

Episcopal Diocese
of Washington



Diócesis Episcopal
de Washington

Reparations is the spiritual process to remember, restore, reconcile and make amends for historical and continuing wrongs against humanity that can never be singularly reducible to monetary terms, but must include a substantial investment and surrender of resources.

EDOW's Working Definition of Reparations

Dear EDOW clergy, wardens, and elected delegates to Diocesan Convention,

Blessings to you in these early September days, full of promise and potential for ministry.

In preparation for an important vote regarding racial reparations at our next diocesan convention, I write with a request for your participation in a diocesan-wide **symposium on reparations to be held Saturday, October 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Calvary Episcopal Church in Washington, DC.**

Register for the symposium [here](#). If you are unable to attend in person, please consider participating via live-stream, or reviewing the recorded sessions at a later date. Given the magnitude of the issues before us, it is imperative that every congregation's delegation of lay leaders to the next diocesan convention and all voting clergy be fully prepared for the vote in January.

During the symposium we will:

- Hear and digest the reports of historical investigations into the ways the founding congregations of our diocese, and many of their members, amassed much of their wealth from the labor of enslaved persons.
- Explore the painful reality of our historical complicity and active participation in chattel slavery, and some of the lasting consequences of that complicity.
- Hear testimonies from those in our diocese who have undertaken a racial history of their congregations and what they have learned.
- Receive the preliminary findings of a nation-wide study of other religious, academic, and civic institutions that have attempted to make financial restitution for the wealth their forebears accumulated through chattel slavery and other subsequent expressions of racial injustice. These include Virginia Theological Seminary, Georgetown University and the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland.
- Reflect theologically on the issue of reparations with the Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, Canon Theologian of Washington National Cathedral and Dean of Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary.

The day is being carefully planned by members of the Diocesan Council appointed Reparations Task Force and diocesan staff. There will be ample time for questions and discussion.

In preparation for the symposium, the School for Christian Faith and Leadership is offering An Exploration of Reparations in EDOW, a two-session online course developed by the Reparations Task Force on

Wednesday, September 14th, and Wednesday, September 21st, at 7:00 p.m. You can register for the course [here](#). There is a video preview of this curriculum to share with your congregation: [Repairing the Breach: Peter Jarrett Schell's Introduction](#).

To be sure, we will continue the conversation at Regional Gatherings later in the fall as we draft a resolution for consideration at Diocesan Convention in January. It would be unfortunate, however, for you to come to those meetings unprepared. To that end, I ask for your engagement with the good work of our Reparations Task Force and presence at the symposium.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the diocesan staff with questions or concerns. I look forward to gathering with you on October 1st, one of the most significant events in our diocesan life.

Faithfully,

Bishop Mariann