



TRINITY  
EPISCOPAL  
CATHEDRAL

## **ANTIRACISM TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT**

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Portland OR

September 2022

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## **ANTIRACISM TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Following the death of George Floyd in May 2020, the Vestry of Trinity Cathedral adopted a renewed commitment to racial justice in its July 2020 Vestry Statement. The call to action from this statement provided the charter for the Antiracism Task Force, established in February of 2021. The 14-member Task Force included representatives from clergy and lay leadership of the church.

Working over the next 15 months, the Task Force developed recommendations in the areas of culture, campus, currency, and continuity highlighted in the July 2020 Vestry Statement. An overarching recommendation is that the Vestry create a commission that will carry this work forward.

A key activity of the Task Force was to work with the Mission Institute to conduct a racial justice audit at Trinity. In August of 2021, online surveys were sent to two groups, the leadership of the church and the congregation at large; the Mission Institute also conducted 15 individual interviews. Overall, data was collected from 498 individuals. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the survey data identified 6 dominant interlocking patterns at Trinity:

- Anxiety and Fear Embedded in the System,
- Whiteness at Trinity,
- Intersectionality of Differences,
- Key Role of Leadership,
- Impact of Racism: Microaggression, Exclusion, Exhaustion, and
- Challenging Systemic Racism vs. Diversity and Inclusion.

The work of the Task Force was grounded in Trinity's core values and the 2017 strategic vision. Key to both was Trinity's vision of Radical Hospitality as undergirding everything we do.

Trinity's antiracism work takes place in the larger context of The Episcopal Church's commitment to racial reconciliation, healing and justice. The 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention of the Episcopal Church in July 2022 adopted a number of resolutions related to the call for racial justice.

Since the founding of Trinity Cathedral, the congregation has sought ways to address concerns that today would be labeled issues of social justice. This report summarizes some of the multiple efforts and initiatives that have been undertaken, especially over the past few decades. The Antiracism Task Force is the most current expression of these endeavors.

## ANTIRACISM TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Portland OR

This document reports on the work of Trinity's Antiracism Task Force. Section 1 provides information on the origins and charge of the Task Force. Section 2 gives details about the creation of the Task Force and its activities. Section 3 lists the recommendations of the Task Force. Section 4 is devoted to a brief overview of Trinity's Racial Justice Audit, conducted by the Mission Institute in 2021. Section 5 locates the work of the Task Force in the context of Trinity's recent efforts to offer radical hospitality. Section 6 situates the work of the Task Force and discussions of these issues with respect to the work of the Episcopal Church and the 2022 General Convention. Section 7 seeks to provide additional background on how the work of the Task Force relates to Trinity's evolving understanding of the need for social justice. URLs for additional [resources on antiracist work](#) from faith-based organizations are included at the end of the report.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Antiracism Task Force was established in February of 2021 by Dean Nathan LeRud with the support of the Cathedral's Vestry. It completed its work in August of 2022.

The call to action from the July 2020 [Statement of the Vestry of Trinity Cathedral, Portland OR](#) provided the charter for the work of the Task Force:

The Vestry offers the following framework for action ... across our four dimensions of congregational life.

- **Culture:** We commit to examining and reforming the ways in which systemic racism and implicit bias are embodied in our policies, practices, and congregational culture.
- **Campus:** We commit to auditing our physical spaces to understand how the Cathedral campus "speaks" of who we have been and who we want to be, and we commit to making necessary changes.
- **Currency:** We commit to intentional and deliberate investment in communities that have been underserved.
- **Continuity:** We commit to identifying and raising up leadership that reflects the congregation we wish to become.

### 2. ANTIRACISM TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

Following the February 2021 Vestry discussion about developing an Antiracism Task Force, Dean LeRud identified two co-chairs for the Task Force. Together, they created a 14-member team that represented clergy, staff, Vestry, and members of Trinity's commissions and ministries. ([Appendix A](#) lists the Task Force members and Task Force meeting dates.)

The bulk of the work of the Task Force took place during the COVID pandemic and was conducted via Zoom. The Task Force was launched with a virtual retreat on April 23, 2021

followed by five monthly or bi-monthly meetings over the next thirteen months. Early on, the Task Force divided into working groups related to culture, campus, currency, and continuity. The four working groups met independently between full task force meetings that were scheduled to update and coordinate their work.

A virtual retreat on September 11 provided an opportunity for focused working group discussions as well as collaboration among groups. An in-person retreat was held on March 19 to discuss and finalize recommendations from the working groups. A final meeting of the full task force was held on May 25 to review the results of the Racial Justice Audit<sup>1</sup> and incorporate the findings into each group's recommendations.

Task Force members hosted two programs over the summer of 2022. Two listening sessions were held in July and August for individuals who wanted to learn more and/or share their reactions to the results of the Racial Justice Audit. In August, a five-session online course, "Becoming Beloved Community: Understanding Systemic Racism", was offered.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force recommends that the Vestry create a commission that will carry this work forward. The commission will work to ensure that Trinity becomes an antiracist institution by setting priorities and adapting the recommendations below as needed to respond to the changing nature of systemic racism.

As noted, the Task Force divided itself into four subgroups focusing on campus, continuity, culture, or currency, respectively. Below, we report the Task Force recommendations organized in this way as well as the overarching goal of each subgroup's recommendations. The recommendations are listed in rank order with the highest priority recommendation listed first.

#### **CAMPUS**

**Purpose:** Understand what our physical space says about our history and who we are today as well as changes that need to be made to advance racial justice.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Reach out to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde pertaining to our current land acknowledgment and ask how Trinity could honor them as the original stewards of the land. Revise the current land acknowledgement as appropriate.
2. Explore and develop a strategy for creating a reconciliation and reparations initiative/process at Trinity.
3. Envision Trinity as an outward-facing community whose physical space is used for a variety of multicultural/multiracial activities and events.
4. Partner with relevant organizations to support the development of transitional and affordable housing in Portland.

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<sup>1</sup> URL to be added.

5. Research chancel and sanctuary design options as well as other Trinity spaces with an antiracist lens.

#### CONTINUITY

**Purpose:** Identify and raise up leadership that reflects the congregation we wish to become.

**Recommendations:**

1. Recruit People of Color from the congregation to reflect on the findings of the Mission Institute Audit and make observations and/or suggestions. Build communities of Color within Trinity to support friendship and discernment.
2. Systematically review bylaws with an antiracist lens, including especially focus on diversity in leadership/staff.
3. Ensure antiracist awareness training for all leaders.
4. Establish a paid leadership position with a social justice/antiracist focus.
5. Ensure all search committees receive implicit bias training prior to the search process and seek out a racially diverse pool of candidates.

#### CULTURE

**Purpose:** Create a culture of dignity and inclusion at Trinity.

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop and implement communication strategies to make Trinity more welcoming.
2. Establish an education and training program for DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, and access), which includes learning opportunities at Sunday Forums and Wednesday evening classes.
3. Establish a team to create quick responses to acts of hate, violence, and discrimination occurring in our community and the world at-large that would reflect solidarity with other organizations and faith communities.
4. Work to ensure that music and liturgy reflect diversity and include celebration and remembrance of various cultures.

#### CURRENCY

**Purpose:** Make transparent how Trinity's budget works to support social justice, especially antiracist work, as a vehicle for long-term systemic change within the Portland community.

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop ways to make transparent how our current budget/expenditures contribute to social justice, especially antiracism.
2. Determine the portion of the budget contributing to antiracism and social justice projects within Trinity and outside Trinity as well as the portion of the budget focusing on meeting immediate needs versus systemic change.
3. Separate out budget items that contribute to social justice work so that these expenditures can be evaluated together in terms of percentage of budget, targeted beneficiaries, and nature of social justice work. Allocate funds specifically to support antiracist work.
4. Investigate possible strategies for increasing Trinity's commitment to longer-term social justice projects that focus on systemic change.

5. Incorporate social justice issues, including specific projects, in materials about estate planning/planned giving.

#### 4. TRINITY'S RACIAL JUSTICE AUDIT BY THE MISSION INSTITUTE

A key activity of the Antiracism Task Force was to work with the [Mission Institute](https://themissioninstitute.org/),<sup>2</sup> a faith-based consulting organization, to conduct a racial justice audit at Trinity. Specific goals of the audit included:

1. Understand and explore how structural racism operates at Trinity,
2. Understand the demographic makeup of Trinity leadership and to hear their experiences of race and racism in their work and ministry,
3. Understand more fully what “whiteness” means at Trinity and how it functions, and
4. Begin to build a vision and a plan of response to the dominant patterns we identify.

