

IN THE DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA  
BEFORE THE TITLE IV HEARING PANEL  
THE MATTER OF  
THE REV'D DR. B. CAYCE RAMEY, RESPONDENT

**Response to Church Attorney's Request for Additional Sanctions**

Respondent, the Rev'd Dr. B. Cayce Ramey, by counsel, responds to the Church Attorney's Request for Additional Sanctions as follows:

The Title IV charges levied against Respondent are based on an underlying question of whether there is space in the Episcopal Church for a priest to act out of conviction and conscience with respect to the Episcopal Church's and the Diocese of Virginia's active participation in the historical and current systems of white supremacy, violence, and oppression. This history includes participation in the slave trade; bishops, priests, vestry and lay members enslaving people, supporting Jim Crow and racial segregation; and a terrible litany of other offenses against our BIPOC siblings.

The Diocese of Virginia sent Respondent to Ghana as part of the Triangle of Hope partnership whose mission, as stated by the Diocesan bishops of Kumasi, Liverpool, and Virginia is to live together in,

...a covenantal community between the dioceses of Liverpool (England), Kumasi (Ghana), and Virginia dedicated to transforming the long history, ongoing effects and continuing presence of slavery in our world through repentance, reconciliation and mission.

In Ghana, the Triangle of Hope International Planning Team toured Cape Coast Castle. The group, including the Respondent, Fr. Ramey, started in the male slave dungeon, proceeded through the female slave dungeon, walked through the Door of No Return, saw the garrison's living apartments, and ended at the former chapel. The chapel at Cape Coast Castle is the site of the first Anglican celebration of Holy Eucharist in Ghana.

The chapel is built directly on top of the male slave dungeon. (See Exhibit A, attached)

The site of the first Anglican celebration of Holy Eucharist in Ghana, was directly above hell on earth. Men stood in the dungeon, surrounded by and on top of bodies and blood, while an Anglican priest and a congregation of white worshipers received the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The chapel was even constructed with a large shaft in the floor outside the doors so that guards could attend service while monitoring the people suffering below. Standing in that chapel, all the claims of Respondent's Anglican sacramental theology seemed utterly insufficient. Respondent was taught nothing in church or in seminary that could answer the question or respond to the anguished cries Respondent heard in his soul arising from the dungeon below. Where was Christ in that moment of Eucharistic celebration?

Returning to the Diocese of Virginia and Respondent's parish, the questions surrounding Holy Eucharist never left him. Respondent continued to reflect and wonder, his doubt and frustration growing. How would our Episcopal theology be different if we had to answer the questions posed by our treatment of the people we enslaved at Cape Coast Castle and here in Virginia? Amidst these questions, Respondent rediscovered the history of his own parish.

The All Saint's Sharon Chapel property was donated by a wealthy Virginia enslaver plantation owner. The parish had known for decades the names, ages, and genders of nineteen people held enslaved by the family and had done nothing. The altar at which Respondent consecrated bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ sits atop land saturated with the bodies, blood, sweat, and toil of people enslaved, just like at Cape Coast Castle.

Then, on August 12, 2017, responding to a diocesan-wide call from the bishops of the Diocese of Virginia, Respondent traveled with other clergy from the Diocese to attend a counter-protest to the white supremacist rallies in Charlottesville, VA. As they gathered in the basement of a chapel adjacent to the park containing the statue that was the ostensible cause of the protests that day, a woman announced hurriedly that they needed all the clergy to go to the church parking lot. The clergy were to form a human barrier against armed and armored neo-Nazis marching past. As Respondent proceeded to the stairway, he asked the woman if she had any specific instructions. She looked directly at him, replying clearly and firmly, "You, stand in front."

Respondent's experiences in Ghana, his questions about Holy Eucharist, and the admonitions of both his bishops and the woman in Charlottesville continued to fuel his questions and lead him to pursue graduate studies. Respondent spent three subsequent years at Virginia Union University's Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology (STVU) - a HBCU Seminary founded on the site of Lumkin's Jail, a notorious slave-breaking prison in Richmond.

