

Anti-Racism Policy of St. Mary's in-the-Valley Episcopal Church

Purpose: As followers of Christ, we are called to love one another as God loves us, striving for justice, peace, and the dignity of every human being. Recognizing the sin of racism and its pervasive impact on individuals and communities, St. Mary's Episcopal Church commits to active, ongoing anti-racism work. This policy outlines our dedication to confronting racism in all its forms, both within ourselves and in the wider world, as we seek to be a community of justice, equity, and love.

Our Commitments

1. Challenging White Fragility

We acknowledge that discomfort often accompanies conversations about race and racism. We commit to engaging with humility and openness, resisting defensiveness, and working through our discomfort to grow in understanding and action.

2. Using Our Voices for Anti-Racism

We commit to speaking out against racism whenever we encounter it, recognizing that silence perpetuates injustice. This includes challenging racist beliefs, practices, and structures in our church, community, and beyond.

3. Challenging Racism in Others

As people who recognize and acknowledge white privilege, we commit to confronting racism in those around us with compassion and accountability, helping to educate and inspire others toward anti-racism work.

4. Uplifting, Supporting, and Centering BIPOC Voices

We commit to centering the voices, stories, and leadership of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). We will actively seek opportunities to amplify their voices, support their work, and honor their lived experiences.

5. Financially Supporting BIPOC Movements and Causes

We commit to providing financial support to organizations, movements, and initiatives led by and for BIPOC communities. We will prioritize budgetary allocations and fundraising efforts to ensure this support is sustainable and impactful.

6. Lifelong Anti-Racism Education

We recognize that anti-racism is a lifelong journey. We commit to ongoing education for our congregation, clergy, and staff, including workshops, book studies, and other learning opportunities.

7. Breaking Through Apathy

We reject indifference and inaction in the face of systemic racism. We commit to active engagement in anti-racism work, recognizing that apathy perpetuates harm.

8. Showing Up Even When We Make Mistakes

We acknowledge that we will make mistakes in this work. We commit to showing up with humility, learning from our errors, and continuing the work without retreating into shame or defensiveness.

9. Using Our Privilege for Anti-Racism

We commit to leveraging our privilege—social, economic, and institutional—to dismantle systems of oppression and build equitable, inclusive structures.

10. Challenging Optical Allyship

We commit to moving beyond performative actions or appearances of allyship. Our focus will be on meaningful, sustained engagement that prioritizes impact over intent.

11. Being Good Ancestors

We commit to building a legacy of justice, equity, and inclusion for future generations. This includes creating policies and practices that reflect our commitment to anti-racism and ensuring they are upheld over time.

Implementation

To uphold these commitments, St. Mary's Episcopal Church will:

- **Review Church Practices:** We will audit our policies, liturgies, hiring practices, and community partnerships to ensure they align with our anti-racism commitments.
- **Engage in Community Action:** We will participate in local and national efforts to address racial injustice, including marches, advocacy, and volunteering.
- **Measure Progress:** We will regularly evaluate our progress and update this policy as needed to reflect our growth and learning.

Conclusion

This policy is a living document that reflects our commitment to following Christ's call to love our neighbors and work for justice. We invite every member of St. Mary's Episcopal Church to join in this sacred work, trusting in God's grace to guide us toward a more just and equitable world.

Adopted by the St. Mary's Bishop's Committee on Sunday, March 9, 2025.