In August of 2021, Trinity invited two groups to respond to anonymous online surveys developed by the Mission Institute in collaboration with the leadership team of the Task Force: 1) the leadership of the church, a group of 287 clergy, staff, and lay leaders, and 2) the congregation at large, an email list of 4,136 that included all pledgers/parishioners, plus newcomers and others who self-added to the list. (Obviously, this latter list is much larger than individuals actively involved in the life of the congregation, but it was the most appropriate available list.) Survey responses went directly to the Mission Institute.

Response rates for the leadership and congregational surveys were 39% and 9%, respectively. Quantitative data was collected from 498 individuals overall. During September and October, the Mission Institute conducted forty-five-minute qualitative interviews via Zoom with 15 respondents from the leadership group who had volunteered to provide additional information.

Highlights from the leadership survey results included the following:

- In terms of the demographics, 90% of the leadership respondents identified as white, 72% reported having advanced (MA+ or professional) degrees, 19% identified as LGBT+, 79% were age 56 and older, and only 30% reported being cradle Episcopalians.
- Twenty-seven per cent of the respondents reported experiencing discrimination, generally some form of microaggression, at Trinity.
- Asked if Trinity had a healthy relationship with conflict, 34% disagreed, 25% were neutral, 27% agreed, and 14% reported that they didn't know.
- Eighty-three percent reported that the work of racial justice fits God's mission for us, but they were not always sure Trinitarians agree on what racial justice means.

The Mission Institute also identified six dominant interlocking patterns that emerged from their quantitative and qualitative analysis of the responses:

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<sup>2</sup><https://themissioninstitute.org/>

- **Anxiety and Fear Embedded in the System:** Many people expressed doubts about whether they were “doing the right thing” and “doing enough” as it related to many aspects of life at Trinity, including racial justice. Coupled with their love for Trinity and appreciation for the good work that is happening was anxiety about how they fit into how things worked at Trinity.
- **Whiteness at Trinity:** Most people mentioned how “white” Trinity is as a church. The white dominant culture of Trinity permeates almost all the other patterns.
- **Intersectionality of Differences:** Most respondents noted that racial/ethnic differences co-existed with differences in class, education, gender, age, sexuality, and gender expression. Racial justice work needs to reflect this intersectionality of differences.
- **Key Role of Leadership:** Not surprisingly, survey respondents pointed to the key role of leadership, especially clergy, in racial justice work at Trinity. Some also expressed the view that the model of leadership was that of a monoculturally white professional, which missed and often devalued other cultural leadership styles.
- **Impact of Racism: Microaggression, Exclusion, Exhaustion:** Most respondents identified microaggressions, implicit bias, and tokenism as the primary ways they witnessed and/or experienced racism at Trinity. People who are committed to racial justice at Trinity, especially People of Color, also expressed that this work is exhausting.
- **Challenging Systemic Racism vs. Diversity and Inclusion:** The survey results highlighted a tension between respondents who saw diversity as the primary goal (i.e., getting more People of Color in the pews and involved in the life of Trinity) and those who want more substantial, systemic change, which may or may not directly influence the demographics of the congregation.

While the Mission Institute focused their efforts on the leadership survey, they also provided the results of the congregational survey. In their final report, the Mission Institute encouraged Trinitarians to examine all the sources of data in the report as they engage in antiracism work.

On April 23, 2022, the Mission Institute presented their findings at a retreat for the Antiracism Task Force, Vestry, clergy, and other lay leaders. The following day, Dean LeRud discussed the results of the Racial Justice Audit at a [Sunday morning forum](#)<sup>3</sup> open to all congregants. An article about the Racial Justice Audit was also included in Trinity’s Weekly Email Update on April 28 with a link to the Executive Summary of the Institute’s final report.

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<sup>3</sup><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tt9zrwCiYQ8>



## 5. THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE AND TRINITY'S VISION OF RACIAL HOSPITALITY

In 2017, Trinity adopted a [strategic vision](#) that focused on the four dimensions of congregational life noted above; this vision rested on Trinity's previously adopted [core values](#). Key to both was Trinity's vision of Radical Hospitality as undergirding everything we do. Following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, the Vestry adopted a renewed commitment to racial justice in its July 2020 Vestry Statement.

## 6. THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH'S COMMITMENT TO RACIAL JUSTICE

Trinity's antiracism work takes place in the larger context of the work of The Episcopal Church on these issues. The Episcopal Church's work toward racial reconciliation, healing, and justice is guided by the long-term commitment to Becoming Beloved Community. The Church organizes its ministries around

- Truth-telling: Telling the truth about our churches and race
- Proclamation: Proclaiming the dream of beloved community
- Formation: Practicing Jesus' way of healing love
- Justice: Repairing the breach in society and institutions

As a result of the 2021 [Racial Justice Audit of The Episcopal Church](#),<sup>4</sup> the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies commissioned a Working Group. [The Working Group's Report](#)<sup>5</sup> provides recommendations for racial justice at all levels within the Episcopal Church: Church-wide, provinces, dioceses, seminaries, schools, other institutions, and congregations.

The 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention of The Episcopal Church likewise adopted six resolutions<sup>6</sup> on topics relating to antiracism: the formation of the Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice, a review of the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Hymnal*, funding for a commission to investigate complicity in Indian board schools, a forensic audit of the church's assets, the development of best practices in hiring and developing cultural competencies, and the language used to refer to People of Color. General Convention also passed [a resolution on](#)

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<sup>4</sup><https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/racial-reconciliation/racial-justice-audit/>

<sup>5</sup><https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/31499>

<sup>6</sup>These were Resolutions 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, and 131. Their respective URLs are

<https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/198?house=HD&lang=en;>

<https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/199?house=HD&lang=en;>

<https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/200?house=HD&lang=en;>

<https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/202?house=HD&lang=en;>

<https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/203?house=HD&lang=en;> and

<https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/204?house=HD&lang=en.>

[Land Acknowledgements](#)<sup>7</sup> that deals with a number of topics related to the Indigenous Peoples of North America.

## 7. TRINITY'S EVOLVING UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL JUSTICE.

*As Fulfilling the Promise: The History of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 1851-2014* demonstrates, since shortly after the founding of the church, Trinity's congregation has long sought ways to minister to the needs of the larger community, including addressing concerns that today would be labeled issues of social justice. The following discussion of efforts since 1998 is by no means comprehensive, but it is important to acknowledge that across the decades, Trinitarians have confronted issues of social justice as understood at the time in a range of ways. The Antiracism Task Force is the most current expression of these endeavors.

While Trinity's Center for Spiritual Development, launched in 1998, focused on questions of spiritual practice, following the events of September 11, 2001 and the anti-Muslim sentiment they gave rise to, many of the Center's visiting speakers and its longer-term programming like *Seeking God in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* focused on understanding contemporary Christianity in the context of the other major Abrahamic faiths, Judaism and Islam, as well as non-dualistic traditions like Buddhism. Over the past few years, a number of classes and Saturday workshops have continued this latter focus. A consistent theme of such efforts has been the cultivation of openness to and appreciation of difference and of compassion, prerequisites for creating a more just and equitable society and world.

Over the past decade, given the changes in American society, a growing number of Trinitarians have felt a need to educate themselves about the social, economic, political, and demographic diversity of Portland, Oregon, and our country. Much of these efforts has focused specifically on deepening our understanding of racism in American society, its consequences for all, and opportunities for confronting systemic racism. [Appendix B](#) details the various programs or initiatives that have sought to broaden Trinitarians' awareness of these issues. The paragraphs below provide additional detail about some of the specific endeavors.

In response to the August 9, 2014 murder of Michael Brown, an unarmed Black youth, in Ferguson, Missouri, a group of Trinitarians created the Trinity Racial Action/Information Network (T.R.A.I.N.). Its purpose was "to make the transition from racial consciousness as an occasional focus of discourse at Trinity to being an integral part of the community's spiritual practice." From October 2014 until March 2020, the T.R.A.I.N steering committee offered multiple opportunities for Trinitarians and guests to learn from and about People of Color in Oregon about how they and their communities had been and continue to be impacted by systemic racism and poverty as well as the ways in which the white community has contributed to this oppression. Presentations included lectures, storytelling, and discussion, and there were opportunities for those interested to

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<sup>7</sup><https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/31499>

experience art, theater, music, dance, and museums focusing on these communities. Since the creation of the Antiracism Task Force, the work of T.R.A.I.N has been integrated into its work.

