership and governance.

### **Quotes**

“Like I said [about] the Commission on Ministry, we've had candidates [of Color] to go up and they never get past the Commission. Once I got on the Standing Committee we got a chance to sit in on some of the meetings of the Commission, and I'm looking and listening to some of the stuff ... it's like who you know. It's not what you know and whether you would make a good priest, it's who you know. So, we've got plenty of racism here, but it's probably in a lot of dioceses.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I had to make myself be at the table. If you're not at the table, you can't make a change. Because your voice is not heard. I was determined to be at the table so I could make a difference”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I serve in one of the most-white/Euro-centric dioceses in The Episcopal Church. We have long tried to address the implicit and explicit racism in our being, in our structures, in who has power but we still fall way short and, in the current environment, overt incidences of racism/racial profiling/racial targeting have increased. So, while I can blithely say that I have not experienced issues of racism and race, the entire ordination process is skewed to favor white people with education and privilege.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“In the Commission on Ministry, [it is] very difficult for a Person of Color to advance through this committee. Most of the candidates go on to other dioceses and become priests.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I have seen a white man elected over and over and over for a position. I -- and others-- have far more ability to be present in rooms of power through appointment than election in the church. The most diverse and healthy leadership body in our diocese is our diocesan staff office. I wonder and muse and talk about how it seems that those entities with more centralized power and authority seem to be doing a MUCH better job of pushing against racism than elections at our diocesan council, vestry and worst of all calls as rectors (let alone cardinal rectors). We have fewer ordained women and ordained Persons of Color who are rectors in our diocese than a decade ago.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“We really want to talk about structural institutional racism, then why aren't we talking about how this entire system was formed, how it was formed? I don't know if y'all know a lot. I don't know what your background is, but I mean, the whole thing was based on oppression. So let's talk about how your system perpetuates people not being able to speak truth without ramifications. It's a complete dysfunction of power dynamics. Talk about that and then I think you're going to see real changes happening quicker.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I saw no intentional recruiting of people of different ethnicities or color other than white. No statement by the Bishop or other leadership of intentionality in making sure all diversity in the diocese is represented on leadership bodies. That includes Indigenous people, Black, Brown, Asian people. Our leadership groups are mainly white.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“One of them was, follow the money. It's nice to hear a white man say that. Because that's a radical problem, right? If you don't pay attention to that, we'll be just sort of shadow boxing. So those kinds of questions and inquiries give me pause and say, okay, I think that's, in my opinion, a good example of beloved community. And when we start, when the bishops start asking that kind of question and are willing to then do the hard work of saying, what does that mean? What do we need to change as an institution?”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

## **Reflection**

- Power is unequally wielded globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield great power over others, thereby allowing them greater access to, and control over, resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates. Although power is often conceptualized as power over other individuals or groups, other variations are power with (used in the context of building collective strength) and power within (which references an individual's internal strength). Learning to “see” and understand how power functions and how it shows up is vital to addressing systemic racism.

Power may also be understood as the ability to influence others and impose one's beliefs. All power is relational, and the different relationships either reinforce or disrupt one another. The importance of the concept of power to anti-racism is clear: Power can be used malignantly and intentionally, but need not be. Individuals within a culture may benefit from power of which they are unaware.<sup>32</sup>

- White dominant culture often mystifies power structures and access to these structures, and creates confusion around navigating them. Power operates as decision making, distribution of resources, access to networks, and ability to influence and create. One's access to, control of, or understanding of these might indicate the degree of power one might have. In white dominant culture, decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it. People with power often don't think it is

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary#power>

important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions. Those without power understand they do not have it and understand who does. Those without power do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet they are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on them.<sup>33</sup>

- The hoarding and control of power is another way by which it is leveraged in the system. This shows up when those with power feel threatened when anyone suggests changes in how things should be done in the organization and feel that suggestions for change are a reflection on their leadership. Those with power assume they have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume those wanting change are ill-informed, less intelligent, overly emotional, and inexperienced.
- Power is fluid and can be experienced in good, bad, and neutral ways. Likewise, power can be enacted in good, bad, and neutral ways.
- In conversation with the demographics of class and education, The Episcopal Church skews highly educated, middle class and upper class. The cultural standards associated with these educational and economic groups become the norm and assume everyone else in the system has access to disposable income and time.

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<sup>33</sup> [https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/1/5/43579015/okun\\_-\\_white\\_sup\\_culture.pdf](https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/1/5/43579015/okun_-_white_sup_culture.pdf)

## ***Anti-Racism Work as Transformational vs. Transactional***

A tension that arises throughout people's stories is between transformation of the larger culture (systemic change) and disconnected, individual transactions that try to address racism (episodic change). In this paradigm we see the insidious effects of systemic racism playing out in subtle and not-so-subtle ways. White dominant spaces are excited about diversity and intellectual engagements (book studies, workshops, video series, etc.), but these don't often result in transformation of the white dominant culture. This pattern pressures leaders of Color who serve on committees, are hired on staff, elected bishop, or sit on the Executive Council to assimilate or leave parts of themselves at the door. If not, People of Color often speak of being perceived as too bossy, aggressive, playing the race card, or loud. In essence, leaders of Color are asked to restrict who they are in order to placate and pacify the white dominant system, to survive and to remain employed. Leaders of Color and a few white leaders spoke about experiencing retribution (or the fear thereof) for speaking truth about systemic racism and personal experiences of racism.

White leadership tends to engage anti-racism work through a transactional lens like hiring, appointing, or voting for a Person of Color, or attending an anti-racism workshop. Either white leadership is unaware of how to engage systemic transformation - policy change, cultural shifts, systematic truth-telling, etc. - or finds it difficult to address and transform it.

Finally, an overall pattern emerges when asking white people about anti-racism work. They tend to focus on positive work and tangible impact with little to no recognition of more work that needs to be done. On the other hand, People of Color speak primarily of shortcomings and the ongoing work that needs to be done, with a nod to the positive impact of previous work.

### **Quotes**

“In some ways it was a very frustrating experience because people were very much like, look, I'm showing up and I am saying that racism is bad and look at all these things that I'm doing to help stop racism. But when we came to the point of trying to get people to talk about kind of like, okay, well, so the Church is an institution, were you observing those things? Nobody wanted to talk about it. It was all like, no, look at the good things I'm doing, or look at these situations that I'm dealing. It was very individual and trying to get people to recognize that it's not just an individual problem. It's not something that I think that we were successful with.”  
- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“And I'll own it as a piece of my own upbringing and I'm sure ... and that would be white privilege. That's just something that is so ingrained and that so many people are oblivious to and just take for granted the opportunities that they have and just assume that that's the way the world is and why would anyone else's experience be different than that? You mean we're not all looking at an equal level playing field?”  
- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“So for me, racism is not just racial insults, a lot of it is microaggressions. That's what makes it so difficult because you can't really ... I think, in my life at least 90% of the time or more, you can't prove anything, and that's what makes it so hard. Then you, being the person who is receiving it, ends up being seen as playing the race card or playing victim or stuff like that.”  
- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“So I've noticed that every time I speak out and I've talked publicly about it like every time I speak out and say the truth, I'm literally not invited back to the table, literally.”  
- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*



“There's war. We're in the middle of a war, and I don't know why people don't seem to be behaving as if we should be... We're gearing up for a fight for our very existence, Black people in this country. We have a Black head of the Church, but the institution is institutionalized.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“So one of the challenges we've been very aware of from a diocesan perspective is the progressive self identity of most of our congregations that are historically white. Which means that there's the desire to do good in the world. And there is sometimes very little self reflection about the ways in which whiteness operates in those contexts to keep things the way they are. That's been really interesting and challenging and...I don't have a lot of control over how we respond to that.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Well I just want to say, what's the purpose? Is this just going to be another stupid survey where nothing happens? Because this is the church. We play a lot of games, and nothing happens. We don't get dirty. This is another one, to me is just a bunch of crap. They treat many minorities as a ministry, but we are not ministries. What we're doing is filling out another survey, we're going to talk about it for three years, and nothing is going to happen. So, send out as many surveys as we want, nothing is going to change unless we are willing to have honest conversation about it.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“We are a culturally English establishment white supremacist organization. That just is who we are. We don't have to stay that way but if we aren't going to stay that way, we have to figure out what parts of our inherited tradition reflect the way of Jesus and what parts of it reflect cultural white supremacy. And I find that that's really challenging for me to think about. And I know it's really challenging for our Commissions on Ministry and our Standing Committees and our bishops to wrestle with.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“We have to get into the deep theological and personal world of identifying the causes and the structures, not just does a Standing Committee support you. Identify some of the things within our own body, and what are the barriers, and identify our own racist tendencies within our governing bodies. And what are the structures that encourage it or prohibit the kingdom? I think these are some of the questions. Do the Anglo liberal voices actually help or impede?”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“They want to see us dress up, they want to see feathers, they want to see beadwork. Stand up and look nice and then sit down and be quiet. They don't really want to hear what we have to say. At least not anything that would threaten them or threaten the power.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“We [are] just one battle at a time, one person at a time, one experience at a time, we can make a difference. We can make a difference and we can change this world and we can change our church and most importantly, I can change myself by the grace of God. I can change my heart, my behaviors, my words, that's where it's going to start. I can't start working on the other if I haven't done the work on myself.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“No one admits to being prejudiced or having that behavior, yet marginalization is present and the inability to recognize that marginalization is happening.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I feel like much of the language about justice is lip service and white supremacy still rules the day.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Ours is an issue of the only People of Color invited to the table are ones that stay quiet, go along with the majority and don't challenge.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I heard someone comment, I don't know if this has helped me, but I've learned a few things I shouldn't say in public. We can't settle for just giving people the buzz words they shouldn't say to avoid offending somebody. We want transformation. We have to put what we learned into action.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide leader*

