Resolution for the Creation of a Reparations Committee for Reparations in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington

Submitted by: The Rev. Gayle Fisher-Stewart (ret.), Erika Gilmore (St. George's, DC), Embry Howell (All Souls, DC), The Rev. Glenna Huber (Church of the Epiphany), The Rev. Peter Jarrett-Schell (Calvary), Caroline Klam (Church of the Epiphany), The Rev. Michele Morgan (St. Mark's, Capitol Hill), Gigi Nelson (Church of the Atonement), Cathy O'Donnell (St. John's Norwood), Andrea Pringle (St. Luke's, Bethesda), Gail Russell (Christ Church, Clinton), Susan Schulken (Grace Episcopal, DC), Anton Vanterpool (St. Alban's. DC), The Rev. David Wacaster (Grace Church, Georgetown), The Rev. Richard Weinburg (St. Margaret's, DC), The Rev. Creamilda Shirley Wulck-Nortley Yoda (Christ Episcopal Church, Clinton)

RESOLVED, that a Reparations Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee"), be appointed by the Bishop Diocesan, is hereby established to address and recommend reparative measures for historical injustices inflicted on affected clergy, congregations and communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee:

a. shall help investigate and assess the impact of racialized injustices, including the identification of affected communities and congregations, and the scope of harm.

b. shall develop a comprehensive reparations plan, including financial, social, educational, and policy measures.

c. shall review the implementation of approved reparative measures and provide ongoing evaluation and recommendations for improvement; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee shall engage with affected individuals, communities, experts, and stakeholders to ensure that its work is informed, inclusive, and transparent; and be it further

RESOLVED, that:

a. The Committee Composition shall consist of at least five to eight members, appointed by the Diocesan to include individuals with expertise in writing, history, law, economics, social justice, and community advocacy. The Committee membership shall be majority African-American in composition.

b. All members shall be individuals with a demonstrable history of commitment to racial justice (including participation in organizations and initiatives working toward racial equity).

c. In making appointments, the Bishop and the Committee shall endeavor to reflect the geographical, lay/clerical and other significant diversities of the Diocese.

d. The Committee may seek the support of a historian and/or program manager, to be compensated using resources from the reparations fund. Those who serve as support shall not have a vote on the

Committee. The historian would have the capacity to accompany congregations as they examine their history through a lens of race. This person may be supported through the reparations fund.

e. The Committee shall have a chair elected by its members. The chair would have an advisory role that supports the historian and/or program manager; and be it further

RESOLVED, that adequate funding and resources shall be allocated to the Committee to carry out its mandate effectively, including research, and consultations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that:

a. The Committee appointments would be made by May 1, 2025.

b. The Committee will function for a minimum of ten years, with the possibility of an extension depending on progress and needs. Committee members will serve three-year terms and may be reappointed after taking a one-year break.

c. The Committee shall submit an annual report to diocesan convention detailing its findings, recommendations, and progress on reparative measures.

d. The Committee shall maintain transparency in its decision-making processes, providing regular updates to Diocesan Council, the Bishop and the Diocese. The Committee, in consultation with the Bishop and Diocesan staff, shall establish mechanisms for accountability, including review processes and avenues for input and feedback.

EXPLANATION: Research conducted to date has shown that sustained, dedicated involvement from a committed group of individuals is critical to ensuring that diocesan efforts to address both historical and ongoing anti-Black bias are effective and impactful. This group would serve to maintain momentum and ensure that actions are intentional, accountable, and measurable over time.

Additionally, the research suggests that many congregations within the diocese are willing to engage in the important work of examining their parish histories through a racialized lens—if the necessary resources are made available. Congregations would benefit from support in this process, such as access to historians or a specialized committee, to provide expertise and guidance. This support can also help maintain accountability and ensure that the process is thorough and meaningful.

It is also essential to establish a dedicated group responsible for overseeing the allocation of financial resources. Given that monetary disbursements are a key part of reparations efforts, this committee must be closely aligned with diocesan structure, policies, and procedures. At the same time, the group must be impartial to ensure that funds are directed to, reach those individuals, congregations, and communities most impacted by anti-Black racism.