Following the election of President Donald Trump, a number of Trinitarians were especially concerned about the increase in anti-immigrant public discourse, a concern that gave rise to the Red Door Task Force. This initiative led to two programs: 1) the creation of the Immigrant Welcoming Team, a program in partnership with [the Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice](#)<sup>8</sup> (IMIrJ), and 2) Listen to Learn, a program to assist adult English language learners. Both programs were paused with the advent of COVID.

The murder of George Floyd in May 2020 and the social unrest it sparked represented a profound call for action in the eyes of many Trinitarians. As noted earlier, in the months following these events, the Vestry issued its statement of July 2020, committing Trinity to examine its practices with regard to campus, continuity, currency, and culture. Under the auspices of IMIrJ, Trinity organized a Sacred Circle group to meet virtually to discuss responses to the challenges of social and racial justice. A group of Trinitarians also participated in Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's [Reckoning with Racism](#)<sup>9</sup> program. The work of this group resulted in a [Land Story](#) for Trinity, which is the beginning of a narrative about how Trinity came to occupy the land that it currently does.

As Appendix B demonstrates, the Arts Commission and the Music Commission have likewise sought to respond to concerns of racism and racial justice during recent years. Both commissions as well as the Commission for Spiritual Formation have committed to continuing this work.

#### REFERENCE

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral History Guild. (2014). *Fulfilling the Promise: The History of Trinity Episcopal Church, 1851-2014*. n.p.

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<sup>8</sup><https://www.imirj.org/>

<sup>9</sup><https://www.commonableoregon.org/rwr-cohort-2020-2021>

## **Appendices**

### **APPENDIX A: ANTIRACISM TASK FORCE MEMBERS AND MEETING SCHEDULE**

\*Alan Murray, Co-Chair, Member, Vestry

\*Barbara Whitmore, Co-Chair, Member, Vestry

Bill Bard, Chair, Cathedral Life Commission

Jilli Bronson, Staff, Calendar and Events Coordinator

John Carney, Member, Music Commission

Janet Kasameyer, Member, Vestry

\*The Rev. Shana McCauley, Canon for Cathedral Life

Barbara Millikan, Convener, T.R.A.I.N

\*Stephanie Montgomery, parishioner, DEIA consultant

Ford Morishita, Member, Vestry

Bruce Neswick, Staff, Canon for Cathedral Music

Jill Osburn, Staff, Missioner for Youth and Liturgical Assistant

\*Keith Walters, Clerk, Vestry

#### ***Change in Membership (Unable to complete full term)***

Sarah Read, Member, Vestry

Adia Jones, Youth Representative

\*Members of Leadership Team established to provide consultation and feedback regarding the ongoing work of the Task Force, as well as oversight of the Racial Justice Audit by the Mission Institute

#### **Meeting Schedule**

- April 23, 2021 – Initial four-hour retreat
- June 3
- July 1
- September 11 Fall four hour-retreat
- November 11
- January 6, 2022
- February 3
- March 19 Final five-hour retreat
- May 25

**APPENDIX B: RECENT RELEVANT ACTIVITIES BY VARIOUS GROUPS AT TRINITY<sup>10</sup>**

This appendix lists activities organized or sponsored by various groups at Trinity over the past several years. It is by no means comprehensive; however, its goal is to demonstrate the breadth of activities at Trinity that have sought to help Trinitarians encounter and understand difference of various kinds, prerequisites for engaging in antiracist work. Included in the lists below are 1) topics of Sunday morning forums, 2) other T.R.A.I.N. activities, 3) series of Sunday morning forums or Wednesday at the Commons classes devoted to the study of books, 4) texts read and discussed by the Trinity Book Club, 5) other relevant Wednesday at the Commons classes, 6) Arts Commission exhibits and lectures, 7) Music Commission projects, 8) The *Urban Pilgrimage* podcast, 9) hosting for other groups, and 10) activities with external organizations.

1. TOPICS OF SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS, SOME SPONSORED BY THE OUTREACH MINISTRY, THE RED DOOR TASK FORCE, OR T.R.A.I.N., SINCE 2014. Some were presented by Trinitarians, and some were presented by members of the community.

Breast Cancer and Other Health Issues Impacting Underserved Communities

Children's Literature to Help Parents Have Conversations on Challenging Topics  
with Kids

Chronology of Race Relations in Oregon

Dealing with Enduring Conflict: How One Community Reaches Out to the Mexican  
Community

Efforts to Repeal Oregon's Sanctuary Law

Growing Up in a Christian Community in Korea

Gun Violence: Moms Demand Action

Health Issues in Underserved Communities

Homelessness among Youth

How to Become an Immigrant-Welcoming Congregation

Immigrant Stories from Earlier and More Recent Learners of English as an  
Additional Language

Indian Land Cession

Intimate Enemies

Introduction to "Beloved Community"

Islam: Two Episcopal Perspectives

Japanese Internment Experience in Oregon

Native American Artifacts and Traditions

Native American Perspectives on Oregon

Native American Youth and Family Center

Nicaragua Mission Trip Stories from the Youth

Oregon Black Pioneers

Personal Stories of Eviction

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<sup>10</sup> Special thanks for Inga Dubay, Christine Johnson, Rev. Matthew Lawrence, Michael Manwaring, Barbara Millikan, Bruce Neswick, Rev. Raggs Ragan, and Jonathan Tamez for assistance in compiling this list of activities.

Perspectives on Police Reform  
 Policy and Advocacy Forums on Houselessness  
 Race and Religion in Revolutionary America  
 Red Lodge Transition Project: Bridging Prison and Community  
 Refugee Resettlement  
 Responding to the Houselessness Crisis  
 SOAR Immigration Legal Services, Ecumenical Ministries of Austin  
 Speaking Up: Responding to Everyday Bigotry  
 Taking Up the Cross through Feminist Latina Eyes  
 Termination and Restoration  
 The Doctrine of Discovery  
 The Gospel according to Broadway: Race and Ethnicity in Musical Theater; Race and Redemption  
 The Plight of the Rohingya  
*The Real Origins of the Religious Right and Why It Matters* (Balmer, 2022)  
 Refugees: Piecing Their Lives Together  
 Sioux Traditions: How They are Misunderstood and How We can Learn from Them  
 Refugees and Asylees in Our Community  
 Strangers in a Strange Land: Old Testament Perspectives on the “Stranger”  
 Toward a Smarter, More Humane, and Morally Grounded Immigration Policy  
 Understanding Mexican and Hispanic Culture in Our Midst  
 Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice  
 What Does It Mean to be Japanese American?”  
 White Privilege  
 Wisdom of the Elders

## 2. OTHER T.R.A.I.N. ACTIVITIES SINCE 2014

### RESOURCES CREATED FOR THE CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY:

Booklet about Oregon’s Native American History  
 2016 Resource Guide to Portland’s People of Color, created by Donna Maxey, 2015  
 Black History Month: Booklet & display about African American Oregonians  
 Trinity Racial Action Information Facebook Page for current events  
 Understanding Thanksgiving from the Indian Perspective (National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian)

### FIELD TRIPS TO INSTITUTIONS AND EVENTS:

Portland Center Stage Exhibit Hall, Exit Wounds: Soldiers’ Stories—Life after Iraq & Afghanistan  
 Grande Ronde Museum, Chachalu Museum and Cultural Center  
 The Oregon Historical Museum Exhibit, Racism in Oregon  
 Chinatown History Museum and Lecture  
 Chief Lelooska Cultural Center Performance of Stories & Dances  
 Portland Art Museum, Native American and African American Art & Artists  
 Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center/Japanese American History Museum  
 Kennedy School Race Talks  
 Red Door August Wilson Dialogue Competition

Coho Theater, Stories from Immigrants Living in Oregon

SATURDAY WORKSHOPS:

Compassionate Listening Training

Dismantling Racism Training

Diverse Church, Foundations for Ministry in a Diverse World

Peace and Nonviolence Training

PLAY ATTENDANCE:

*Berlin Diary*, Coho Theater, collaboration with Temple Beth Israel

*Hands Up*, The Red Door Project

*The Piano Lesson*, Portland Playhouse

*Hold These Truths*, Portland Center Stage

INTERGENERATIONAL BOOK GROUP/CONVERSATION, TRINITARIANS AND A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN NYC:

*Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor* (Saad, 2020)

### 3. SERIES OF SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS OR WEDNESDAY AT THE COMMONS CLASSES DEVOTED TO BOOKS SINCE 2017

*Evicted: Without a Home Everything Falls Apart*, (Desmond, 2016)

*Jesus and the Disinherited* (Thurman, 1949)

*Moses: Man of the Mountain* (Hurston, 1939)

*Song in a Weary Throat* (Murray, 1987)