## **Reflection**

- People of Color's knowledge and experience of needing to placate white dominant spaces within Episcopal leadership bodies leads to People of Color (and white people) not trusting invitations into “difficult” conversations around race, engagement in reconciliation, and truth telling. Not recognizing deep cultural and systemic racism points to how the larger white dominant culture continues to uphold values, behaviors, practices, and cultures that reflect its own self and in turn penalizes, drives out, or silences those who challenge them by merely showing up in their fullness or by directly raising concerns.
- Another barrier that prevents transformation of the system is individuals and organizations becoming defensive at the account of systemic racism or the inability to name systemic racism as a problem. Even though a critical mass of those in leadership positions have some level of systemic understanding, many, particularly white leadership, lack the ability to name how racism operates systemically in the church or their own context. They advocate for simple solutions for complex systems (e.g., if we just get people of color to the table or in leadership, things will change). This in and of itself is not bad, but when it is the only solution or response and not part of a multifaceted approach like policy change, reparation and redistribution of wealth, theological re-formation, and reconciliation, it has the unintended result of exacerbating the problems of racism and white dominant culture.
- Many of the various leadership bodies fall into a form of paradoxical habits<sup>34</sup> that often occur in well intentioned and progressive organizations. This comes up time and time again when the surveyed leadership bodies require only the bare minimum in terms of anti-racism work (i.e., a singular training or siloing anti-racism to work by itself and not integrating it). These habits also arise when these leadership bodies inadvertently treat anti-racism work and healing as an intellectual activity (i.e., book studies and TED talks). Both of these examples at the surface seem like they are “doing the work” but inversely enact racist behaviors. These behaviors can look like defensiveness, self-congratulations, or tokenizing People of Color - all of which look like engagement but have no lasting transformation or cultural impact.
- This work must be seen as foundational to Christian formation and discipleship. By not doing so the Church falls into simple solutions, transactional work, and a shame-based reactionary stance.
- We must go at the speed of trust.<sup>35</sup> Both personal and systemic transformation are relational.
- Shame-based approaches lead to transactional, episodic change. Why? Because the shame is so unbearable that the system looks for easy fixes and answers to relieve the pressure and pain. The Church must lament and own its complacency and complicity. It must also find within itself the power and faith to know that transformation is possible, and that we can endure the discomfort, pain, and struggle.

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<sup>34</sup> [https://greatlakesequity.org/sites/default/files/201905091974\\_brief.pdf](https://greatlakesequity.org/sites/default/files/201905091974_brief.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> brown, a. m. (n.d.). *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds*. United Kingdom: AK Press.

## ***Faith & Spirituality & Anti-Racism***

A significant number of people use the language of their faith to reflect on anti-racism work and to compel the Church to do the work. People lift up both the ways theology, liturgy, and spiritual practices are leaven for the work of anti-racism, and at the same time how they can actively maintain white supremacy culture and racism.

### **Quotes**

“To me, it would be easy if we held up our Baptismal Covenant. If we continue to point back to that in what we say, I don't know how racism could exist or how we could not behave differently given what we promised. It's baffling to me.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“We were talking about funeral rites the other day among the Chinese folk, and I was saying *The Book of Common Prayer* is so Anglo-centered. The Chinese culture focuses a lot on the ancestors, on honoring our ancestry. Usually in the funeral rites there will be something about paying your respect to the ancestors. It is almost like the ancestors are the ones waiting at the gate when you are coming---you know, the clouds of witnesses and saints in the Bible. A lot of different cultural pieces are really missing in our translation of the *Book of Common Prayer*. When you think of the liturgy, it is very, very culturally specific.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“And of late, I have concentrated on the extrication of white supremacy from liturgy. One of the things I've been researching and I've presented on is [how] liturgy and worship practices can actually do more to reinscribe racism, [or] ban [and] disrupt racism. What we're seeing, preach, read in scripture, including the lectionary, the images on the wall, the images that we use in storytelling, the images in Christian formation, particularly [of] young people, all of those really do more to reinscribe racism and white supremacy. There's been work done on anti-racism, but I feel now that the country has been catapulted into this moment, perhaps the Episcopal Church can seriously look at how deep white supremacy is, particularly in our worship and our formation and begin to do something, to tell a different narrative and work to dismantle it.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan leader*

“Yeah, building capacity has got to happen before we can do any effective work. ... And we've got to get our infrastructure of vital communities that understand what it means to be the church, that it is not a closing little club of people, an enclave of old white people and it is the mission of God and there's real work to be done at that level before anything effective can really happen.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“So it's not a, ‘gee, isn't this a nice thing that the church is doing and should do for justice matters.’ No, it's absolutely fundamentally essential to what God is up to and Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that being the mission of God. So if we're not about this, then we're not about anything. So I think the church is literally bedeviled by distractions of the church and our love for the church, instead of the love and commitment to the mission of God. So what inhibits it is frankly, love of church. And what we presume to have been safe and secure and known and then we're back into a white supremacy, and how each one of us personally is caught up in the soup.”

- *White, Churchwide Leader*

“If one of the slave ships is called the ‘Good Ship Jesus’ and if the cathedral in Cape Coast is across the street, literally across the street from the slave castles, then we literally ... The litany that you and I say [was said] just above the dungeon. We said the mass over enslaved Black bodies and see no contradiction, and then we provide a theological framework so that people can get the spiritual justification that they need to do evil, then ... I expect the businesses to be about crass margin, right, I expect that. I expect if you're a businessman at that

time ... I even expect the Ashanti, the largest Black ethnic group in Ghana, to do business with the Portuguese so that they can have domination over all the ethnic groups in West Africa. I expect that, right, because that's business, that's power, right, that's just raw power. Everybody is trying to figure out how to be dominant. But what the church did was it just told a lie and wrote it on Jesus' flesh. That's a hell of a thing. That's a hell of a thing."

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

"I'm going to be honest and say that people talk about it and they have their own opinions, but I think that when we go to church on Sunday, the preacher may do a sermon on loving one another. And I think we're brought back when we go to church.... But I just feel like everybody has their own opinions about those things. And it's not for me to judge. It's something that I think they need to wrestle with God about. I mean I can't do anything to change their feelings. I mean I can express God's love and I can share God's love with them, but that's all I can do. I can't change them. That's something that has to change in their own heart."

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

"And the huge growing edge that I see in our program and in every single formation program for clergy in The Episcopal Church is how do you get people to have Beloved Community at the very ground of their theological imagination? How do we take that from being it's like, Oh yeah, and here's feminist theology, and here's liberation theology, and here's this notion of Beloved Community, and here's this... like how do you take it from being an add-on and nice to have to...helping make the connection between those concepts and what Jesus Christ was doing in first century Palestine."

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

"Another random vision for the Episcopal Church: that The Episcopal Church stop giving people a way out of being the gospel in action. So many times we talk about change being difficult. Saying change is difficult and change takes time allows us to backpedal on or back away from tough topics. Change is difficult. But the gospel expects change. The opposite is stagnation and ill health. If my child is the same size at age eight that they were at age one, then that's ill health. There's something wrong there. But the church gives people a way out, of not attending to their spiritual growth and change ... [C]hange is expected."

- *Person of Color, Churchwide leadership*

### **Reflection**

- White dominant culture works to actively disassociate the work of anti-racism from liturgy and theology, relegating the work to outreach, as if worship and theology is morally untouched or neutral to the sin of racism and the history of systemic racism. The Church must have a deep reckoning of the marriage of theology and liturgy with the maintaining of dominance, normality, and racism. This reckoning must occur alongside boldly claiming the liberatory truth of a theology and liturgical practice that invites people into the heart of beloved community and freedom.
- There seems to be an energy of frustration that behavior doesn't match professed belief. This seems to be especially alive for those who that very belief has directed their own liberation, i.e., the Baptismal Covenant.
- There is work to be done on really embodying the theologies being put forth by the Church. Do people say the words without making connections to their own lives and bodies?

## ***Anti-Racism Work, Intentionality & Ongoing Commitment***

Many people express a need to foundationally recognize that the work of anti-racism, racial justice and healing require long-term commitment, lifelong learning, deep intentionality, financial redistribution (reparations, to name one example), and powerful and courageous leadership. In some interviews, people mention the lack of such commitment to the work. On the other hand, fully engaged leaders with a deep grasp of systemic racism stressed the need to embrace the fact that anti-racism work is never done once and for all. People share how trust is built over the long-haul.

People of Color point to the critical need for affinity spaces to help navigate aspects of the institutional church and nurture their unique commitments and culture. People of Color's uniqueness is a primary source of resilience and for being a stronger part of the Church as a whole. There is a concern that such spaces appear as a threat or will disappear as priorities change.

Finally, a few interviews reveal the effects of such commitment. In some places, commitments to anti-racism began earnestly and intentionally decades ago. In these locations the impact of the work is tangible and transformative. For leaders, both white and People of Color but especially People of Color, there is strong, steady, and compassionate leadership. Many leaders also express compassion/justice fatigue with always being the first or only leader of Color, or one of few leading the work of anti-racism.

