

We are comforted in the fact that we are not starting from scratch; People of Color have been advocating for change for decades. We shouldn't seek to re-invent the wheel but instead amplify the good work that has already been done. In order to do this, we should find Black leadership and amplify Black voices. Additionally, we would like to work with an organization(s) that tackles the issue of racial justice using a multi-faceted approach. We need to acknowledge our Black parishioners and ensure we are providing them a safe space to fully participate in Jesus' love. This encompasses raising up the voices of our Black parishioners as we continually strive toward a more perfect expression of Jesus' all-encompassing love in our congregational life.

What TFCE has Done

TFCE has a long history of partnering with organizations that either directly or indirectly address racial inequality within our local region. We have either current or past relationships with:

1. Tinner Hill Heritage Society
2. Homestretch
3. Bailey's Crossroads Shelter
4. Arlington Food Assistance Center
5. The Social Justice Committee of Falls Church
6. Offender Aid and Restoration
7. The Lazarus Center

TFCE also hosts and/or sponsors a number of events with our partnering organizations throughout the year including Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation events, The Martin Luther King day community festival, and providing hospitality for the Rally for Black Lives at Cherry Hill Park in June 2020. The church is currently participating in the bimonthly Silent Witness against Racial Justice events along Broad Street with the Falls Church Presbyterian.

TFCE sponsors educational opportunities throughout the year including topics devoted exclusively to racial justice during adult formation as well as parishioner led book groups. The enslaved workers' plaque on church property was installed in 2017 to commemorate those enslaved people who built the Falls Church Episcopal. The archives ministry within TFCE is currently working with the Falls Church vice mayor's office to help re-write a more inclusive telling of the history of the city of Falls Church.

We acknowledge that we can do more.

What TFCE Will Do in Future

Partnerships: We will strengthen our existing partnerships with the Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation and Offender Aid and Restoration and be alert to new partnerships and opportunities through the Episcopal Public Policy Network. We should follow on policy work being done by our partners instead of attempting to undertake de novo policy efforts. We will partner with the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes (CEEP) and take part in a pilot program for testing a new parish learning resource for Racial Justice and Reconciliation in the late fall. We will also be open to new, additional partnerships.

Education: We will commit to offering opportunities for education throughout the year for our adults, youth, and children. Clergy and lay leaders will continue to present Adult Formation topics on racial justice and extend invitations to topical speakers. We will create a fund to be used for formation activities focused on racial justice, named for the enslaved person(s) associated with TFCE. This fund could be used to support a yearly speaker event commemorating Juneteenth. We will partner with the Tinner Hill

Heritage Foundation to participate in yearly Juneteenth Commemoration activities. TFCE staff and clergy will support the formation of book clubs for interested congregants. Our church will also participate in the *Sacred Ground* initiative of the Episcopal Church. Our archives ministry will commit to ensuring that People of Color associated with our church's history are represented in our church tour materials and brochures.

Community: We will create and pay for a banner or series of banners to be placed on church property that makes clear our church's stance on loving our neighbors as ourselves, striving for justice and peace among all people, and respecting the dignity of every human being. We will continue to support and actively participate in community racial justice events. We will look to strengthen our relationship with more diverse Episcopal congregations and continue to support Rock Christian leadership during this time of physical separation. We will prayerfully consider how we can broaden the diversity within our own congregation. Finally, we will expand an existing fund to offset tuition costs at the Falls Church Episcopal Day School to ensure that our children are exposed to more diversity at an early age.

Ministry/Leadership: We will establish a racial justice ministry with strong lay leadership to ensure it is sustained and successful for years to come. We will commit to identifying future vestry leaders that will be passionate about racial justice. We will commit to ensuring that our vestry reflects the diversity of our congregation and community. Additionally, the vestry and staff of TFCE will commit to yearly diversity and implicit bias training.

Images: We will commit to including images that are more diverse when promoting and advertising church programs and projects.

Prayers: And finally, we will pray so that our prayers have feet and arms and eyes and hands!

The Collect for Social Justice (Book of Common Prayer, p. 260)

Almighty God, who created us in your own image: Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among the nations, to the glory of your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

A Prayer for the Oppressed (Book of Common Prayer, p. 826)

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.