*The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (Rothstein, 2017)

*The Fifth Mountain* (Coelho, 1996)

*The Power Worshippers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism* (Stewart, 2020, with Grace Memorial Episcopal, PDX)

*The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion* (Haidt, 2012)

*The Underground Railroad*, (Whitehead, 2016)

White Resentment/White Privilege, including discussion of *The End of White Christian America* (Jones, 2016), *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right, A Journey to the Heart of our Political Divide* (Hochschild, 2016), and *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* (Cramer, 2016)

*White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* (DiAngelo, 2018)

### 4. TEXTS READ AND DISCUSSED BY THE TRINITY BOOK CLUB SINCE 2019

"Amazing Peace" (Angelou, 2005, read aloud)

"The Hill We Climb" (Gorman, 2021, read aloud)

*An American Marriage: A Novel* (Jones, 2018)

*Born a Crime: Stories of a South African Childhood* (Noah, 2016)

*Marooned: Jamestown, Shipwreck, and a New History of America's Origin* (Kelly, 2018)

*Stubborn Twig: Three Generations in the Life of a Japanese American Family* (Kessler, 1993)

*The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East* (Tolan, 2006)

*The Promise: A Novel* (Galgut, 2021)

*This Tender Land: A Novel* (Krueger, 2019)

#### 5. OTHER WEDNESDAY AT THE COMMONS CLASSES SINCE 2017

Catechesis of Care

Fear and Compassion

Lessons from the *Piano Lesson*

The Life and Music of Tsianina Blackstone

Martin and Malcolm, Then and Now

Racism: Where do I fit in?

*Sacred Ground: A Journey of Faith and Race*

Practicing Compassionate Listening

Self-care

*Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*

#### 6. ARTS COMMISSION: EXHIBITIONS (many included one or more lectures) SINCE 2014

Art in a New Land, Haifa Habeeb and Farooq Hassen, refugees from Iraq to Portland

Enchanted Lives, William Hernandez, Portland-based Peruvian painter

Eternal Echoes: Realities of Being an Arab Muslim Woman, Marwa Adel, photography

Exit Wounds and What We Carried, Iraq War veterans on displacement and Iraqi and Syrian refugees who fled to America, Jim Lommasson

Footprints, an exhibit focusing on immigration in collaboration with six other downtown churches

From Within: Photographs from the Arab Emirates, Rebecca Akporiaye,

Mark Shelton (Seneca and Honorary Chinook Tribal Artist)

Mother & Son: Peace against War, Elena and Trifon Markov

Native American Heritage Month, sale of prints and cards to benefit the Red Lodge program for incarcerated Native Americans

Peace & Justice: Three Lettering Traditions (Arabic, English, and Hebrew calligraphy by Kanaan Kanaan, Inga Dubay, and Sara Harwin, respectively), in collaboration with the Muslim Educational Trust and the Mittleman Jewish Center

Prints, Crow's Shadow Institute of Art, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation

Quilts for Empowerment, quilts by sub-Saharan women

Safe Haven, Sidnee Snell, contemporary Black textile artist

Thambanathi South African crafts, sale benefitting education and community projects in the artists' community

The Bridge, featuring the work of 47 Arab, Israeli Jewish, and Persian arts



The Many Faces of Fidel, artists responding to Fidel Castro  
Threads of Hope, Peruvian textiles

#### 7. MUSIC COMMISSION PROJECTS SINCE 2020

Creation of a Music Diversity Fund to commission new compositions by composers from underrepresented groups that were performed by the choir.

Commissions by Damien Geter (2021), a setting of a poem by James Weldon Johnson; by William Z Cleary of Theodicy Jazz Collective, a setting of a poem by Brant Maina, at the time a Trinity choir member from Kenya; and by organist David Hurd, who composed three pieces for Trinity and also performed here

Organ voluntaries from *Voices Uncovered: Organ Music by Under-Represented Composers*

Supplementing hymns from the 1982 hymnal with selections from *Lift Every Voice and Sing II: An African American Hymnal* (1993)

Recruitment of singers and performers from a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds for services and concerts

Theodicy Jazz Collective, Saturday evening concert and Sunday morning liturgy

Ongoing collaborations with Temple Beth Israel

#### 8. PODCAST (2020)

*Urban Pilgrimage Podcast: Holy Week*, guided pilgrimage to sites in Portland that had been scenes of witness, protest, or reconciliation during the prior year

#### 9. HOSTING

Trinity hosted antiracism training sessions for the Diocese and a day-long training by the Compassionate Listening workshop. With the Diocesan Latino Ministry, it also hosted the La Posada event several times before COVID.

#### 10. ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Sacred Circle, a monthly meeting for six months, 2020, Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice

Reckoning with Racism, a year-long program meeting twice monthly, 2020-2021, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

**DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT**

- 1. STATEMENT OF THE VESTRY OF TRINITY CATHEDRAL OF PORTLAND, OR, JULY 2020**
- 2. TRINITY'S STRATEGIC VISION (2017)**
- 3. TRINITY'S CORE VALUES (2008)**
- 4. THE LAND STORY OF TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL, PORTLAND OR: A BEGINNING (2021)**

## 1. STATEMENT OF THE VESTRY OF TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL, PORTLAND OR, JULY 2020

As a religious institution, Trinity Cathedral, a member of the Episcopal Church in the USA, has much to repent of. We acknowledge that white privilege, an attitude of racial superiority, and the denial of true equal access to education, health care, housing, and jobs to nonwhite individuals, have perpetuated our sin and impaired individuals of color from full participation in the rights and life they deserve. We also acknowledge that the Cathedral stands on land previously under the stewardship of the Multnomah and Clackamas peoples.

Through the actions and negligences of our forebears, we have directly and indirectly benefited from participating in structural racism, and we have reinforced it on many levels. We have seen but failed to speak out or act in the face of redlining, mass incarceration, and repeated instances of police brutality at the local and national levels. We have failed to examine the implicit biases expressed in our music, liturgy, and ministry programming. Among our own congregation's early leaders and prominent members were those whose public advocacy and participation in government helped set in place laws, policies, and practices that shaped Oregon's troubled and troubling racial history. They argued in favor of slavery, supported exclusion laws, held membership in the Ku Klux Klan, and in various ways promoted discrimination. We have inherited this legacy.

We cannot forget our history, but we can work to ensure that our future is shaped by our values. We strive to follow Jesus of Nazareth, who began his teaching with these simple words, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Of all these sins — "things known and unknown, things done and left undone" — we repent. Drawing upon the language of *The Book of Common Prayer* (1979), we grieve and humbly repent of all that we have done and that which we have left undone. True repentance requires us to set aside our privilege, explore the impact of our sins, engage the demands of our historical moment, take responsibility for the harm we have caused, and, where possible, make amends.

In this posture of repentance, we return to the Core Values of Trinity Cathedral, adopted in 2008, to guide us as we strive for a more just community:

**Respect:** We will respect the dignity of every human being

**Compassion:** We will love our neighbor as ourselves

**Integrity:** We will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ

**Justice:** We will strive for justice and peace among all people

**Inclusion:** We will seek and serve Christ in all persons

**Stewardship:** We will sustain the gift of joy and wonders in all Your works.

With gratitude to the staff for the work they have initiated and will continue, the Vestry offers the following framework for action, praying for the power of the Holy Spirit to lead us, trusting in our values to guide us, and inviting the congregation to active participation in this vital work. This framework will guide us in developing an in-depth and dynamic

strategic plan for living into our Baptismal Covenant. We make these commitments across our four dimensions of congregational life.

**Culture:** We commit to examining and reforming the ways in which systemic racism and implicit bias are embodied in our policies, practices, and congregational culture.

**Campus:** We commit to auditing our physical spaces to understand how the Cathedral campus “speaks” of who we have been and who we want to be as well as to making necessary changes.

**Currency:** We commit to intentional and deliberate investment in communities that have been underserved.

**Continuity:** We commit to identifying and raising up leadership that reflects the congregation we wish to become.

We pray that with God's help, we will be able to take up the profound justice work before us with humility, fortitude, and grace as full and willing participants in the continuing revelation of God's kingdom on earth.