### **Quotes**

“I hate the slogan of the Episcopal Church. ‘The Episcopal Church welcomes you.’ You can come in but remember, a welcome can be rejected at any time. Episcopal Church is a place where you belong. Because belonging connotes something different than welcoming. Belonging means that if you’re not at the table, if you’re not eating with me, if you’re not walking with me, something is inherently missing.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“Where we need to get to is the healing and reconciliation. Because the anti-racism piece is just the awareness that it exists and talking about ways to stop it from happening. But that doesn’t speak to the healing and reconciliation so that going forward we don’t just get back to where we were. So it’s going to take some education of people, how to reconcile. How to heal. There has to be reparations that repair before we can have healing. In order to make progress you have to play the game so to speak.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“So I felt like [the speaker] really cracked something open. Unfortunately, there wasn't an effective way to follow up on that. And I think we only had her for a day or something. And so the attempt to follow up, to have a discussion as the clergy of the diocese after her talk was kind of a missed opportunity. It just wasn't organized in a way that was effective. I'm not sure if there wasn't a plan, or whatever.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I hope we just keep adding and don't think that we've arrived because we haven't and to be honest, to talk honestly with one another. What I love about my relationship with [a bishop of Color] is that we've known and loved each other for so long, I can talk to him. Honestly, I don't do more worrying about hurting his feelings and he doesn't ... have to worry about hurting my feelings.”

- *White, Churchwide Leader*

“Other dioceses do very little preparation, even for people elected for the first time. This impacts People of Color who might be newly elected. They don’t have an opportunity to be trained to be effective deputies. So the Deputies of Color gathering provides the opportunity to meet from Friday night through Sunday. The presiding officers from the Episcopal Church come and give an orientation on parliamentary procedures,

there's a review of resolutions, and a chance to meet within our caucuses and ethnic groups to come up with legislative priorities”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“He formed a group of People of Color, sometimes there were eight, we met every other week at the diocesan office for bible study and a meal. All of us were discerning. We stayed together for more than 2 years. Not everyone went forward, but we helped each other. The [discernment] process isn't for People of Color and yet we were able to get through it.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“Yeah. And so when we look at the national church, we are dependent upon the grace of the House of Bishops and the Diocesan or the Executive Council on how they decide to give us money. And yet they don't know very much about us at all. And as a matter of fact and I can't tell you what year it was, but it was in the nineties, they tried to take away, because I think they had like a desk, so to speak, an independent person for Black communities, for Hispanic, for Asian, for Indian. And they had all of these different ethnic people representing the needs of those cultures. And the national church decided that was too expensive and they grouped them all into one. And after I think a lot of difficulty, we got the Native desk kind of out there. And yet it's so small.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“You cannot have sustained slavery for 400 years and suddenly think that with one light switch can go the other way and everything will change. Because it's a mindset. And the mindset that somehow some people are inferior to others. That is not something we can overcome easily. It takes a lot of deep work.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I've been used to the fact that white liberals have a wonderful idea that we're going to help change all of this. But then our ability to stick to it is shallow, and people fall away. They don't see results, because they're used to seeing results, and they tend to lose heart and fall away.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

### **Reflection**

- A long-term commitment to anti-racism work is key because of the permanence of racism.<sup>36</sup> Because racism is built into the very fabric of our church history and foundational culture, it will continue to be a force we must grapple with and address when it appears or mutates.
- Human Systems Dynamics Institute<sup>37</sup> talks about trust as a pattern of relationship, or a bridge. Patterns that build that trust must be lifted up and reinforced. Patterns that undermine trust must be exposed and challenged, or if too powerful and embedded, protected against and resisted.
- Individuals and communities have vastly different understandings and experiences of understanding racism systemically - whether they agree with the analysis or not. It is essential to make sense of this in order to plan for and influence how The Episcopal Church moves forward.

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<sup>36</sup> Bell, D. (2018). *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism*. United States: Basic Books.

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.hsdinstitute.org/>

## ***Intersectionality Within & Outside of People of Color Spaces***

Law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw defines intersectionality as “a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other.”<sup>38</sup> Using such a lens allows people to see the deep complexity that is systemic racism. In many of our interviews, those complexities were lifted up directly or indirectly as people shared their experience and their relationship to systemic racism in the Church.

These intersections of power (or powerlessness) and privilege (or disadvantage) across racial groups or within them are sometimes taboo or perhaps not openly explored. Others share deep wisdom about crossing these intersections.

Leaders of Color speak of the complexity of how internalized racism and cross racial tensions show up for People of Color – how they navigate their own identities in a predominantly white context. People speak of the limitations of the black/white paradigm for challenging racism in the US and in the church.

### **Quotes**

“We are such a diverse church. One thing that’s become crystal clear to me is that one size will not fit all. Most people when they hear the term ‘racism’ in the church think about Black/white. There are issues, there are ways to deal with that are different than dealing with Asian American, Native American racism, from Hispanic racism. etc. Even within each of those races, there are different experiences of racism, different levels of experience; as well as internal within those groups – there’s colorism and shadeism. That’s one of the things that’s been lacking in the church. So it’s a very complex issue, you can’t just say racism and assume that everyone has the same ethic.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I think my racialization has made me sensitive to the fact that you can’t make assumptions about people’s backgrounds. You can’t make assumptions about white people, you can’t make assumptions about Black people. Everybody may be more complex and probably is more complex than you would assume and think.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Asians have to navigate between white and Black cultural worlds. I’ve been in situations where it’s a group of white and Black colleagues. Black colleagues are clearly acknowledged as minorities and People of Color but I’m lumped together with white colleagues. It happens a lot. I experienced that at seminary. There were several white male seminarians who were highly active and visible; a few other African American seminarians who were kind of acknowledged and held up. I largely was invisible to both sides.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I felt like I was being asked to collude in something that was a little bit duplicitous. Or at least shallow. I think in terms of advancement in the Episcopal Church there are... Just to name the elephant in the room, I am whiter than the other Latino, some of the other Latino clergy in the Diocese ...The lighter skin more... English is my first language kind of person, I’ve advanced. But in the diocese...you can’t say that.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I wouldn’t say I haven’t been supported. But there’s a lot of not acknowledging that I’m different. Very often when we start talking about race in the diocese my colleagues will say we’re a room full of white guys. I have to wave my hand and remind them, there’s someone who is not white in the room and it’s me. There’s for me a sort of wonderment: I’m not sure this is happening. There’s a level of insecurity that comes along with it. It’s

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<sup>38</sup> <https://time.com/5786710/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality/>

nothing near what a lot of other people have experienced in the church. I've been able to kind of hide myself in plain sight.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I think that it's been said by smarter people than me that racism and anti-black[ness] runs right down the middle of our culture and country. It was how we were founded. It's part of our founding documents that African Americans are three-fifths of a human being. I mean, you can't have that codified in the very founding documents of your country and not have that. So race and racism is a sin that has so thoroughly permeated our culture that we're unconscious of it. And I think Black folk are often unconscious of it as well. When I talked to them and they told me their stories. And you know, I have some very successful African Americans in my diocese who don't want to talk about this. They made it and they're not interested in anything.”

- *White, Churchwide Leader*

“And we all have to do that, I mean I have to do that as a Person of Color as well. That I am not internalizing something that was a lie. And that I am not continuing that paradigm of oppression. Because that's the other part of it, it's not just a black and white issue. It's a much [more] complicated way of thinking that somehow some people are inferior to others.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leadership*

### **Reflection**

- People of Color raise issues of internalized racism and of the "cross-racial hostility" that inevitably emerge among People of Color. It is important to keep in mind and to have spaces for People of Color to do very different work to address racism and their leadership around it.
- White people and People of Color often mention the intersections of race and class in looking at the Church.
- Racism affects different racialized groups in unique and similar ways. There is a tendency both in the Church and in society to flatten racism to a Black/white paradigm. Although racism rooted in anti-blackness is fundamental in the United States, that does not justify erasing the particularities of Indigenous, Asian, Latinx, and other Peoples of Color. This is why turning the mirror on white dominating culture is vital to anti-racism work: it takes away the wedge between oppressed groups of people and names the system that is responsible for (and benefits most from) the oppression.



## ***Racism Rooted in Historical Context***

Throughout the interviews the historical grounding of particular regions of the country combined with the larger US history of systemic racism shapes the experience of racism and appears as a backdrop to current conflicts and understandings.

There is a deep longing and commitment to telling the whole historical truth of how The Episcopal Church financially benefited from, participated in, and perpetuated white supremacy and racist practices and beliefs and how it continues to benefit from, participate in and perpetuate racism to this day. All in all, there is a need to understand our history, our policies and our theology, all of which enables us to see how the racist aftershocks live in the present and how old narratives play out now.

This pattern also shows up in the way people see their leadership through a generational lens. Some came of age and to political consciousness during the 1950s and 1960s. Some are shaped by more recent politics and conflicts. Some people bring attention to these different perspectives through conversation and deep listening, while others are perplexed about how to bridge differences across generations.