Under the guidance and mentorship of the Rev. Jabriel Ballentine (a Black man, Episcopal priest, and Respondent's partner in ministry for over ten years), the Rev. Dr. John W. Kinney (a Black man, pastor of over 35 years, Professor of Theology and Director of the Center for African American Pentecostalism and Leadership Development and Dean Emeritus of STVU as his thesis advisor), Dr. Paula Parker (Principle of "Roots Matter" generational healing ministry and former Associate Director of the Katie Geneva Canon Center for Womanist Leadership at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, as consultant on Womanist Theology and Moral Injury), the Rev. Dr. Kate Sonderreger (Professor of Systematic Theology at Virginia Theological Seminary, member of numerous Anglican Community-wide theological committees, as his pastoral counselor and outside reader for his thesis), as well as his Spiritual Director, numerous friends, colleagues, and family members, Respondent studied, reflected, discerned, prayed, struggled, and worked to listen to the call of the Holy Spirit.

Respondent maintained throughout this time regular correspondence and conversation with diocesan ecclesial authority, the Rt. Rev. Susan Goff. (Please see the

attached thesis document for a more thorough exploration of Respondent's ministry and DMin journeys.) (Exhibit B, attached)

Respondent became convicted and compelled by the life of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, as well as by the words of Christ in Matthew 5, included as offertory sentences in the Book of Common Prayer,

So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.  
(Mt.5:23-24)

Respondent discerned, in community, his call to a temporary Eucharistic fast as an appropriate response to the reality of the already broken communion of the white Episcopal Church with our BIPOC siblings, thereby temporarily leaving his gift at the altar and focusing on repentance and repair.

Respondent discussed this fast with the ecclesial authority, Bishop Goff, beginning in February 2021 and who affirmed verbally in an early meeting that she wondered if "[T]he Holy Spirit was up to something... and [she] didn't want to get in the way" and later wrote in email written in relation to the fast that her "concern" was the parish merger Respondent was helping lead at that time. (Exhibits C and D, attached)

Respondent discussed and worked with (3) priest colleagues, all part of the Potomac Episcopal Community, then exploring the merger and mutual ministry of four Episcopal parishes in Alexandria, VA. He received unanimous support from them for continued discernment in community on this decision and planned together with them to continue his participation in the celebration of the mysteries of Christ's Body and Blood through preaching, presence, teaching, receiving a blessing during distribution of the elements, and even through serving as the principle celebrant at the Easter Vigil, receiving communion at that service with sure and certain hope that if repentance and reconciliation are ever possible they are most apparent to us at the Easter Vigil. (Respondent has continued this practice of receiving communion at the Easter Vigil throughout his Eucharistic fast). Both Respondent and Respondent's Vestry volunteered on multiple occasions to pay for supply clergy to serve at times Respondent might otherwise have been responsible in the clergy rotation for celebrating. All such offers were denied as unnecessary. At no time was any member of All Saints Sharon Chapel or any of the parishes who were part of the Potomac Episcopal Community at the time denied communion or the canonically required celebration of Holy Eucharist at the principal Sunday service.

Respondent discussed this fast with his Vestry, receiving unanimous support from them and working together to determine how best to continue discerning in community on the future of their pastoral relationship.

Respondent attempted early on to discuss this fast with his worshiping community but was told in November 2021 during a phone conversation with the Canon to the Ordinary, on Bishop Goff's instruction that engaging the congregation at that time would

be an unnecessary and unwelcome distraction from the work of exploring the parish merger. Respondent spoke directly with Bishop Goff in January 2022 and again was told that working with the merger was tricky so that now was not the time to engage the congregation.

Following Respondent's previously planned sabbatical, June - August, 2022, the Vestry of All Saints Sharon Chapel and Respondent mutually agreed that Respondent's call was to a ministry of undoing white supremacy in the Church more broadly and no longer as rector of their parish. They discerned Sharon Chapel's decision to continue independently of the Potomac Episcopal Community and planned supply clergy to celebrate Holy Eucharist for the four Sundays before Respondent's leave-taking with the parish.

The Title IV process was started in November, 2022, after a year and half of conversation with Bishop Goff and less than a month before Respondent's planned departure from parish ministry. There was no warning or discussion whatsoever that Bp. Goff, the Ecclesiastical Authority, believed Respondent's actions were heretical, a violation of his ordination vows, an abandonment of public worship, conduct unbecoming a clergy person, or in any ways contrary to the Canons of the Church.

Over the past year and three months since that time, the Diocese of Virginia has engaged in two investigations, and full discovery. The Church Attorney has not made any protest about the completeness or sufficiency of responses made during discovery, which included, as requested, the names and contact information of all of those who Respondent discussed his fast prior to the Title IV referral, hundreds of documents, interrogatories, and depositions. The Church Attorney did not ask for the names of everyone the Respondent talked to after the referral. The Church Attorney has also not made any claim that he was unable to talk with any witnesses or potential witnesses.