## 2. TRINITY’S STRATEGIC VISION (2017)

### TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL: UNCOMMON WARMTH \* HOLY COMPASSION \* INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY \* DEEP BEAUTY

CULTURE	CAMPUS	CURRENCY	CONTINUITY
<p>Radical love and hospitality are the essential base for all of Trinity’s ministries and connections</p>	<p>The historic Cathedral campus is a sacred, accessible and hospitable locus for all of its ministries</p>	<p>Needed assets are identified and developed to support, improve and expand the Cathedral’s ministries</p>	<p>A succession of wise leaders guide Trinity toward the realization of the vision, and all congregation members have a role to play in Trinity’s future.</p>
<p>Enhance and Deepen Connections through developing a culture of radical love and hospitality (current and historical members)</p> <p>Personalize our Welcome through enhanced Pastoral outreach – create a culture of vulnerability and acknowledgment of needs via small groups.</p> <p>Diversity of Leadership that represents inclusion of the breadth and depth of our region: intergenerational, ethnic, age, socio-economic, etc.</p> <p>Authentic Evangelism: Increase our capacity to share the good news through music, events, classes and community warmth.</p>	<p>Accessibility: It is easy to park at and access the Cathedral’s campus and facilities.</p> <p>Hospitality: Development of the Cathedral campus reflects the core values of this community.</p> <p>Multi-Use Space: New and existing spaces are created and enhanced to support new programming (e.g. childcare, preschool, music education, outreach &amp; administrative needs)</p> <p>Deep Beauty: The sacred heart of Trinity is preserved and enhanced through new and existing spaces (e.g. narthex and chancel redesign, columbarium).</p>	<p>Engagement &amp; Vision: the yearly stewardship campaign begins a time of vision and engagement that focuses the energy of the congregation on the future.</p> <p>Charity &amp; Transparency: about our needs and assets is the undergirding of stewardship at Trinity</p> <p>New Revenue is generated from unexplored sources (e.g. grants, planned giving, estate planning, building revenue)</p> <p>Sustainability &amp; Diversification: yearly operating revenue is more evenly spread between pledges, endowment funds, and building/parking income</p>	<p>Succession Planning by which emerging leaders are identified and developed.</p> <p>Robust Training by which accumulated wisdom, knowledge and experience is transmitted to new leaders</p> <p>Mentorship: current and past leadership takes an active role in identifying and mentoring new leaders.</p> <p>Channels of Engagement where the talent and energy of our members is fully utilized.</p>
<p>Create small working group to audit and enhance Newcomers process (Orientation on Liturgy/Rituals, Tours for Physical and meeting spaces, communications, Individual Shepherds for Newcomers)</p> <p>Clergy/Pastoral Outreach to Silent Middle</p> <p>Regular surveys of congregation to measure impact and correct course through HolyCow/ Consulting</p> <p>Deepening Spiritual Connections &amp; Spiritual Growth</p> <p>Soft Entry/ Processes</p> <p>Skill building for existing members: how to welcome</p>	<p>Multi-use parking structure developed on east lot: increased parking and revenue generation</p> <p>Improvement of interior and exterior signage to allow newcomers to easily navigate campus</p> <p>Chancel and narthex are redesigned/remodeled to allow greater flexibility and warmer welcome to parishioners &amp; guests</p> <p>Begin vision process for new multi-use spaces to better serve existing and future needs, with particular attention to children, youth &amp; vulnerable neighbors.</p>	<p>Parking/leasing revenue to be explored</p> <p>Enhance social media/online giving options</p> <p>Review current structure and work of Endowment Committee, enhance relationship with vestry</p> <p>Working group (Vestry and Staff) to identify future needs for endowment gifts (endowed positions, naming recognition)</p> <p>Improve communications on Endowment/Planned Giving opportunities/awareness</p>	<p>Expand discernment criteria for Nominating Committee</p> <p>Develop clear leadership roles and responsibilities, expectations and parameters</p> <p>Establish process for former leaders to mentor new Vestry/Ministres leadership</p> <p>Implement Vestry exit/transition strategy</p>
<p>Trinity members reach out with radical love and hospitality to people they encounter at church (but don’t yet know)</p> <p>Children and youth flock to Trinity, and are highly engaged</p> <p>Newcomers welcome is compelling and fun—people want to return and want more.</p> <p>All members are recognized for their gifts and find ways to engage and share their talents.</p>	<p>Trinity’s community outreach facilities are beautiful, efficient, welcoming and flexible.</p> <p>Visitors to Trinity park easily in the facility across 19th street</p> <p>Trinity is a city-wide hub for outreach services, leadership and events</p> <p>The historic and sacred beauty of Trinity is preserved and enhanced for future generations.</p>	<p>Trinity is generating revenue from its real estate/facilities, grants and endowment and is less dependent on Annual Giving Campaign (giving patterns have shifted)</p> <p>Members feel engaged and excited by yearly giving campaigns</p> <p>Trinity’s Endowment is over \$20 M and growing</p> <p>Trinity’s operating budget is \$5M+</p>	<p>Every member of Trinity feels like their gifts are being utilized</p> <p>Leadership at Trinity reflects the diversity of the congregation</p> <p>Former and existing leaders are respected and consulted for their contributions and wisdom</p>

To do this: Vestry/Leadership develop plans for communicating vision and plans to Congregation, effectively focus on strategic leadership and Cathedral leadership is informed with details of Ministries

Develop communications venues similar to Town Hall and Forums, have robust feedback, included as a part of update and presentation, Develop Forums for congregation and Town Halls to be more strategic and led by working groups to review/assess progress of vision • Identify emerging leadership in Town Hall • Clarify Annual Goals for Vestry, Develop annual evaluation process and include Holy Cow survey results as part of re-evaluation

The Result: Congregation will be well informed of vision and planning • Congregation will be knowledgeable of the communication venues available • Clear evaluation in place to monitor progress

### **3. TRINITY'S CORE VALUES (2008)**

**Respect:** We will respect the dignity of every human being

**Compassion:** We will love our neighbor as ourselves

**Integrity:** We will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ

**Justice:** We will strive for justice and peace among all people

**Inclusion:** We will seek and serve Christ in all persons

**Stewardship:** We will sustain the gift of joy and wonders in all Your works.

#### 4. THE LAND STORY OF TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL, PORTLAND, OR: A BEGINNING (2021)

“You make me feel guilty for being a white man.”

—Comment from visitor to the Oregon Historical Society (OHS)

“You’re not responsible for what happened 150 years ago. But you’re responsible for knowing what happened.”

—Response from Kerry Tymchuk, OHS Executive Director<sup>11</sup>

##### A CONTEXT FOR THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a response to several Trinitarians’ participation in the 2020-2021 cohort of the Reckoning with Racism program organized by the Common Table, a state-wide effort involving over two hundred participants from across the state led by a group of faith leaders to confront Oregon’s history of racism < <https://www.commonableoregon.org/>> under the auspices of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. Each faith community was challenged to investigate the land on which their community worships or has worshipped, to create a “land story,” and to find ways to share that story with their community and others.

Land stories, which detail how a family came to own property they currently control, are often a proud part of some family traditions and history. More recently, however, institutions have been challenged to examine issues regarding the land they currently control or have controlled. The specific questions posed for worship communities by the organizers of Reckoning with Race cohort included when and how a worship community’s land came to belong to the group, why it was available, where the funds for the purchase came from, what was going on in the surrounding community at the time, and what life the land has borne or bears now and for whom.<sup>12</sup> Discussions of these issues expanded over the course of the cohort’s twice-monthly meetings to include questions about the faith community’s demographic profile and the ways the community’s history might have contributed to racism in Oregon. Predictably, the land stories of institutions often confront readers with complex and painful questions about the relationship between the past and the present, on the one hand, and the present and possible futures, on the other. Indeed, it is often difficult to be confronted with the language used in the past to refer to certain groups; however, we retain that language in this document.

This document, which examines only several key moments in Trinity’s and Portland’s history, represents a first step in investigating Trinity’s history from this perspective of land.<sup>13</sup> It is a first step in several senses. Obviously, historical narratives can never be complete, and documenting and analyzing a history as long and complex as Trinity’s would

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.wweek.com/news/2021/04/28/wws-may-2021-endorsements/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.commonableoregon.org/session-3-homework>

<sup>13</sup> Special thanks to two members of the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral History Guild for their comments, corrections, and suggestions on an earlier draft and to several members of Vestry who made comments and suggestions on a subsequent draft.

take years of the research by individuals trained in doing such archival work, training that none of the authors of this document had. At the same time, an analysis of the information available to the creators of this document raises questions that merit continued reflection. In fact, a series of questions for consideration of the information and reflection on it is included at the end of the document.