### **Quotes**

“I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee and I was six years old when Martin Luther King was assassinated. And that had a huge impact on me, I think, as a little girl, just witnessing the anxiety of white people in my family around that event. And so I've kind of made it ... It's been sort of a priority for me to kind of understand that event in its historical context just for my own education...I have this one crew of people who are kind of relatively young, we speak the same language, they're mostly people who don't want to go to a traditional kind of church. They like that things are kind of funky and they let me say whatever I want and they don't give me a hard time.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“We really need young people's voices in on this. How they experience racism is so different. Especially when you add the socio-economic factor. There's a vast difference. You couldn't get my brother in the room to have a conversation about this. My brother and I are technically in the same generation---he's 26---but his experiences are a lot different from mine.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I will say though to our bishop's credit is that he, at our last diocesan council he said about an initiative and set about a goal to challenge the parishes in the diocese to learn their history and learn what role racism has played in their parishes. And has thrown some of the money behind that. And says, ‘If you need money to figure this out, there's money. We have money. We've set aside money.’”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“[White people] just have the stories of the hardship and the, ‘how we worked the land’, that whole American taking of the West, as I call it myth. And behind that is the guilt and the feeling that the world, as they knew it is collapsing around them and they don't know what to do except pretend it's not happening.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I don't see how [white supremacy] can't be in the structure of the diocese to some degree because the diocese was created...out of a church that's enjoyed...white privilege up the ying yang.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Back in 1844 [the white Church] relegated the few Black members to four pews in the back and then eventually asked them to leave the Church because they didn't want to worship with Black people, so that's

how my Church started.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Native people, it wasn't their choice to be Christian in the beginning. It wasn't their choice to live on reservations and the national Church made a real big deal in an apology at Jamestown years ago. Gosh, what's it been now at least 15 years ago? Because Jamestown was first contact really with native people and The Episcopal Church. So that was a really big deal that they acknowledged that presence. But native people are still struggling. Again, people don't, you think about Navajo land and how Corona has hit them. They don't have water. So how are they supposed to ... I don't know who needs me so bad. There's just so many basic needs and the Church can be a presence in these communities.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“The church must simply come to terms with its racist history and its support of racist economic and public policy positions. Being sensitive and defensive about it won't solve the problem. History must be claimed and owned before there can be forgiveness and reconciliation. Until we accept that institutional slavery built this nation and that African Americans continue to be marginalized and terrorized by the justice system, law enforcement, institutions and governments at every level in this nation, real change will never happen. Perhaps the 1619 Project is a good place to begin meaningful dialogue and progress.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Racism has shaped the inland and mountain Northwest region. It has been a "white flight" region of settlement and relocation, leading to a skewed population (95% white in north Idaho, between 70% and 92% white for most of eastern Washington, except a few counties with around 40% white). This has shaped religious experience here, as has the white heritage of the Episcopal Church as an imprint, and so most leadership circles in this diocese are racist by the larger regional secular system they inhabit. This means a racism that continues due to low exposure and lack of opportunity to practice and engage differently. Location of meeting in the largest city centers means more challenge for people from more racially diverse counties.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

### **Reflection**

- Regardless of where you live (major city, rural or small town) there is a history of racism within every context.
- Taking generational context into account is crucial to having access to the cross-generational wisdom about systemic racism. It is sometimes hard - but necessary - to keep in mind that major negative and positive patterns of systemic racism/anti-racism continue to repeat, *and* the current reality is unique and comes with its own very different opportunities and threats.
- It is crucial to notice how historical context shapes people and the institution, as this may a place of growth (reckoning with one's own history) or of “stuckness” (clinging to the past). Both of these tendencies become powerful in relationships. As we practice deep listening, we can hear historical context in the background.
- There is no way to keep in mind the entire history of the Anglican Church and Christianity. Yet certain patterns reappear that, in fact, have their roots in those larger histories.
- In the dioceses, the varied settler patterns as well as the time of settlement influence current relationships and power dynamics (e.g., indigenous struggles, border state relationships, etc.). This was true both for how People of Color were brought to or excluded from a region, as well as white people's relationship to the larger government and to the primary European cultures that settled them, and their relationship to each other.

## **Political Polarization of Racial Justice**

A pattern of intensifying political polarity around anti-racism and racial justice emerge within the interviews. This is most notable in the interviews conducted after the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. There is both an urgency around anti-racism work and a nervousness about how to navigate it, especially for white people, because it is currently so politicized. Relatedly, leaders of Color we interviewed after the murder of George Floyd mention an uptick of instances of blatant racism within The Episcopal Church. They speak about knowing this kind of racism was there, but now it is stepping out from the shadows and into the light.

### **Quotes**

“They talk about it being the original sin, and I guess it is. To get them to be where we are is hard. And we have a President who has exacerbated this stuff. People coming out of the woodwork saying what they really feel. That doesn’t help either. The discourse at top does not help in terms of how they see us. Our bishop is fine talking about love and all that, I’ve kind of bought into that Jesus movement, trying to get people to see that we could really make a difference if we cared about each other. But it’s hard to do that. We just keep working. We have hope. I think we’ll touch some people and we’ll make some changes. But trying to get to a lot of the older ones will be a real challenge. But you can’t give up. You’ve got to keep on trying.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“Now all of this politicized stuff is intruding on to the point where if you preach about diversity in any way, or God’s love for all people, you’re being political. Everything’s about everybody else. And I think that there’s a fear in there that underlies the sort of old white establishment. I’m not defending it, I’m just trying to understand where people are coming from, where is their anger, their fear. Because if we can’t address that, we just keep talking to the air.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Well, with the current environment, we’re seeing some tension in our parish with people who would be of the very conservative political background, essentially Trump supporters who are struggling a great deal with the protest movement. They were struggling at the beginning before the current issues. They were struggling with COVID and the Church not being out protesting to meet together. They were kind of angry about that. Like this fellow and I, we’re on different ends of the political spectrum and we’re able to talk about that and joke about it, but I know I dare not go too far with that, because then he gets offended and I don’t need that.

We had a lot of that over there and we have a little of it here in our community, some white supremacist folks. I don’t know anybody within the Church that gives them any credence. So at least I think that’s a plus. On the other hand, I don’t know too many people who are shouting them down either. And that’s a minus.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

### **Reflection**

- There is increasing anxiety in the system as it relates to current political affairs and racial conflict and unrest, particularly in the U.S.
- One interesting thing this pattern exposes is how reactionary much of the Church’s anti-racism work is. Recently there have been various social movements and high-profiled police violence. This, no doubt, has played a role in the volume of resolutions and commitments from the General Convention. Similar patterns exist in other past resolutions and commitments. The system operates from a reactive state and not one that is proactive.
- There also was a palpable anxiety and anticipation regarding whether the “Obama effect” would happen in The Episcopal Church. This refers to the backlash to the nation’s first black president, specifically as white people and structures became more forthright with their racist beliefs, policy, or practice. Some leaders of Color report they are holding their breath awaiting what is to come after

Presiding Bishop Curry is no longer in that role. Many white leaders look to the election of bishops of Color, particularly Bishop Curry, as an example of how racism isn't a barrier or an issue in The Episcopal Church.

## **Anti-Racist Leadership**

Leaders of Color in this work are often very comfortable and prepared to take leadership around issues of systemic racism in all aspects of the Church. Most have tremendous self-confidence combined with a deep commitment to The Episcopal Church and helping it to address anti-racism.

People of Color in leadership confidently bring their perspective, worldview, and experience to their leadership roles. Sometimes, however, leaders express the stress of being the first or the only Person of Color doing this work in a mostly white context -- especially when the white people do not understand what this means for the Church and for ministry.

Furthermore, People of Color in white dominant spaces often feel diminished and overtaxed because they are asked to represent all People of Color, which then leads to burn out and exhaustion.

White culture paradoxically elevates and marginalizes People of Color. It places them on a pedestal, holds them to high expectations, and passes them the responsibility for naming, calling out, and confronting racism. This directly correlates with a sense of burden and burn out.

### **Quotes**

“I think we are better than we were, but we have more to do. But we will get there. Our people are strong, and they are intelligent, they are theologically astute and they don't even know it. And I love it. These are the most beautiful people on the planet in my opinion and I'm really happy I'm here. I wish I made a little more money but oh well. I'll keep buying lottery tickets.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“But we have more agency. How do we claim our agency across the spectrum but particularly for POC for whom it's easy to say, OMG this church is a mess and there's no place for me. If you exit the room, then there's no place for you. How do you get yourself in it in a way that you can hold authentically whatever you feel called to advance. Knowing to some degree that it all builds on itself. Being elected Deputy is not the only way to gain access.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“So there's something I learned really early on, that I wish for my child, and I wish for people everywhere [which] is to say that you deserve to be in every space you're in... and you deserve to be in that space with all of who you are and don't let people tell you otherwise, don't believe the lie that you are not worthy and don't belong in that space. As I look back on myself when I was a kid, I think 'What did people think of me?' I was this odd duck of a kid who put herself in spaces because I thought well, 'of course I belong here.'”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“[In reference to another leader of Color in a similar role] 'Why are you so relieved?' I said, 'Because I have always had to be the first and the only in so many situations, and I just had no desire, none whatsoever, to be the first again.' I had no desire for that. So, it was a great relief for me. And then I thought, oh great, now people will stop bothering me.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“It's really exhausting and frustrating as a Black person ... you have to constantly be the one to bring this stuff up. Like people should be having the presence of mind and the consciousness to be able to think of this stuff before a Black person brings it up to them.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I don't want to come across angry. But I do want to know how you think though and how you think about things. So I do try to devise questions that might get at the heart of things...You know this. Black people have radar. You probably have your own kind of radar, but we have had to have a radar in order to survive. You may call it a gut, but that radar rarely fails us to know where danger is. I have to rely on my radar, so that I don't go too far, and I am trying to test where that radar is right now with this group.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“You have this Superman or Superwoman thing that gets layered onto Black leaders where you have to be extraordinary, right? And they usually hire black people in these kind of situations when things are going bad, so we hired Michael Curry the Presiding Bishop some time ago, but there was a sense that The Episcopal Church is going to hell in a handbasket, so let's see if we can work some Black man magic.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“So even though people are not trying, they're not overtly racist in trying to dominate, but it's that white privilege and lack of understanding of culture. Even though they live in the culture, sometimes they don't really get it.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

### **Reflection**

- People of Color in leadership at all levels navigate - for better or worse - the tension between taking care of the Church and taking care of themselves given the pervasiveness of systemic racism impacting all aspects of their work, and whether or not it is seen as relevant.
- The bulk of anti-racism work continues to fall on People of Color. Except for a minority of white people, racism is not widely accepted as an issue that deeply shapes and affects everyone.
- White people in leadership are often in the role of translating between cultures to other white people who are blind to the systemic racism in their day-to-day lives.
- Strong anti-racist leadership involves balancing patience and urgency, humility and power, inner journey and outer realities, etc.
- To be effective, leaders must be committed to anti-racism for the long haul and must draw on deep spirituality.