In an email to friends and colleagues, almost a year after this process began, Respondent included two sentences that he believed were correct, and were in no way intended to be disruptive, dilatory or contrary to the integrity of the proceedings. After exercising his full right to be heard within the time periods provided by the canons, Respondent accepted that the Hearing Panel and Disciplinary Board believed that the sentences were incorrect and sent a correction to all the recipients of the email. The Church Attorney received a copy of that email and has not questioned its contents or sufficiency.

However, as provided in the Motion for Reconsideration, Respondent is unwilling to provide the names of vulnerable clergy who have no connection to this preceding other than being a friend or colleague of Respondent. Although this is not in accordance with the letter of the sanctions, it is in accordance with Title IV's stated goal of "reconciliation" and the spirit of the Gospel to not perpetuate the historical pattern of prioritizing white (Respondent's) self-interest above the safety of clergy of color. This is not a mockery of the Episcopal Church, rather it is a desire to prevent the human-derived boundaries within the Church of the Title IV process from doing violence to the Gospel imperative to love-through-action those who are most at risk in our community.



Respondent is profoundly sorry that he was not offered the opportunity to settle this disagreement about the interpretation of various sections of the canons with a respectful and faithful conversation that could have easily resulted in a clarifying email being sent by him to his various friends and colleagues. Instead, the Church decided against even attempting to settle a minor dispute within the bounds of Christian relationship and jumped directly to demanding formal sanctions against Respondent.

Generations of BIPOC siblings in Christ have testified to the violent attempts to and successes of silencing dissent and serving the status-quo goals of white supremacy through the exercise of human laws, guidelines, and constructs labeled “race neutral” or “color-blind” by the white power structure which created them.

Given the overwhelming historical evidence, the current understanding of how human institutions are structured to perpetuate and protect white supremacy, and actions of the Title IV system, Respondent is concerned that the this new motion for sanctions was pursued as a means of reaching this exact point -- to silence the Respondent and to prevent the Church’s very public engagement with the Gospel imperative of racial justice and the painful truth of white supremacy in the foundations of our Episcopal faith.

Respondent firmly believes that if any error is being perpetrated here, it is the error of a Church which says we believe in an infinitely imaginative and loving God, but surrenders to despair and lives as if there is no imaginable way that we can confront the realities of our historic and current violence in white supremacy, journey through the very painful and shameful valley of the shadow of death with Jesus, and ultimately find healing and hope.

If any heresy is being perpetrated here then, it is the heresy of a Church which sent one of its priests with a community of believers charged with and dedicated to repentance and reconciliation to the Holy Ground of Cape Coast Castle’s dungeons, to stand atop 18 inches of compacted human remains and excrement -- the very bodies and blood of God’s beloved children – and not believe by sending someone into this experience that the Holy Spirit would not act powerfully in transforming that priest’s life.

The fundamental question is whether there is any room in the Episcopal Church for a priest of the Church to engage in a Eucharistic Fast, as a matter of faithful conviction and theological conscience, when he is moved by the Holy Spirit to bear witness to the racism which pervades both our culture and our Church. It is hypocritical to assert that we must control the length of such fast, the contents of the repair, the cost of the repentance, and the terms of our own restoration before we are even willing to begin to discuss the possibility of considering how to take the first step toward what we name “reconciliation” under Title IV. Respondent’s Eucharistic Fast is driven by conviction and conscience, inspired by the work of the Holy Spirit, grounded in actions taken in obedience to the requests of his bishops, experienced by walking on the holy ground of Cape Coast Castle, and explored in loving community with lay people, deacons, priests, and bishops.

The Canons require that “any sanction must be proportionate to the underlying misconduct.” (IV.13.11(b) Yet, here, the proposed sanction is wildly disproportional. We

are within two and a half weeks of the hearing. Counsel have been in frequent discussions of joint exhibits, witness lists, and briefing schedules. Not providing names of a few clergy who are irrelevant to any of the matters under consideration does no harm. The Church Attorney already has the names of those with whom Respondent discussed his decision to engage in a Eucharistic Fast. Any remaining names have no bearing on whether Respondent has neglected his ordination vows, neglected public worship and Holy Communion, conformed to the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, held or taught heretical views, or conducted himself in any way unbecoming a member of the clergy.