Importantly, this document came into existence during the COVID pandemic, when the Oregon Historical Society and local libraries were either completely closed or access was highly restricted. Its creators used the very limited resources available to them, almost all online, to begin sketching very preliminary answers to the questions our group was asked to consider. Thus, throughout the document, reference is made to questions that could not be answered at the time with available resources, questions that perhaps are unanswerable even now. Those who participated in the Common Table program hope that others will carry on this work, providing those who are part of the Trinity community a deeper understanding of the role our community has played in Portland and Oregon's past with the hope of contributing to a better and different future.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Trinitarians are often proud of the fact that from early on, members of the congregation have been leaders in business, government, and education at the local, regional, state, and national levels. Streets known to all Portlanders bear the names of individuals or families that have been members of our congregation.

During the period following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, the Trinity Vestry began working on a statement in response to Floyd's death and the ensuing events. As the statement notes:

Among our own congregation's early leaders and prominent members were those whose public advocacy and participation in government helped set in place laws, policies, and practices that shaped Oregon's troubled and troubling racial history. They argued in favor of slavery, supported exclusion laws, held membership in the Ku Klux Klan, and in various ways promoted discrimination. We have inherited this legacy.

Our land story is surely part of the legacy we have inherited, and understanding it is part of our own efforts to reckon with not only issues of race and racism but also issues of class and gender, among others.

## **TRINITY'S HISTORICAL LAND FOOTPRINT**

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral (Trinity Episcopal Church until 1993) was organized in 1851. It has at different times occupied land at three different locations in what is today downtown Portland:



1854-1871: Second Avenue<sup>14</sup> and Oak Street

1871-1902: Oak Street between 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue

1902-present: 147 NW 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Everett Street

For the first few years, however, Trinity did not have a permanent home but met in various places near the Willamette River. One source lists the “Methodist house of worship” (Scott, 1890), at least for the initial service, while another lists the newly built school.<sup>15</sup> A similar situation arose during the period between the fire in 1902 at the church’s second location and the completion of the third church building. During the interim, services were held on Sunday afternoons at First Presbyterian church for a few Sundays and then in the converted drill hall of Bishop Scott Academy, which came to be known as Trinity Chapel. In short, Trinitarians have not always worshiped in spaces that they could claim as their own, and, as documented below, financial considerations have sometimes constrained the purchase of property or the completion of proposed facilities.

Additionally, Trinity played a role in the founding or supporting of the following institutions and perhaps others:

- 1) St. Helen’s Hall, a school for girls (1869), 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Madison Street, and, later, 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Hall Street, before moving to its current Raleigh Hills location (1964). In 1972, the school merged with Bishop Dagwell Hall, an institution for boys in the same location, to become the Oregon Episcopal School.
- 2) The Bishop Scott Grammar and Divinity School (1870), which became the Bishop Scott Academy (1887), on property comprising 38 lots between Couch Street and Everett Street on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue.<sup>16</sup>
- 3) The Trinity Mission (1873/1874?), which became the Parish of St. Mark the Evangelist (more recently, the (Anglican) Parish of St. Mark’s), constructed to serve the residents of the Alphabet District. Originally at NW 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and NW Q Street, it moved to its current location, NW 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and NW Marshall Street, in 1909.
- 4) Good Samaritan Hospital (1875), 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Lovejoy Street, known today as Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center, NW 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue; the Women’s Guild of Trinity was especially active in this endeavor.
- 5) The Mission of the Good Shepherd (1882) in Albina, at that time a separate town. Trinity assumed the loan for the land on which the mission stood. (This church no longer exists.)
- 6) Ascension Parish (1889), which became a mission church overseen by the Bishop in 1968 and a full parish by 1984. Originally located at SW 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Elm Street, the building was later moved to its current SW Spring Street location.<sup>17</sup>
- 7) A mission school for the Chinese community on SW Harvey Milk Street (formerly, SW Stark Street).

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<sup>14</sup> Earlier, numbered streets in Portland were named streets (e.g., 19<sup>th</sup> Street). Throughout, we use the contemporary name (e.g., 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue).

<sup>15</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity\\_Episcopal\\_Cathedral\\_\(Portland,\\_Oregon\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity_Episcopal_Cathedral_(Portland,_Oregon))

<sup>16</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop\\_Scott\\_Academy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop_Scott_Academy)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ascensionepiscopalparish.org/our-history>

Thus, it is safe to claim that Trinity's historic land "footprint" extends over a much larger area than the three locations where its houses of worship have been located.

#### **EARLY CONTACT BETWEEN INDIGENOUS GROUPS AND EUROPEANS**

*The History of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral: Fulfilling the Promise, 1851-2014*, a short 2014 volume created by the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral History Guild, begins with the departure of the first Episcopal missionary for the Oregon Territory in the 1840s, well after some other Protestant groups had sent "religious teachers" to the Indigenous peoples of the region. This process began in 1834 by the Methodists and was joined soon thereafter by the Congregational, Dutch Reform, and Presbyterian denominations, which supported the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (Scott, p. 344). In contrast to these other denominations, the concern of Episcopalian missionaries was the settlers, not the Indigenous groups.<sup>18</sup> However, there were Anglican missionary efforts on the north side of the Columbia River at Ft. Vancouver under the auspices of the Hudson Bay Company.<sup>19</sup>

Since mid-2020, worship services at Trinity have included a [brief](#) land acknowledgment, reminding those present that Trinity stands on land most recently under the stewardship of the Clackamas and Multnomah bands of the Chinook peoples. Trinity and its land footprint sit in the Portland Basin, at the confluence of what are today the Columbia (Wimal) and Willamette Rivers. (*Willamette* is an anglicized version of the French-rendering of the name of a Clackamas village or a Kalapuyan term; accounts differ.) Native peoples had lived in the region for over 10,000 years until their numbers were reduced by illness resulting from contact with the settler colonialists (e.g., smallpox, 1770s) or they were forcibly removed by government mandate.

The right of governments and settlers to engage in such behavior had multiple origins, two of which are especially relevant. The first is generally termed "The Doctrine of Discovery," which was officially repudiated by the 2009 General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Resolution D035.<sup>20</sup> The resolution traces the doctrine to the 1496 royal patent granted by Henry VII of England to John Cabot and his sons, giving them the right "to find, discover and investigate whatsoever islands, countries, regions or provinces...in whatsoever part of the world placed, which before this time were unknown to all Christians."<sup>21</sup> Importantly, in the

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<sup>18</sup> The archives at Fort Vancouver provide evidence that there were missionary efforts among the region's Indigenous peoples around the fort although no boarding schools were established there or in the Portland area. In July 2021, the Episcopal Church issued a statement on the Church's role in Indigenous boarding schools in the US, calling for research and reconciliation with Indigenous communities in our church.

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/publicaffairs/statement-on-indigenous-boarding-schools-by-presiding-bishop-michael-curry-and-president-of-the-house-of-deputies-gay-clark-jennings/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.nps.gov/articles/fovamissionaries.htm>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\\_resolution-complete.pl?resolution=2009-D035](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution-complete.pl?resolution=2009-D035)

<sup>21</sup> <https://doctrineofdiscovery.org/patent-cabot-henry-vii/>. This patent was, in many regards, a reaction against the earlier papal Bulls of Donation (1493) and the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), which divided any newly "discovered" territories between Spain and Portugal. Critics of the

U.S. Supreme Court decision *Johnson v. M'Intosh* (1823), Chief Justice John Marshall, writing for the majority and referring to this patent and other sources mentioned in footnotes 10 and 11, enshrined the doctrine into American law, where it was cited as recently as 2005 by Ruth Bader Ginsberg writing for the majority in *City of Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation of New York*, ruling for the City of Sherill.

The second is the ideology of manifest destiny, which was first so named in 1845 by journalist John L. O'Sullivan, arguing for the annexation of Texas and of "the whole of Oregon," which, at that time, extended far beyond the borders of the current state to include much of the northwest. This set of beliefs assumed that American people and their institutions at the time embodied particular virtues, that it was their mission—and for many, one given by God—"to redeem and remake" the American West in the image of the American East, and that this destiny was "irresistible."<sup>22</sup>

Precontact groups living in the Basin at various times included the Clatsop, Kathlamet, and Chinook (Multnomah, Wapato, and Upper Chinook). There were no village sites in what is today downtown Portland though groups moved throughout the basin at various times of the year, likely crossing all the area of Trinity's land footprint. There is clear evidence that Native Peoples had cognitive or mental maps of the region linked to their seasonal cycles of migration. In 1846, a treaty between the U.S. and Britain gave the U.S. control of the area; in 1848, the Oregon Territory as established; in 1850, the Donation Land Claim Act was passed; and in 1855, the Willamette Valley Treaty was signed. All of these resulted in the Indigenous peoples' being removed to reservations with their land being offered to white settlers for a minimal fee. Rather than move to these reservations, some Native People simply fled. The consequences of these events here and across the US continue into the present. Although only 2.5% of Multnomah County residents identify as Native American, 12% of the local homeless population is Indigenous.<sup>23</sup>

#### **LAND AS COMMODITY FOR WHITE EUROPEAN SETTLERS**

From the arrival in late 1843 of William Overton and Asa Lovejoy at "the Clearing," which today is the western riverfront of the Willamette in downtown Portland, land became a commodity to be bought, sold, and speculated on. (The fact that there were no Indigenous villages here led the settlers to assume that the land "belonged" to no one.) The maps created from this point on were written documents, land plats linked to private ownership of the land, which, in turn, is linked to the accumulation of cross-generational wealth, a privilege that was accorded primarily to white Oregonians (a terms whose meaning has broadened over the past 150 years) but denied others.