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

“The moment we choose to love, we begin to move against domination, against oppression. The moment we choose to love we begin to move towards freedom, to act in ways that liberate ourselves and others. That action is the testimony of love as the practice of freedom.”<sup>39</sup>

As we have listened and learned from Episcopal leaders across the Church, we have resonated with the labyrinth at the heart of The Episcopal Church’s Becoming Beloved Community journey toward racial justice and healing.<sup>40</sup> The labyrinth invites us into an active embodied practice, one that doesn’t have a linear path. Instead, it folds on itself, brings each of us seemingly closer to a destination then brings us back out. We double-back to places visited before but from a different angle, one that might reveal new truths and different insights.

We hope the dominant patterns we lifted up in the previous section will inspire deeper reflection and action rooted in truth and love. As you digest and metabolize your own reflections and action to this report, we hope this report stirs you to continually notice patterns among individuals, leadership bodies, and the Church at large. Our engagement in racial justice must be multifaceted, complex, and adaptive. It is not a problem to be solved, but an ongoing process of transformation through action and reflection.

If the report up to now has addressed the queries "what?" and "so what?", the next section on *Living into the Questions* is our "now what?" They are questions spoken implicitly or explicitly in the course of our research. We believe these questions can inform further steps along the labyrinth. We would encourage you to sit with these questions and reflect individually and at all levels. As you lean into them, allow action and further reflection to arise throughout the church community. In addition, the section labeled *The Episcopal Church Recommendations* offers particular approaches The Episcopal Church as a whole could undertake, in order to strengthen its systemic approach.

“The way of love will show us the right thing to do, every single time. It is moral and spiritual grounding - and a place of rest - amid the chaos that is often part of life. Love is not always easy, but like with muscles, we get stronger both repetition and as the burden gets heavier. “Now is the time for all of us to show - in our words, our actions, and our lives - what love really looks like.”<sup>41</sup>

You and your community will decide what that action is and what love looks like.

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<sup>39</sup> hooks, b. (2015). *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*. United States: Taylor & Francis.

<sup>40</sup> [https://episcopalchurch.org/files/becoming\\_beloved\\_community\\_summary\\_0.pdf](https://episcopalchurch.org/files/becoming_beloved_community_summary_0.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> Grace, S., Curry, B. M. (2020). *Love Is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times*. United States: Penguin Publishing Group.

# 9 DOMINANT PATTERNS & LIVING INTO THE QUESTIONS

## Transformational vs. Transactional

What is your congregation's/diocese's/ministry's deepest longing and dream for racial healing and transformation? What is the dream beyond representation and shared language?



## Hypervisibility vs. Invisibility

For white people: Do you see predominantly white spaces as racialized? If so, how do you talk about it within your community? If not, why do you imagine that you or others do not see white people as racialized?

For People of Color: What resources do you draw on from your own culture and history to avoid internalizing racism? How do you support other People of Color in doing the same?



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

- Prioritize racial justice and healing within, between, and for People of Color including resources, gatherings, and funding. This ought to be explicitly at the center of the work and accessible to People of Color.
- Continue to educate all-white or predominantly white congregations about racialization and about the story/history of whiteness in their lives and communities. This is essential because many congregations chalk up their lack of commitment because there aren't People of Color in their church or community, as if engagement in this work is solely motivated on the proximity to People of Color and not on our baptismal covenant and moral obligation. The Episcopal Church in its anti-racism resources ought to shift the language in order to reflect both the ways white people are privileged and diminished by white supremacy culture and racist systems. Furthermore, this deepens white people's understanding of their context as racialize, regardless of who is or is not present.
- Systematize internal racial audits for leadership bodies. Conduct racial audits every 5 years on a churchwide level. Provide resources and tools to conduct racial audits for dioceses and congregations. This ensure that people engage in the long term reality of this work and enter into a process instead of one and done.
- Explore and discern a system of accountability as it relates to systemic change (culture, policy, decision making, education, liturgy, etc.). This might mean having an external body made of people, primarily People of Color, to ensure that those who are making decisions about policies, liturgy, budget, etc. are living into commitments around racial justice and healing.
- Institute reparations on the churchwide level for communities directly affected by the exploitation of or profiting from the removal and extermination of Indigenous people and the forced labor and terrorization of Black people. Continue to encourage reparations to be done on the local level as well.
- Expand this report to be a living, interactive, and theological resource for the Church. Over the course of the next few years, build upon this report, expand the voices, deepen the analysis, bring in different perspectives, and provide tangible engagement with the material.
- Design effective interventions for communities at different points along the labyrinth or in anti-racism language along the spectrum from exclusive club to anti-racist organization. Anti-racism work and racial healing cannot be a cookie cutter approach and requires dynamic, agile, and multiple points of entry.
- Use theological resources to deepen commitment to the long-haul of anti-racism and Beloved Community. This might mean creating new resources, curating resources already available, and formation around how our theology is impacted and perpetuates racism and white supremacy culture.

# ADDENDA

## *Addendum A: Tensions*

### ***Capitalization***

Throughout this report, when referring to people (rather than to paradigms or other social dynamics), we have chosen to capitalize People of Color, Black, and other names of racial groupings, such as Asian, Latinx, etc. We have chosen not to capitalize white when in reference to white people. Aside from Black, racial identifiers for People of Color reference a particular geography (Asian, Latinx, Middle Eastern, etc.). Black people in the United States and beyond who are descendants of enslaved Africans have been cut off from this tie to geography, and thus the capitalization of Black is an attempt to respect those lost histories. White has never referred to a particular geography. Whiteness has always been defined by domination, in opposition to blackness, and in service of white supremacy, which subjugates all People of Color. The bounds of whiteness have grown larger and smaller over time in order to maintain the hegemony of white supremacy. ‘White’ thus acts as a descriptor only in that it refers to shared domination, and without a tie to a particular geography, we have chosen not to capitalize it.

### ***Black, Indigenous, and People of Color vs. People of Color***

The term ‘People of Color’ (People of Color), as defined in the glossary, emerged in the late 1970s as an inclusive and unifying term which encompasses all non-white people. Building on this, the term “Black, Indigenous, and People of Color” (BIPOC) emerged during the 2010s and seeks to emphasize the particular ways in which racism targeting Black and Indigenous folks is foundational to the development of white supremacy in the United States. While we have chosen to use People of Color in this report, we could have used either, and this choice has remained a very live tension throughout the research and writing process. At the time of writing, People of Color is the more widely used term across The Episcopal Church, and we have chosen to remain consistent with this preference. We encourage readers to grapple with both the power and the limitations of each term. How might they create a sense of monolithic People of Color identity, where in fact there is vast diversity? How does it feel to hear the terms People of Color and BIPOC? What impact have slavery and Native genocide had on the fabric of racism in the United States? Does BIPOC erase the experiences of other non-Black and non-Indigenous POC, such as Asian-American people, Latinx people, and others? Is there a discomfort we feel in naming Blackness directly?

## ***Addendum B: Challenges and Limitations of the Racial Justice Audit***

As with any project of research and reporting, this racial audit presented numerous challenges and necessitates an acknowledgement of some limitations.

This project was commissioned by The Episcopal Church as a racial audit of the Church leadership, not a census of Church membership. It does not seek to make a claim about the makeup nor the experience of members of The Episcopal Church at large. While there has been some desire within Church leadership to conduct a more robust census-style research project, the limited scope of this project was, in part, due to budgetary constraints.

Conducting a research project on church leadership necessitated a definition of church leaders. This research relies on leadership as it is exercised in formal bodies across The Episcopal Church. Thus, it does not include the experiences of the myriad of individuals who hold leadership with the Church, but outside of the context of the five formal leadership bodies which have been researched.

Within an institution, power, decision making, access, and culture creation are held largely, though not exclusively, in seats of formal power. The decision to focus on these five leadership bodies stems from an analysis of where this power lies within The Episcopal Church. Other studies, conducted by the Mission Institute and others, have led Church leaders to know that some of the major roadblocks for People of Color in the Church happen in these leadership bodies, particularly at the diocesan level.