Unfortunately, the Title IV process does not allow Respondent to appeal any decision on sanctions (either the ones issued in early February or any imposed as a result of this motion) beyond the level of the Disciplinary Board until the underlying matter has been resolved. Therefore, if the sanctions requested in this motion are ultimately imposed, Respondent is in a “Catch 22.” He will not be able to appeal the original sanctions that led to this point and the subsequent sanctions will prevent him from presenting his full case. Respondent thus will be denied a fair hearing.

Under Title IV Canon 1 the Diocese is called to “seek to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected.” Nothing in this process has met this call. At this point, Respondent has little hope that this will be resolved in a matter that allows for healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ The Rev’d Dr. B. Cayce Ramey

I swear that all factual statements contained in this Response are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

The Rev’d Dr. B. Cayce Ramey, Respondent

/s/Jack W. Burtch, Jr.

Counsel to Respondent

Burtch Law, PLLC

1802 Bayberry Court, Suite 302

Richmond, Virginia 23226

(804) 593-4004

jb@burtchlaw.com

Date: February 18, 2024

I certify that a copy of this Response to the Church Attorney's Motion for Sanctions has been provided by email to Brian Carr, Esquire, the Rev'd Herbert Jones, the Rev'd Crystal Hardin, Julian Bivens, Esquire, the Rt. Rev'd E. Mark Stevenson, J.P. Causey, Esquire, Bradfute W. Davenport, Esquire, the Rt. Rev'd Susan E. Goff, the Rev'd Edward O. Miller, Jr.; the Rev'd Canon d'Rue Hazel.

/s/Jack W. Burtch, Jr.

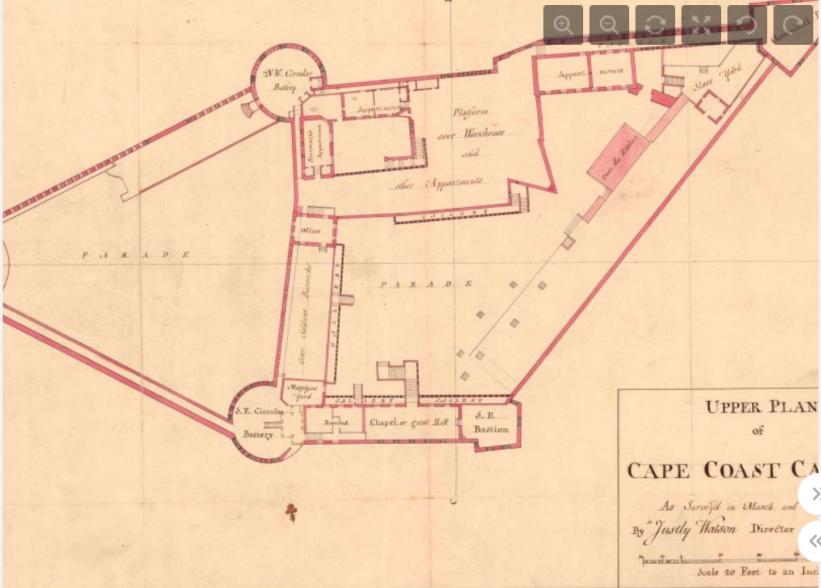
Date: February 18, 2024

# EXHIBIT A

Upper Plan of Cape Coast Castle

slavery.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Detail/upper-plan-of-cape-coast-castle-as-surveyd-in-march-and-a...

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Summary

Title  
Upper Plan of **Cape Coast Castle** As Survey'd in March and April 1756 by Justly Watson

Reference  
MPG 1\_234

Date  
1756

Library / Archive  
The National Archives, UK

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Author  
Justly Watson

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# EXHIBIT B

**Leave Your Gift at the Altar:  
Redoing Eucharistic Theology in Light of Slavery  
through a Justice-Centered Community**

A Doctor of Ministry Project  
Submitted to the Faculty of the  
School of Theology

of

VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY

in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

by

B. Cayce Ramey

Richmond, Virginia  
February 2022

Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology  
Virginia Union University

This is to certify that the Project Document prepared by B. Cayce Ramey entitled *Leave Your Gift at the Altar: Redoing Eucharistic Theology in Light of Slavery through a Justice-Centered Community* has been approved by his or her committee as satisfactory completion of the Program requirement for the degree of Doctor of Ministry.