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doctrine also point to Pope Nicholas V's 1452 bull instructing the King of Portugal to "attack, conquer, and subjugate Saracens, pagans and other enemies of Christ wherever they may be found." [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope\\_Nicholas\\_V](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Nicholas_V)

<sup>22</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manifest\\_destiny](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manifest_destiny)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.oregonlive.com/health/2021/05/70-bed-addiction-recovery-housing-to-open-in-east-portland.html>

As historians explain, the early settlement by Europeans of the Willamette Valley, including Portland, was an era of great land speculation involving considerable litigation. Benjamin Stark (1820-1898) was “a merchant, land speculator, and politician active in Oregon from 1845 to 1862.”<sup>24</sup> As E. Kimbark MacColl and H.H. Stein (1988) document, Stark was very much among the “proprietors [who] wheel[ed] and deal[ed]” quite successfully (1989, p. 12). Stark donated the land where the first Trinity Episcopal Church, a wood-framed structure designed by Elwood M. Burton<sup>25</sup> in the Carpenter Gothic style, was built.

Stark was also “deeply involved in the controversies that divided Oregon and national politics in the Civil War era.”<sup>26</sup> In 1853, he served as a colonel in the conflicts between settlers and the Indigenous peoples usually seen as part of the Rogue River Wars. He supported slavery as did another prominent Trinitarian, Matthew Deady, for whom the first building on the University of Oregon campus was named until it was changed in 2020. As a 2016 report commissioned by the University of Oregon<sup>27</sup> notes, Deady clearly supported the exclusion of free Black and Chinese people from Oregon during the 1857 Constitutional Convention. Prior to the Civil War, he “actively promoted restricting the vote to ‘pure white men’” (Johnson et al., 2016, p. 3). At the same time, as a jurist, Deady was someone who “dedicated his life to critical thinking and the rule of law” (p. 4) and later “interpreted immigration laws liberally toward the Chinese” in light of treaties that had come into existence after his earlier efforts (p. 3). Debates about enslaved and free Black Americans as well as Chinese and other immigrants to the country, on the one hand, and the right to vote, on the other, cannot be separated from our land story because at a symbolic level, they are about establishing and preserving the value of the land as part of the vision of an Oregon that characterized the thinking of many of the early white settlers who came here: potentially, a white utopia.

Capt. John H. Couch is another prominent founder of Portland, and he and his family were members of Trinity. Couch platted his claim of land from what is today Burnside north for a mile from NW 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to the Willamette. He also named the streets of what is today the Alphabet District: A, B, C, etc. These were later renamed after various important men in city, and Couch Street bears his name.<sup>28</sup> His second daughter, Clementine, married Cicero Hunt Lewis. His youngest daughter, Elizabeth, married Dr. Rodney Glisan. Trinity’s Glisan Suite bears their family name. The estates of Capt. Couch and his brother-in-law, Capt. George Flanders, provided the land for the original campus of St. Helen’s Hall.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/stark-benjamin/#.YHj4vKlKg-R>

<sup>25</sup> <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/5954/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/stark-benjamin/#.YHj4vKlKg-R>

<sup>27</sup> Johnson, D.A., Taylor, Q., & Weisiger, M. (2016). Report on the history of Matthew P. Deady and Frederick S. Dunn.

[https://web.archive.org/web/20160918183733/https://president.uoregon.edu/sites/president2.uoregon.edu/files/deady\\_dunn\\_final\\_report\\_08-05-16.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20160918183733/https://president.uoregon.edu/sites/president2.uoregon.edu/files/deady_dunn_final_report_08-05-16.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_H.\\_Couch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_H._Couch)

**ON THE MOVE IN THE LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

In the last four decades of the nineteenth century, Portland and Trinity grew. The business district moved north to the area around SW Broadway Avenue, as did Trinity's parishioners. Trinity purchased half a block on the north side of Oak Street between 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue for \$3000 in 1867. Raising the funds for a new building, which was consecrated in 1873, took four years. During the interim, the congregation continued to worship in the original structure, which had been moved in 1871 to the new site as a temporary worship space. After the new sanctuary was completed, the first church building continued to be used as a parish hall and Sunday school classroom. Construction of a rectory began in 1874.

By the last decade of the century, because of growth, it was clear that Trinity needed larger facilities. Additionally, parishioners were moving farther north and west. H.W. Scott (1890) characterizes the situation in this way:

The middle portion of the city has been spoken of as the place of churches, the large Catholic Cathedral built of brick, and surmounted by a tower with a fine chime of bells, erected on Third and Stark streets; the old Presbyterian Church on Third and Washington; the Baptist on Fourth and Alder; the Congregational on Second and Jefferson; the First Methodist Church on Third and Taylor; and Trinity Church on Sixth and B[urnside] would justify the remark. In truth, however, the area of churches is moving back. Already the roar of business, the pressure of other buildings and the centres of the residence quarters, have moved the church area more than half a dozen streets westward. This is all the more to be desired since, as is usual, business buildings of a very inferior sort have been made to occupy the cheaper ground just back of the main grand mercantile houses. Some of the church edifices have therefore found themselves almost submerged in a drift-wood of mean, wooden shanties, devoted to occupations highly offensive to religious feeling. (p. 438)

We imagine the "occupations highly offensive to religious feeling" to have included gambling and prostitution. The flood of 1894, which severely damaged the Trinity church building, necessitating considerable repair, further spurred the desire to move.

Finding land for a third location for Trinity during this period was challenging, exacerbated by the financial panic of 1893. After several options fell through, partly because of the congregation's inability to raise sufficient funds in a timely manner, Cicero Hunt Lewis, as noted, the son-in-law of Capt. Couch, purchased land between what is today 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Burnside Street and Couch Street. Although the details of a series of transactions remain unclear, this property was apparently transferred to the ownership of Trinity and later traded for our current property, which includes some land originally belonging to the Bishop Scott Academy. The Academy's facilities had been built in the 1870s on land donated by Capt. Flanders and his sister, Mrs. Caroline Flanders Couch. As Scott notes, "The grounds at that time were away out in the woods in the western part of the city, and it required great faith in the development of the country and the town to establish a school at that time and place" (1890, p. 396). The Academy closed in 1904.

While the Academy was known for educating young men who would later become political, business, and civic leaders in the Northwest, not all its students were white. Reuben C. Sanders (1876-1957), whose father was an Irish immigrant and whose mother was from the Joshua band of Tututni in the southern part of the state, was a member of the Siletz tribe; he played football for the Academy. Known as the “Jim Thorpe of Oregon,”<sup>29</sup> he also played football and half dozen other sports for the Chemawa Indian School in Salem and later taught and coached there. According to the permanent exhibit at the Portland Chinatown Museum, Seid Back, Jr., the first Chinese American to practice law in Oregon, received part of his education at the Academy as well.<sup>30</sup> These cases remind us of the need for continued research to avoid oversimplifying the past and to permit us to acknowledge pioneers whose backgrounds differed from those of the overwhelming majority of their classmates and who acted as culture and language brokers and interpreters for the communities of which they were a part.

#### **CLASS, GENDER, AND SOCIAL RESPECTABILITY**

Comments like those of Scott above and Steven Lowenstein (1987), who treats the history of Jews in Oregon, make clear that the moving houses of worship nearer their congregations was also related to issues of social class and respectability, framed as a particular concern for women, who were no longer comfortable attending events in the area where Trinity’s second structure was located, especially at night (Trinity Episcopal Cathedral History Guild, 2014, p. 44, referring to an article from *The Oregonian*). That area had become associated with Chinese immigrants from East Asia to the north, the “occupations” Scott describes just south of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and the recently arriving Eastern European Jews and other European immigrants moving to the southern part of what is today downtown. While these latter groups would later become “white,” they were not so considered at the time. (Congregation Beth Israel was a reformed congregation composed primarily of German Jews and their descendants whereas the Eastern European Jews were Orthodox; Temple Beth’s relocation to NW 19<sup>th</sup> Ave., the site of the former Flanders estate, in 1927 was motivated partly by similar considerations<sup>31</sup> as well as by arson of their building on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in 1923.)