The overall response rate to the survey was 45%. While this is an acceptable response rate to confirm the validity of the findings, it must also be acknowledged that none of the data collected is representative of the whole of the Church. This limitation is inherent in a quantitative data collection process like the one engaged here.

Within the survey tool itself, multiple limitations emerged. To collect racial demographic data, participants were asked to choose all descriptions of themselves from a list of racial groups and classifications. While this allowed for a fuller and more nuanced understanding of the diversity of Church leadership, it inhibited the ability to make distinctions across and between racial groups without accounting for some respondents multiple times. The solution has been to create two overarching stratifications through which to analyze the data: People of Color and white people. This separation has been helpful, and also poses many risks. It does not allow for an exploration of the diversity within People of Color. It risks creating a monolith of People of Color, not representing vastly different experiences across the Church. It also does not allow for investigation into whether or not there are patterns of people who identify with the same racial grouping having similar experiences of racism in the Church.

Interviewees were self-selected from amongst those who completed the survey. This provides an obvious limitation to the research. It has been limited in scope to the experiences of those who chose to share, and who were currently, at the moment of research, in formal positions of leadership.

A set of challenges were also presented around issues of context. Location is one important context that has influenced the research. The experiences of people in different dioceses regarding racism, due to geographic location, historical and contemporary leadership, and current events, vary widely. Every attempt has been made to explore these particularities of context and location, and to not rely on sweeping statements of the Church at large.

Another challenge of context involves the location of interviews. To interview members of the Executive Council, for example, researchers travelled to the Council meeting in Montgomery, AL. At this particular meeting, Council members were deeply engaged in exploring the history of race and racism, and its enduring trauma, through visits to museums and memorials in Montgomery dedicated to its unveiling. The salient focus of racism at the meeting was present in interviews with Council members. This was not consistent across other leadership bodies.

This research was concurrent with two significant sociopolitical and cultural moments of our time: the COVID-19 pandemic, and the worldwide eruptions of protest and outrage in response to the police killing of George Floyd in May 2020. Both the survey and the interviews were conducted before and after the commencement of these two phenomena. Their effects on the research cannot be understated. In reviewing the data, there is an obvious shift in the ways participants are speaking about racism in response to these events, as compared to before they occurred. The pandemic, in particular, elongated the timeline of the research process.

## *Addendum C: The Voices Continue*

In this section we continue to lift up the multitude of voices we heard throughout the research phase. Take time to read through and digest these voices as they add to the report and the importance of continuing the work of racial justice and healing.

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“Part of what I have witnessed, not just in the church, but in our state, is that difference in communication because Native people are very quiet and they will listen to what someone is saying. Then they have to pause and think about what they want to say in response. Whereas white people talk quickly, they talk on top of each other, there isn't pauses for silence to let people think about what was said, and then have a response....He posed the question, what has racism, how has it affected you as a white person? That's the first time anybody ever asked me, a white person, to think about how racism affects me. And I really appreciated that.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“There's this tall priest who's a man and he's white and he has the door open, and he's welcoming everyone. And I'm walking with a colleague of mine. The colleague of mine who's on staff is a very tall Black gentleman. The [white] priest goes to welcome us and he reaches up over my shoulder to shake my friend, the gentleman's hand, who has since stepped behind me because he's being gracious, like ladies go first. So now he's not next to me, he's behind me, and the priest acts like I didn't exist, he literally put his arm over my shoulder. Which is just this fascinating thing of either you exist too much or you don't exist enough. This is my experience being a leader in the Church. In some ways it's to my benefit because I can walk in a room and really get a sense of who these people are before they have any idea that I'm the person that they have asked to come, that I'm the leader that they think is coming. So that invisibility can be quite helpful at times in that sense, and then at other times I'll walk in a room and people will think that I'm the staff of the hotel or something like that.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“Well, I always go back to the red and yellow, black and white. We are all children in his sight. We're all children of God. And honestly here, in my leadership role, I've not ever experienced any issues with racism. Our church is not very diverse, but I think it's because just everybody has their own way and style of worship and that's okay. We accept all. We don't reject people. But in this town, I think people just have their own style and that's what they choose to do.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“The pattern that I really see is in our diocese is that oftentimes, People of Color are appointed to or asked to join leadership boards almost as a token.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“[The] Episcopal Church is viewed as an upper crust kind of church. You have people in it who have no relationship, no contact with lower income folks. So they don't see themselves as having a problem.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“So I learned the whole story of the African-American Episcopal Church literally outside of this country. I had to leave the country to access that story, which I felt was a huge tragedy. How could I get all the way through divinity school and not ... Of course that's how history goes, right? Who's telling those stories?”

- *White, Churchwide Leader*

“I think the way I see things here is that the leadership at all levels, I think, would like to see us reflect the diversity of our community. And it doesn't, mostly for historical reasons. And our congregations and our leadership will not reflect the diversity of our region unless we intentionally work to combat those historical and systemic forces.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“So somebody who takes the very light and life away from your people, from your culture. And people's eyes, they go wide and they go, ‘You’re on the reservation, aren’t you frightened?’ And I look at them and I go, ‘No, why would I be frightened?’ ‘Well, they’ll scalp you.’ And I'm like, ‘What?’”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“White privilege, others are ‘invisible.’”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I serve a bishop of Color and being a Canon people often seem more comfortable with me as a white male. I am never confused for another white male at an event and I am more free to talk about racism without it being seen as political.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I saw and felt racism at seminary and as a non-white person, felt invisible. Great efforts were made to elevate the situation of Black and Hispanic people but there was not a category for half-white or half-Asian. Often white people would speak ‘for’ the non-whites. At the Convocation in Europe, we are very diverse although the top leadership tends to be quite white. As a non-white, I feel heard and respected.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“People have acted as if I were not present in the conversation.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“When I would raise an important point for contention or priority, another ‘white’ member was given credit for it in the committee and open plenary sessions”.

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“2 big questions in one! 1) I was nominated from the floor of GC. I remember there being some dissatisfaction with the slate. I don’t remember the details. 2) During my tenure, stories too numerous to tell of silencing of voices of [C]olor. Of those whose first language is not English. And of that dynamic whereby voices of marginalized groups are sometimes given more weight as other members try to be not racist/sexist/ageist/ordination-ist. In this triennium, the Council seems far more diverse. So perhaps the next triennium committee leadership will be, too.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“Decision to include a minority on the basis of language (utilitarian), not particularly the gifts that they brought.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I think I was chosen to add diversity to the board on which I serve.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“It sometimes feels as though I am tokenized for all of the boxes I check, a gay, black, cradle Episcopalian.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Often there has been a desire by leadership at diocesan level to have a ‘token [B]lack person’ in the leadership group or serving in a parish - oddly, in our diocese, this has often been a person who has just come to the USA from Africa, Jamaica, etc. and even tho [sic] often from upper-class (financially, educationally, etc.) in their own country, they were put in poor, inner-city parishes, etc. where they had very little in common with the members of the parish. But this was seen as being intentionally inclusive. People put in these positions rarely stayed long - surprise, surprise!!”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“History. No Person of Color had held my position before, and none have been hired in similar positions since.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“...that's what the staff looks [like] from an elected-body leadership standpoint. It's absolutely predominantly white.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I have to say, ‘As a Person of Color,’ boom, ‘As a Person of Color.’ It is quite frustrating that I have to keep beginning my conversations with that preface. But I actually said, I'm like, ‘Here's my problem is we're talking about access and equal access to the Native American community, to the Liberian community, to the Hmong community. Where are they at this table? Why are they not a part of these conversations? Rather than I'm going to work through an intermediary who's going to come back to the board and then tell the board what we need.’ Call me crazy. Talk to the source.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Our nomination and ‘lifting up’ process appears not to be inclusive - I don't know if this means we are not actively recruiting different voices, but it does mean that we are not successful in that, or that many in under represented groups are gaining or feeling they can gain access. We can do better to encourage diversity and inclusivity and intentionally act toward more inclusive leadership.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I am very mindful and concerned about the development of ordained leaders for the next generation--- especially in communities of Color. Even African American numbers have gone down so badly that it is alarming at the moment. The Church as a whole has done a bad job in raising up a generation of leaders. We're facing a wide clergy shortage. But for People of Color the numbers are truly dismal. I'm very mindful of this and am trying to do something about it. I'm trying to nurture young people to step up into leadership in the church in all orders, whether lay, deacon, or priest. This is something the Church as a whole and the House of Bishops especially must address. And they have not. It's an issue that communities of Color must address. It's just now beginning to be on people's radar screen. The Church always does things very slowly, very late. I've had this conversation with our canon for ministry and development. Let's find a way, an intentional way, of calling and raising up the young People of Color for ministry.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“I think one of the things that's been highlighted for me that I don't know that I had paid attention to before, is around formation, and who actually makes it to the Commission on Ministry. And it doesn't seem like non-whites really make it all the way through, to be in a diocese as large as we are, and have been ordained in this diocese. There's only been, so far, since I was ordained, two of us were both ordained deacons. They barely

see me as a Person of Color. I know the other woman, they don't think of [her as a Person of Color] at all, and she's biracial.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“The person I ran against and who lost the election was later appointed to the COM. This process invalidated the election and appointed someone that represented the status quo instead of what our electorate wanted—someone to represent those being marginalized in the process of formation and ministry development. Our formation process also favors white, middle class individuals with access to technology and excludes those who speak other languages or need to be formed in a particular context.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Because [the bishop] made [racial reconciliation] a top priority, some of the parishes and dioceses have bought into it. It starts at the top. I think I'd put more emphasis on it. And try to get people that don't look like me to be part of it, you know, some majority people. Get them to take the lead that really believes in this, that have a passion for it. So that people can see that it's not something that is unique to African Americans and People of Color, but it affects all of us.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