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Program Director and School Name

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Advisor/Committee Member

---

Dean of School

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Date



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# ABSTRACT

Leave Your Gift at the Altar:  
Redoing Eucharistic Theology in Light of Slavery  
through a Justice-Centered Community

By B. Cayce Ramey, MDiv, Virginia Theological Seminary

A Project Document submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Ministry, at Virginia Union University

Virginia Union University, 2022

Advisor: John W. Kinney, Ph.D., Professor of Theology  
Director, Center for African American Pentecostalism and Leadership Development

The celebration of Holy Eucharist is the central act of worship in the Episcopal Church and is the heart of how we Episcopalians understand ourselves as Christians. Yet the Diocese of Virginia's Eucharistic theology remains grounded in the plantation perspectives of white supremacy in which we were founded. We are living in a state of broken communion with our Black siblings, sisters, and brothers, which hinders our relationship with God, perhaps even threatens our salvation, and invites condemnation as we approach the altar of the Lord.

Using an action research methodology, this project gathered participants from the Potomac Episcopal Community for six sessions to explore the development of a justice-centered community capable of redoing Eucharistic theology in light of the participation of the Diocese of Virginia in the transatlantic slave trade and ongoing systems of white supremacy. Structured by the four-fold shape of the Holy Eucharist and employing Womanist pedagogy, these sessions guided a group of twelve people to engage Episcopal history and Black experience and theology, interrogating contemporary Eucharistic theology to discover they could form a justice-centered group capable of challenging and transforming their beliefs.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks go to so many who made this project possible.

To Elinor, Carson, and Daylon, who endured countless late nights, early mornings, and more mood swings than I care to remember, your support and encouragement and patience have stored for you, no doubt, great treasures in heaven. I pray that you will remember the sacrifices you made for this work one day and understand.

To the Rev. Jabriel Ballentine whose friendship, love, support, and challenge brought me to and from the brink of divine joy and abject despair too many times to count. God has poured out immeasurable hope and grace to me through you. The ruts my heels dig in the road to glory are deep because your pull is strong. I may get there yet.

To my parents and sister, and sister-in-law who didn't always understand or agree with what I was saying, studying, or doing but who always supported me anyway.

To DMin Cohort 2022 who welcomed this outsider to a family of celebration and devotion. You have been for me a master class in faithful discipleship.

To STVU and my professors whose generosity of spirit has given me a gift I could not find at any other seminary and whose insistence on liberation and experience freed me to find the work my soul must have.

To my advisor the Rev. Dr. John W. Kinney, whose deep wisdom, insight, and pastoral care encouraged, directed, and guided me on this journey, and whose question, "What about your people?" prevented me from becoming the very thing I am working to undo.

To Andrew and Tiffany Terry, whose many conversations, quiet support, joyous laughter, and dining room table were critical for my journey to STVU possible and enriched my experience along the way.

To the Rev. Dr. Paula Parker, who shared so freely her wisdom, insight, and heart and whose prayers have opened the way for my own wholeness, and perhaps the healing of many more.

To the Rev. Dr. Kate Sonderegger, who was my priest amid doubt and tribulation and a patient listener through it all;

To the people of The Triangle of Hope, whose partnership, hospitality, and invitation to Ghana was God's instrument to begin this work in me;

To the Rev. Dr. Joyce Mercer for her patience and gentle guidance from MDiv to DMin and whatever might be next;

To Holy Comforter Episcopal Church, Washington DC, the Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, and the Rev. Dr. Canon Kortwright Davis – you shared your world and let me glimpse the Kingdom of God. I am forever a transformed person and priest because of your investment in me;

Thank you.

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## INTRODUCTION

The white Church is as mired in the sins of white supremacy as any other institution, country, community, or person. From Papal Bulls to “A City on a Hill”; from Manifest Destiny to sermons of “Slaves obey your masters,” to enslaving people, to opposing Civil Rights, to hoarding wealth from stolen land and stolen people, to deafening silence on the continued systematic violation of the human rights of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, the white Church continues to live in a state broken communion with our siblings, sisters, and brothers. The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, where I serve, is built on participation in and wealth from the betrayal and murder of indigenous tribes and the enslavement of millions of African people. Standing on the battlements of the Cape Coast slave-trading castle on the shores of Ghana in 2017, I could feel the direct, bitter, violent connection between my Christian forebearers who ran that fort, my vocation as an Episcopal priest, and our fractured communion.

The violence and brokenness of our diocese are anathema to the life of Christ, as witnessed in scripture. Jesus’ living, preaching, teaching, and healing testify to his demand for communion among his children. In his life, Jesus transgresses law after law that would deny the sanctity of God’s created order of human kinship. Healing on the sabbath, teaching people to love their neighbors as themselves, Jesus even goes so far as to tell the people that reconciliation must precede worship at the very altar of the Lord.

