Funding Reparations in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington

Sponsored 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 the Diocese commits to budget no less $5 million, dispersed during budget cycles 2026-2035, to be used in making initial financial reparations for its history of participation in anti-Black racism that has undermined the Black community in this region; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Congregations of the Diocese are invited, and encouraged, to contribute additional funds toward this initiative; and be it further

RESOLVED, that these funds shall be used for initiatives and programs that specifically aim to remedy racialized inequity suffered by Black congregations and members of EDOW, and by the Black community of the Washington area at large; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the standing Reparations Committee shall determine appropriate allocations of these funds; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Finance Committee and the Treasurer shall advise Council and The Reparations Committee regarding the appropriate and efficient source of these funds; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Disbursement of these funds in full, or in part, shall not be considered completion of the Diocesan Reparations process.

EXPLANATION: In line with the Diocesan operating definition of reparations, that "*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*," the committee determined that some, substantial allocations of funds for reparations was necessary.

Dramatic wealth disparities between the predominantly Black and the predominantly white congregations of the Diocese, which exist despite similar giving levels among members, have undermined the ability of Black congregations to attract and retain clergy, to compensate those clergy equitably, and to fund other ministry initiatives and programs. Inequities in clergy

compensation levels also result in Black clergy being forced to retire on significantly lower income, when compared to their white colleagues.

Similarly, the enormous wealth disparities between the Black and white communities of the Washington area undermine the well-being, safety and political agency of the Black community at large. These inequities demand financial remedy.

The goal of $5 million was determined as a reasonable starting point for this effort. When considering investment and real estate assets, the aggregate wealth inequality between predominantly white and predominantly Black congregations appears to be at least $272 million. However, $5 million falls both within the scope of what the Diocese can likely achieve at this time, and within the immediate needs and initiatives the Committee on Black Ministries has identified.

The restoration of agency and power is an important element of the work of reparations. Therefore the specific uses of reparations funds will be left to the discretion of the ongoing Reparations Committee, but might include the following:

- Providing grants to predominantly Black Churches of the Diocese, with the aim of narrowing inequities in congregational operating funds for program ministries, staffing, and building maintenance/improvement
- Creating scholarships for Black seminarians who commit to serve in the Diocese
- Supplementing the pensions of retired Black clergy from this Diocese, whose pensions have been impacted by racially inequitable practices in hiring and compensation
- Establishing a Reparations Trust fund to support reparations initiatives to the Black community at large of the DC region,
- Staffing a Reparations Director position to manage the disbursement and use of these funds Staffing a Reparation Historian's position to assist congregations with researching and sharing their histories of involvement in, and/or injury from, anti-Black racism, or other initiatives.