[Referring to financial resources] “If you're an entity of the church, you have a set of resources that you can apply to issues. You have to decide what are the priorities you are going to apply those resources to. So from a diocesan level, I can understand why racial reconciliation is not something we put a lot of emphasis on or priority to, not that you're taking away the diversity committee because that committee still exists, you're still doing work, but on a diocesan level to say 'Here are our priorities,' it doesn't rise to that level.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“The time demands placed on members of the Standing Committee (and the mid-week, work-day meeting times) mean that only those who are retired and financially comfortable can afford the luxury of serving. This group skews white and upper middle class. While this is not intentionally racist, it discourages participation by others. In addition, those who feel comfortable running for a position on the Standing Committee are generally church insiders who have been on other diocesan-wide committees. We're exploring ways of addressing both of these.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“In addition, they've set aside money for Black parishes to help with deferred maintenance, because oftentimes, the diocese would give grants and loans to parishes to do maintenance work, but would not give those same terms to Black parishes. And so they recognize this and have set up this fund that would give grants to historically Black...parishes to do deferred maintenance and stuff like that. Set up a huge scholarship fund for the raising of Black lay leaders into ordained ministry so that the seminary experience can be a completely debt free experience.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“So I say, if this faith wants to finally get to true culture shift, you have to provide an environment where you're able to speak truth. I think what upholds this system is that it's like only certain types of people get let in and it's the people that are all thinking alike.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“All this stuff that we have to do, and there's always a certain amount of groveling that we have to do at our General Convention. And people act like it was their own money that they were giving to us. Our clergy are the lowest paid in the whole church. Yeah. It's frustrating, it's really frustrating. I'm grateful that we get that



support but it's not enough. We'll have one priest for 13 mission churches and in one weekend they will put over 100 miles in their car driving from congregation to congregation to congregation. Even if we had two priests for all of them, that's not enough. We should be ordaining people locally and training them locally, but we haven't been able to make that work for three bishops now. It's so frustrating. But I don't know. The national church is hurting too. Attendance is dropping, financial giving is dropping. There's a certain amount of practicality that goes with it.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Just because you have [P]eople of [C]olor in leadership positions does not mean those people have equal power or voice.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“As a Latino, I feel like we are only seen as a ‘ministry’ instead of equal partners in the Gospel and in leadership. Felt like we are the ones who need help and not as ones who have something to contribute. I have seen this in many diocesan leaderships I have been under.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“While not intended or overt, the ‘self nomination’ process for choosing diocesan leaders automatically excludes many groups. The diocese also assumes that all elected leaders know how the diocese staff function and what is expected of them in the role; no orientation at all.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Throughout the process, rules and the application of rules for advancing aspirants in the process for Holy Orders fell along racial lines. White evangelicals were welcomed into the [d]iocese with bending of canonical rules while Black and Brown aspirants had roadblocks placed in their way - sometimes exceedingly similar to exceptions made for [w]hite aspirants.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I experienced bullying and intimidation by the Bishop, Canon to the Ordinary and President of the Standing Committee.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I see discrimination in the processes in place. If one’s English isn’t strong or doesn’t know New England culture very well, it is very hard to be included in diocesan committees. It is hard for new leaders of other cultures to be raised up.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Race has definitely been mentioned during COM meetings at least a handful of times, as we talk about ministries targeted towards underserved populations in the Episcopal church and about the backgrounds of some of our candidates. As a white, privileged woman who's only been on the Commission a short time, I have not noticed racism as a factor in our decision-making, but admit I am not the person who would see that most clearly. I do think the process presumes a certain amount of financial comfort, however, in order to undertake all the steps necessary towards ordination.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“The thing that stands out to me the most from my position is how language barriers can lead to challenges of inclusivity and access. While the diocese makes an effort to provide resources in English and Spanish, our community includes many who speak neither as their first language, and our staff is largely English-speaking. There is a sensitivity to cultural differences that exist within our communities, but not a lot of resources to

get those of us up to speed who may not have had that kind of exposure/education/training before.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“The systemic racism is present in many ways. There are barriers to entry that most cannot see. It's expensive to go through the process and to go to seminary. Good luck lifting up working-class individuals who can't quit their jobs or move their families.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“A communication system needs to be set up so all parish and mission churches can interact with each other instead of just ‘top-down’ communication.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“It appears to be very difficult to persuade minorities to place their names in nomination for elective positions. I do not see this [as] racism in the sense of discrimination rather cultural resistance and pragmatic problems associated with serving for minorities.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“One of the biggest sins of this Church is the disparity in compensation between white males and white females, People of Color, and especially women of Color. Because at that bottom rung is mostly women and People of Color and especially women of Color. These are the sacrificial jobs. We do not do a good job, at this Church, of doing that. And I blame the bishops. I blame the bishops because especially for mission congregations, if you're doing deployment and you're lowballing that or you're balancing your budget on the back of your mission vicars, this is not right.”

- *White, Churchwide Leader*

“As a white person it is hard to determine what institutional racism exists as it is often not projected at me. I did not see areas of racism as I was hired. I think the biggest institutional issue that prevents elected bodies and leadership that is more diverse is the lack of funding to compensate for time off (two weeks needed for General Convention, time off for meetings, etc...) and additional support that removes the economic barriers to serving/working in The Episcopal Church.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Well I can't say I've ever encountered anything egregious or overt in the time that I've been with The Episcopal Church, which I'm very grateful for. Everyone here has been very respectful and inclusive and has wanted to see me succeed. I think one of the things with and I think I noted this in my written responses about the application process and the onboarding and that sort of thing. I think that one thing that is important in that whole process is particularly African Americans is negotiating pay and benefits and that sort of stuff. And sometimes that's an awkward conversation. And given the legacy of the pay gap and the long term issues we have about not just the pay gap but the wealth gap as well between African Americans and whites.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“The people who led them just were not able to get past the surface. Not that they weren't smart intelligent people, but they just weren't able to crack through. I mean, we're a pretty tough bunch.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I think, certainly because racial reconciliation is one of the priorities that this organization is very, very sensitive to issues of race and racism. When I talk about training for the employees it's one of the issues that we've tried to address. Looking at staff one of the questions that we ask is how diverse is your staff? What are

the criteria that you're using for selection? And speaking personally, I'm increasingly trying to identify, 'Okay, where are my own systemic biases?' It's all well and good to say, 'Well, okay, so and so is of Haitian descent and actually that person is as well.' But you can't look at that and say, 'Well, I'm just checking the box.' They were hired, frankly, because they were outstanding candidates in their respective areas. But we're never going to be perfect at this, but it's just continuing to learn, continuing to be aware."

- *White, Churchwide leader*

"But when we talk about racism, when we had our visit with the bishop, I said, 'We do this training, and I've done this training when I worked for the federal government.' We do this training in the church and we all get hyper, we all get all fired up. After they leave, nothing happens, nothing happens. No follow up by anybody to see how things worked out."

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

"There was a woman who was on the Commission on Ministry with me from the area, and that is what we do currently have a local Spanish language dominant service. This person who is from a different church in that area was like, 'Oh, well the Hispanic population, we don't have to do anything with them. They're not us.' Which to me is kind of horrifying both just in terms of like, yeah."

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

"People say they want all this diversity, but they're not willing to be made different or to do things differently in order to truly welcome diversity. It doesn't stop with just welcoming people in the door and teaching them to do things your way. People talk about the 'big tent.' If the tent truly is big, there's going to be some hand clapping, there's going to be some gospel music, people may be worshipping with zydeco."

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

"I feel that in six years that I have been on the Commission on Ministry, I have been silenced. I have been told I'm overreacting. I have been told, 'It's not as bad as you think. We're working really hard. See, we spent an hour here talking about race, therefore we're good people.' I can say a lot of things, but my actions have to match what I say. Our decisions as the church leadership have to match what we say we are. The baptismal covenant says, 'Will you respect the dignity of every human being, not will you respect the dignity of every human being you look like, that thinks like you, that acts like you, that talk to you.' That's not what the message is about."

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

"I think that it's been said by smarter people than me that racism and anti-black[ness] runs right down the middle of our culture and country. It was how we were founded. It's part of our founding documents that African Americans are three-fifths of a human being. I mean, you can't have that codified in the very founding documents of your country and not have that. So race and racism is a sin that has so thoroughly permeated our culture that we're unconscious of it. And I think Black folk are often unconscious of it as well. When I talked to them and they told me their stories. And you know, I have some very successful African Americans in my diocese who don't want to talk about this. They made it and they're not interested in anything."

- *White?, Churchwide Leader*

"And then also, I think just in recruitment in general, I think the church should make recruiting minority staff a priority at all levels from interns to the very top echelons of the church. And just make that a priority basically."