It is also worth noting that during the period, neighborhood churches were being built across the Portland area as a result of population growth and limited transportation options. Such patterns of residential segregation by social class—and in some cases national origin or ethnicity—reified notions of “Christian charity”: something offered to people with whom one would not otherwise associate and whom one might even actively seek to avoid.

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<sup>29</sup> [https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/sanders\\_reuben\\_c/#.YX](https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/sanders_reuben_c/#.YX)

<sup>30</sup> *The Oregon Encyclopedia* entry on Back’s father includes additional information about Back, Jr., who is referred to as “Said Gain”: <https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/back-seid/#.YXwor9bMifB>

<sup>31</sup> Lowenstein discusses the multiple social, political, and religious sources of “discord between German and Eastern European Jews” (1987, p. 79).

During his tenure (1899-1929), Rev. A. A. Morrison “often battled the impression that Trinity was a wealthy, indifferent congregation,”<sup>32</sup> a stereotype Trinitarians continue to resist though it certainly persists, especially outside the congregation. (Long-time Trinitarians still sometimes joke among themselves about the church’s history as a place earlier for the “Frozen Chosen” or “the Country Club at Prayer.”) Early last decade, an elderly white Trinitarian was heard commenting to a friend of his generation before the Sunday morning service began, “Not so long ago, only the best families went to Trinity, and now, just look around” as he gestured to the congregation behind him. In late 2020, a parishioner of color reported that her friends continue to ask why she attends a church “full of rich white people.” Such comments may sting, but that they occur or have occurred reminds readers that Trinity is located in social as well as geographic space in the minds of Portlanders past and present, those who are part of our congregation as well as those who are not.

### LAND AND RACE AFTER WWII

Later, Rev. Lansing Kempton, who served as rector from 1937 to 1968, confronted other challenges, challenges facing Portland and the region at the time. In 1945, three years before the Vanport floods, Kempton served as chair of the Commission on Race Relations of the Portland Council of Churches, the precursor to Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. The committee created a report<sup>33</sup> touching on housing, employment, education, churches, discrimination in public accommodations, and the demographics of the police force. The report’s primary focus was Portland’s Black population, which had grown over twelvefold in five years because of the war, though other groups are mentioned throughout the document. The report discusses, for example, segregation in housing promulgated by the local housing authority in Portland and Vancouver; these official groups attributed their policies to the need “to avoid trouble” resulting from the “feeling[s] of white people.” It likewise notes that realtors and banks engaged in policies of what is today termed redlining, adding “it is...a general policy among mortgage firms that only 50% of the appraised value of a Negro’s home shall be financed....Restrictive covenants are in effect in some areas against Negroes, Chinese, Japanese, Indians and Filipines [sic]. No such covenants have been found to exist against Jews” (p. 1).<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> [https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/trinity\\_episcopal\\_cathedral/#.YIHEq6lKg-Q](https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/trinity_episcopal_cathedral/#.YIHEq6lKg-Q)

<sup>33</sup> Thomas, George L. (1945). Compiled report: January-September, 1945. Portland Council of Churches, typescript, 8 pp. Archives of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

<sup>34</sup> More recent research shows that such covenants generally limited ownership, rental, or use to members of the “Caucasian race,” granting access to the owner’s or renter’s “domestic servants” and “employees” of other races. Covenants have been documented for the neighborhoods of Brentwood Park, Broadmoor, Ferncrest, Gracemont, Laurelhurst, Mocks Crest, Palatine Hill, Raleigh Hills, Slavin’s Addition, Tualatin Heights, and West Highlands as well as areas of unincorporated Washington County. Groups mentioned in various covenants included “no person of African, Asiatic, or Mongolian descent”; “no Negroes, Chinese, Japanese, Orientals, or any person other than the Caucasian race”; no “Italians, Greeks, Hindus, Armenians, and Indians”; and no “Chinese, Japanese, or negroes [sic].” (For examples and documentation, see <https://www.portland.gov/bps/news/2018/3/22/new-research-psu-grad-student-reveals-racist-covenants-across-portland> and <https://www.oregonlive.com/news/erry->

In its conclusion, the report acknowledges a growing “tenseness and restlessness,” especially with regard to housing and employment as options for Black residents continued to narrow with war efforts coming to an end. At the same time, it states:

Both city and state officials are apparently satisfied with inter-group relations and state that there is no reason for concern. Neither [corrected by hand to “Neither”] the governor nor the mayors of Portland and Vancouver, Washington see the necessity for an official inter-racial committee. (p. 3)

The 1945 report offers no evidence that white churches worked against these or similar discriminatory policies, which had consequences for the likelihood of home ownership, itself directly linked to the creation of cross-generational wealth. Further, property values in Portland and across the country have appreciated in predominantly white neighborhoods at a far greater pace than black neighborhoods as a result of legislation passed during the New Deal and regulations of the Federal Housing Administration, which was established in 1934 to address a severe housing shortage, as Richard Rothstein (2017) explains.

#### **QUESTIONS TO INVESTIGATE, WORK TO BE DONE**

At the same time, it is clear that Bishop Benjamin D. Dagwell, who served as the fifth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon from 1936-1958, whom *The Oregonian* referred to as a “militant Christian” in a note on its editorial page acknowledging his death, worked against racial discrimination and was involved in issues related to fair housing.<sup>35</sup> Although details of his work were not available when this document was created, the comments in *The Oregonian* remind us of the challenges of understanding and appreciating the things done and left undone in the past.

Certainly, many questions about land and its meanings remain. In addition to questions about Trinity’s larger land footprint, there are questions about its current property, which includes three parking lots in different locations. Such an unusual configuration of land in a city using the grid system and how it came to be surely have a story to tell.

The Vestry Statement mentioned earlier continues:

We cannot forget our history, but we can work to ensure that our future is shaped by our values. We strive to follow Jesus of Nazareth, who began his teaching with these simple words, “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.” Of all these sins — “things known and unknown, things done and left undone” — we repent.

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[2018/05/fcd13cb4387071/racist\\_restrictions\\_now\\_illega.html](https://www.oregonian.com/2018/05/fcd13cb4387071/racist_restrictions_now_illega.html).) As the former website explains, covenants excluded people of color from creating wealth. For a detailed examination of the larger American context with regard to the negative outcomes of government actions for the Black community, in particular, in terms of the possibility of land/home ownership and the accumulation of cross-generational wealth, see Richard Rothstein (2017).

<sup>35</sup>Militant Christian. (1963, 5 June). *The Oregonian*, p. 21.



Drawing upon the language of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1979), we grieve and humbly repent of all that we have done and that which we have left undone. True repentance requires us to set aside our privilege, explore the impact of our sins, engage the demands of our historical moment, take responsibility for the harm we have caused, and, where possible, make amends.

This brief history, the beginning of our land story, is one step in that never-ending process. At the same time, we wish to remember and honor those who in the past and who today point us to a different way of being in the world, one represented by this prayer, which comes from the 2021 Seminary of the Southwest's "A Liturgy of Remembrance and Truth-Telling":

We strive for the day when all members of God's kingdom feel welcome and valued in The Episcopal Church and have equal opportunity to sit in positions of leadership, earn the same wages, and live free from racial discrimination and violence.

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#### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. How much of this information was new to you? Why, might you imagine?
2. Is it important or relevant for Trinitarians to be or become aware of these aspects of Trinity's history? Why or why not?
3. Although we cannot be said to be responsible for actions taken in the past by others or by institutions, how might we be implicated in the consequences of those actions?
4. What might it mean to take "respons[ibility] for knowing what happened" for Trinity as an institution? For Trinitarians as a community? For each of us as an individual? Is knowing what happened sufficient? Why or why not? If not, what else might be expected or required of individuals and communities? Of churches, in particular? Why?
5. Why might feelings of guilt, however predictable for members of some groups, not be useful in situation?

## **RESOURCES ON RACIAL JUSTICE FROM FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

The Episcopal Church Racial Justice

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/racial-reconciliation/>

Middle Church Racial Justice Resources (New York, NY church, co-affiliated with the United Church of Christ and the Reformed Church in America.)

<https://www.middlechurch.org/racial-justice-resources/>

Luther Seminary Faith+Lead Academy: De-Centering Whiteness (Luther Seminary is a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, located in St. Paul, MN.)

<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/anti-racism-resources/>