In a divisive and divided world, such Gospel truths challenge the independent existence of members of the Episcopal Church. We prefer to live as benevolent benefactors or ardent anti-establishmentarians, anything to keep a safe distance between

ourselves and our neighbors. Relationship in community complicates our practice of faith and with our mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual resources feeling like so much unrenowable energy in this age of COVID-19, Jesus' demand for interdependence seems nearly unbearable. Yet we must bear it. Jesus requires communion with neighbor to be in communion with him. Our longing to participate in the life of our Savior, particularly through Holy Eucharist, challenges us to ask how we should understand our current sacramental life amid our unrepentant, unrestored, unreconciled sin of white supremacy embodied in chattel slavery. Yet we are not without hope. Even in the depths of our darkest history and most violent present, Christ's redeeming love assures us we can be saved from our sin. To find communion with Jesus, we must leave our gifts at the altar and first go and be reconciled to our siblings, sisters, and brothers.

This project explores how the participation of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia in the transatlantic slave trade – justifying, profiting from, and perpetuating white supremacy – should influence our Eucharistic theology.

## **Problem Statement**

The celebration of Holy Eucharist is the central act of worship of the Episcopal Church. It is at the core of our communities, at the heart of how we understand ourselves as Christians, and central to how we understand and interpret almost every aspect of our faith. Yet the Diocese of Virginia's Eucharistic theology remains grounded in the plantation perspectives of white supremacy in which we were founded. We claim to continue to love God (whom we cannot see) while hating our Black and Brown siblings, sisters, and brothers (whom we can see). We have refused to repent of our sin in chattel slavery, continuing to profit from stolen wealth, supporting an ecclesial status-quo we

know to be systemically racist, and partnering with empire in the ongoing silence, violence, and oppression which sustains white supremacy in all its forms. We are living in a state of broken communion, which hinders our relationship with God, perhaps even threatens our salvation, and invites condemnation upon ourselves as we approach the altar of the Lord to partake of Holy Communion.

### **Model for Ministry**

The very nature of Jesus requires this project to be grounded in justice, while my context in the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia recommends a Eucharistic focus. Similarly, the Christological center and relational necessity of this work immediately point to Womanist Theology's resources.

This project explores the redevelopment of Eucharistic theology using an action research methodology employing the four-fold shape of the Holy Eucharist<sup>1</sup> as a framework for a series of group sessions. These sessions use the seven steps of Womanist Pedagogy to build a justice-centered community capable of addressing the Episcopal Church's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade. Through engaging the history and theology of the white Church in humility and submission to Jesus Christ and to Black experiential and theological authority, I believe that participants in these sessions will come both to increase their belief that our diocese's participation in chattel slavery should influence our theology, that they will be able to identify ways that our Eucharistic theology could change, that they will increase their belief that a justice-centered

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<sup>1</sup> "Eucharist," *The Episcopal Church* (blog), accessed February 16, 2022, <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/eucharist/>.

community can act as a corrective to white supremacy as incarnate in the transatlantic slave trade, and that they will become more willing to participate in such a community.

## **Project Document Overview**

Chapter 1 – Ministry Focus: this chapter details my call to ministry and the events which lead me to Cape Coast Castle, Ghana, and this doctoral work. Chapter 1 highlights how the Holy Spirit has been working in my life since childhood, forming and freeing me for moments such as this. This chapter also describes my ministry context as part of the Potomac Episcopal Community and details the participants of this project.

Chapter 2 – The State of the Art for the Model of Ministry: this chapter examines the literature surrounding Eucharistic theology as it relates to and is informed by the participation of the white Church in the transatlantic slave trade, chattel slavery, and subsequent systems of white supremacy violence. Beginning with a brief overview of Anglican Eucharistic theology, the chapter explores those few resources which engage Eucharistic theology in light of the white Church's participation in the transatlantic slave trade, reviews insights from other theological traditions, and concludes with an examination of the impacts of our current Eucharistic theology in the Diocese of Virginia.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Foundations for the Model: this chapter introduces a theology of humility and submission as a necessary antecedent to a new Christology. Drawing on the resources of psychology, particularly the area of moral injury, the chapter connects the authority of Jesus and the authority of Black experience to undo white supremacy foundations of Eucharistic theology within the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia.