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“When I was discerning whether I should take the position I currently have (a position in advocacy and social justice), I wondered if it was right for me to work in the field since I am a white person. Race did not come up in any other portion of the hiring process. A major part of my job is advocating for a racially inclusive church. I feel that I have more power when it comes to communicating with churches than I do over racist structures within the church as a whole. This has been a major tension in my work. There are people on all levels that understand that racism is bad, but not how to combat it on a structural level. Our new bishop is [B]lack, so racism in our diocese is under a microscope.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Subtle, not overt, differences in accepting the authority of the office I hold. I notice that previous bishops - all white - were given more leeway in making decisions. The authority of the bishop has been challenged more in some barely noticeable ways during my tenure.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Tokenism, tendency to look for "well-behaved" (not resisting current culture) person.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“The work I do in helping form emerging leaders, especially ordained leaders, brushes up against issues of race and power constantly. Our system is designed around the mindset and abilities of people successful in white culture (education, digital literacy, communication styles, expectations). We say we want to offer pathways that are culturally contextual for [I]ndigenous and immigrant and culturally specific groups. But at every level of the process -- from COM to Standing Committee to course instructors to pastoral care to behavioral challenges -- we struggle to know what of our expectations are theological ones, and what are grounded in the ethnic inheritance and expectations of ‘Anglicanism.’ I hear my colleagues and myself wrestling with all these questions: ‘How can we ordain someone who can't effectively use the internet?’ ‘How do we know that the folks in that language-specific course are learning what they need to learn?’ ‘Is that conflict between the postulant and his peers due to his sexism, or due to his cultural difference, or due to their racism?’ To make some baby steps in addressing this, we are working with a consultant to conduct an equity audit of our formation competencies documents. This work feels crucial. It also feels very vulnerable to the nature of our elected bodies as three-year roles that people cycle in and out of, often with very little engagement in the deep work that is being done, and yet those people have astonishing power to squash the deep work. It's discouraging. That's on the level of how we treat individuals by the design of the program and the expectations of the people in it. --- AND --- the content of our leadership formation is still struggling to be founded on an actual theology of Beloved Community --- not as an add-on or as a day-long workshop or as a part of our ethics and politics, but as foundational theology. I see many of us wanting to turn the church in this direction, and I'm hopeful but very clear about how unskilled we are here.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Only certain people are invited to the table and heard ... mainly all white. Even people of a minority race who are invited to the table seem to be there for appearances sake, the ones who will just go along, be very political and not speak real truth for fear of retaliation or run the risk of being left out even more if they speak up.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Racial imbalance is blamed on lack of Persons of Color, while little is done to ensure balance. Representation matters.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I talked with a clergy person from my [d]iocese. I asked if her congregation would feel comfortable participating in this training. She said, I don’t think so: they don’t think they have a problem. They’re in the suburbs somewhere. An all white congregation. They don’t see this as something they need. But you have to be intentional about this.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“We as missionaries do absolutely think about representation across race, culture, geography, class, all kinds of things when we go out looking for people to serve in positions of power and getting across that threshold, getting to a yes with those folks or get into a yes with those folks does not happen. It can be really challenging for those folks once they get into those positions. That doesn't even begin to touch the work of identity, right? Are we special because we're doing this weird ritual thing on Sunday morning? Do we have a coherent theology around what we think we're doing in relationship across difference? Or are we just sort of following a progressive political self-identity to its self righteous conclusion? I don't know. If you have the answers please tell me.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“Two of the richest churches in the diocese are very conservative, and it's a matter of walking this line to not offend them. And that's a little, it's a little shot in the gut every now and again. I mean, I sort of understand, but at the same time, it's like, aren't we called to push each other, aren't we called to challenge each other? Yeah.”

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“Our diocese has been doing intentional work around undoing racism, and the leadership body has been actively engaged in that work and learning. There is a [Racial Healing, Justice & Reconciliation Network] consisting of lay and ordained leaders of mixed races. That work has been embraced by diocesan leadership. We are still a work in progress and yet forward movement is being made. Training of leaders is underway, and a number of clergy and lay leaders have been trained.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“I’ve also seen a glimmer of transformation in the way the deputies of Color are having the opportunity to come together, to work together, and to do some things. One of the challenges in being a minority population is that you don’t know the system. And since you don’t know the system and you’re also not necessarily inculturated in how the system works, those gatherings create an opportunity for you to form networks of people who can mentor each other. When I came to the Deputies of Color meeting in Austin, they explained ‘This is how convention functions: this is the structure, the schedule, these are the things that will be going on’. There were a lot of people who had never been to Convention before for whom it was extremely helpful. I had been to previous Conventions and some of it I retained, but there still was a lot I didn’t. This gathering in particular is such an onslaught of information and of culture shock---regardless of whether you’re from the dominant culture or not. There is just a lot coming at you. So having the opportunity to work together, to gather and form those relationships makes a big difference in the church broadly.”

- *Person of Color, Churchwide Leader*

“... the Black Episcopal Church is losing its membership and I don't think that it's unique to just Black churches. It's just that, at least my congregation is so relatively small now that there has to be another strategy because at some point the shelf life is getting shorter and shorter, so the handful of Black churches there are, will exist no more.

- *Person of Color, Diocesan Leader*

“I believe that we are still a racist and white supremacist nation and church, and until we stop being so we're going to keep on doing this work and that happens at the personal, interpersonal and institutional and cultural levels.”

- *White, Churchwide Leader*

“In some places, also The Lord’s Prayer as well, and in the practices, particularly on the reservations where we find ourselves, you have elders who have been in the church for their entire lifetime and who are very much followers of the Anglo traditions and who are very uncomfortable with the mingling, if you would, of Native American spiritual practices and the traditional Episcopal Church practices and yet the younger generations who see nothing wrong with that at all, where to have a drum group and the singers at a wake or a funeral; it adds to the comfort, adds to the strength and reminds us that we aren't either/or as the people of God but we are both/and, and to embrace that and I saw that and I don't remember which diocese or which city I was in but there was there was a young native, I believe it was a Native girl who came up to a police officer and she was smudging with sage and sweetgrass and he knew exactly what to do and he reached out and embraced embrace that gift, that Rite of Purification in a good way.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

“What I found and what I've tried to share with other people who haven't had that experience is a gracious, loving, hospitable, welcoming, forgiving people that have taught me so much and loved me and tutored me gently in spite of my missteps or clumsiness or ignorance. And I'll own it as a piece of my own upbringing and I'm sure ... and that would be white privilege. That's just something that is so ingrained and that so many people are oblivious to and just take for granted the opportunities that they have and just assume that that's the way the world is and why would anyone else's experience be different than that? You mean we're not all looking at an equal level playing field? We're just one battle at a time, one person at a time, one experience at a time, we can make a difference. We can make a difference and we can change this world and we can change our church and most importantly, I can change myself by the grace of God. I can change my heart, my behaviors, my words, that's where it's going to start. I can't start working on the other if I haven't done the work on myself.”

- *White, Diocesan Leader*

## **Addendum D: Glossary of Terms**

This list of terms has been compiled as an attempt to create a common language of racial justice. All definitions come from Racial Equity Tools unless otherwise noted.<sup>42</sup>

### **Anti-racism**

Anti-racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

### **BIPOC<sup>43</sup>**

BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. It is an acronym which seeks to highlight the ways in which racism targeting Black and Indigenous peoples has been foundational to the construction of white supremacy in the United States.

### **Dysconscious Racism<sup>44</sup>**

Dysconscious racism is generally defined as the unquestioned acceptance of culturally dominant norms and privileges. These range from the historical determinism of slavery to racially exploitive standards inherent in American society.

### **Episodic Racism**

Episodic racism refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Episodic racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing that is what they are doing.

### **LGBTQ+<sup>45</sup>**

An umbrella acronym, commonly including people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and other identities beyond the cisgender, heterosexual normative majorities.

### **People of Color**

Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-white racial groups. Racial justice advocates have been using the term “People of Color” since the late 1970s as an inclusive and unifying frame across different racial groups that are not white, to address racial inequities. While People of Color can be a politically useful term and describes people with their own attributes (as opposed to what they are not, e.g., “non-white”), it is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and may be more appropriate.

### **Race**

Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact. Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered “white” in the United States today were considered “non-white” in previous eras, in U.S. Census data and in mass media and popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian, and white Jewish people). The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white.

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<sup>42</sup> <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary#>

<sup>43</sup> Written by the authors of this report.

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00131725.2018.1505015?journalCode=utef20>

<sup>45</sup> Written by the authors of this report.

## **Racism**

Racism is racial prejudice combined with social and institutional power. Racism is a system of advantage and oppression based on race. Racism is different from solely racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

## **Systemic/Structural Racism**

The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage white people while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for People of Color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of white domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism – all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.

## **White Dominating Culture<sup>46</sup>**

A rephrasing of the term ‘white supremacy culture’ which seeks to emphasize the active effects of domination that the system has on People of Color.

## **White Supremacy**

The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazis, white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and "undeserving." Drawing from critical race theory, the term "white supremacy" also refers to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level.

## **White Supremacy Culture**

White supremacy culture refers to the dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States. These standards may be seen as mainstream, dominant cultural practices; they have evolved from the United States’ history of white supremacy. Because it is so normalized it can be hard to see, which only adds to its powerful hold. In many ways, it is indistinguishable from what we might call U.S. culture or norms – a focus on individuals over groups, for example, or an emphasis on the written word as a form of professional communication. But it operates in even more subtle ways, by actually defining what “normal” is – and likewise, what “professional,” “effective,” or even “good” is. In turn, white culture also defines what is not good, “at risk,” or “unsustainable.” White culture values some ways – ways that are more familiar and come more naturally to those from a white, western tradition – of thinking, behaving, deciding, and knowing, while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways.

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<sup>46</sup> Written by the authors.