Chapter 4 – Methodology: this chapter details the research and analysis methods for the project, the curriculum development, and the outlines of each session. The chapter discusses the participants and their recruitment as well as the use of the four-fold shape of the Holy Eucharist and the seven steps of Womanist Pedagogy as foundational aspects of the project. It concludes with a statement of my hypotheses.

Chapter 5 – Field Experience: this chapter presents the data from the twelve-week project. After giving a characterization of the participants, the chapter reviews the data in relation to each of the four hypotheses and discusses the challenges encountered over the course of the study. This chapter concludes with reflections on my personal experiences of the project.

Chapter 6 – Summary, Reflections, and Conclusion: this chapter examines the goals of the study and the relative successes and shortcomings of the work. It also covers my proposals for changes and improvements to the project. Finally, the chapter explores various possibilities for the continuation and expansion of this work.

## CHAPTER 1: MINISTRY FOCUS

### Call Story

On the first day of school, my second-grade teacher pulled down a map of the United States and asked each student to come to the front of the class and point to where she or he was born. I remember walking to the front of the room and pointing instead to a dot on the blackboard about six feet to the left of the map. I was born in Kanagawa-Ken, Japan. My existence that morning upended the teacher's geography lesson. My story didn't fit. This day was the first of many times that I and my experiences would disrupt my community.

Between the ages of one and twenty-nine, I moved every three to four years. One year I even moved twice within eleven months. I lived in Japan, California, Arizona, Hawaii, Virginia, California (again), and then went to college in Massachusetts, moved back to Virginia, got stationed in Japan, and finally landed, for the third time, back in Virginia.

While my early moves were because of my father's career in the Marine Corps, my moves to Massachusetts and beyond were my own. After graduating high school, since I was planning to become a fighter pilot, I applied for and received a Marine-option Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship.<sup>2</sup> Then at the beginning of my sophomore year in college, trying faithfully submit my future to God's will, I prayed for career guidance, asking if God wanted me to become a fighter pilot or not. That

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<sup>2</sup> Navy (Army and Air Force) Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) scholarships provide full-tuition scholarships in exchange for 4 or more years of active and reserve duty in their respective branches. Marine-option scholarship recipients train with the Navy ROTC students at their schools, then are commissioned as Marine Officers upon graduation and serve with the Marine Corps.

Christmas, I got glasses, and my dreams flying ended. Instead, after graduation and my commissioning, I became a Marine Corps Communications Officer.

Five years later, in September of 2003, as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, I was deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, to serve on a coalition military staff where the chaplain assigned to my unit happened to be an Episcopal priest. One Sunday, as I stood in the front row during service, the priest, a “full-bird” colonel,<sup>3</sup> caught my attention. He had just finished the Eucharist prayer and was motioning for me to come forward. I had no idea what he was doing, but I stepped forward as ordered since he was my priest *and* a senior officer. He handed me the chalice filled with consecrated wine and gave me a “battlefield promotion” to the position of Lay Eucharistic Minister. He and I then distributed the body and blood of Christ to people I knew would risk their lives that very morning on convoys down IED Alley<sup>4</sup> and across central Iraq. I had heard often about life, death, and resurrection in the Church. Yet the gift and grace of Jesus' incarnate life, death, and resurrection embodied in Holy Eucharist were never more real to me than in that moment.

Less than a year later, having returned to the United States and civilian life, I began the process of discernment that would lead me to accept God's call to ordination as an Episcopal priest. One day, while driving together, I argued with my wife that every Christian was called to be in ministry. She pressed me to explain exactly what I meant by “in ministry,” so I shared with her what I thought was a perfectly normal description of a

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<sup>3</sup> For comparison of rank, I was a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, O-2, while a Colonel is an O-6, approximately four levels and 15-20 years of service my senior.

<sup>4</sup> Improvised Explosive Device Alley – the stretch of road between the Green Zone, which housed the headquarters of Ambassador Bremer and the US State Department, and the Baghdad airport. As the “insurgency” in Iraq grew, IED Alley was one of the deadly stretches of roadway in the world.

person leading one or more groups and setting vision and direction for the church. She told me I was weird, that nobody else thought like that, and that I needed to figure out what was going on for me before trying to foist my absurd definitions on her. Five years later, through many more discussions, multiple conversations with clergy and lay leaders, and various interviews with ecclesial authorities, I realized that my faith, gifts, and passions intersected and integrated in the vocation of priest.

Carrying my military training with me to Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) in Alexandria, Virginia, I created a detailed plan of attack to organize my three-year course of study. VTS required all students to take at least one class from a different member institution of the Washington Theological Consortium. For no reason I could articulate, *The History of the Black Church* (being taught the following term at the Howard University School of Divinity) sounded incredibly interesting to me, so I registered. Only when I compared notes with my classmates did I realize how far from normal my plan was at VTS. Only when I attended my first class did I realize how far from normal my plan was at Howard. The only white student in the class, I was introduced to faith, peoples, and worlds that my church and seminary education had ignored. The experience shattered my concept of church and shaped a nascent understanding of life outside of my privileged white male heterosexual cisgender existence.

Having been sent to seminary from an affluent white congregation, I continued at VTS with a growing sense that my formation for ministry needed to go beyond the confines of my home parish. I believed that God was calling me, for no reason that I understood, to serve as a seminarian-intern at a parish different than my own. Holy Comforter Episcopal Church, Washington, DC, welcomed me warmly. A historically



Black Episcopal Church led by the Rev. Dr. Canon Kortwright Davis and the Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, Holly Comforter helped me fill the next two years with love, lessons, mistakes, corrections, learnings, and the amazing movement of the Holy Spirit. More aware than I had ever been yet still woefully ignorant of so much of white supremacy's history and ongoing effects, I marveled at the grace Holy Comforter poured out on me week after week. They allowed me to assist at the altar and to serve as a chalice bearer, every Sunday sharing in some of the most intimate moments of worship – the celebration and reception of Holy Eucharist.<sup>5</sup> What's more, five different people from Holy Comforter allowed me to interview them for my Master's thesis, exploring how their family's memories of slavery affected their contemporary Christian faith. At the end of the internship, as I questioned how and with whom to apply what I had experienced, the Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas admonished me, "Go to your people."

A few years after seminary, I began serving as the rector<sup>6</sup> of All Saints Episcopal Church Sharon Chapel in Alexandria, Virginia. A few months after I arrived, I was sent as a substitute to a meeting with my bishop at which he mentioned the Triangle of Hope (ToH), an initiative between the Episcopal Church in Virginia<sup>7</sup> and the Anglican dioceses

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<sup>5</sup> Many parishioners at Holy Comforter practiced receiving the elements without touching either the bread or the chalice, asking the priest or lay Eucharistic minister to place the bread directly in their mouths and tip chalice for them. This required me to be the hands of Christ, literally feeding his people his most precious body and blood.

<sup>6</sup> From the Glossary of the Episcopal Church, "a rector is the priest in charge of a parish. Typically, a rector is the priest in charge of a self-supporting parish, ... The rector is the ecclesiastical authority of the parish. The term is derived from the Latin for "rule." The rector has authority and responsibility for worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the parish, subject to the rubrics of the BCP, the constitution and canons of the church, and the pastoral direction of the bishop. The rector is responsible for selection of all assistant clergy, and they serve at the discretion of the rector. The church and parish buildings and furnishings are under the rector's control." <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/rector/>

<sup>7</sup> The Episcopal Church is a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion and the recognized branch of the Anglican Church in the United States. In 1785, The Anglican Church in the US changed its name to "the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America" to reflect its independence from Britain. Later it would change its name again to The Episcopal Church. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/who-we-are/history-episcopal-church/timeline/>

of Kumasi, Ghana, and Liverpool, United Kingdom, working to recognize, repent of, and address the historic and ongoing effects of the transatlantic slave trade. Eighteen months after that meeting, I was in Ghana, for a ToH planning meeting and a tour of our partner diocese. A few days after we landed in Accra, we drove along the coast of Ghana to Cape Coast where we toured Cape Coast Castle. We started in the male slave dungeon, proceeded through the female slave dungeon, walked through the Door of No Return, saw the living apartments, and ended at the former chapel. The chapel at Cape Coast Castle is the site of the first Anglican celebration of Holy Eucharist in Ghana.

The chapel is built on top of the male slave dungeon.

The site of the first Anglican celebration of Holy Eucharist in Ghana, was directly above hell on earth. Men stood in the dungeon, surrounded by and on top of bodies and blood, while an Anglican priest and a congregation of worshipers received the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The chapel was even constructed with a large shaft in the floor outside the doors so that guards could attend service while monitoring the people captive below.<sup>8</sup> Standing in that chapel, all the claims of my Anglican sacramental theology seemed utterly insufficient. Nothing I was taught in church or in seminary could answer the question-cries I heard arising from the dungeon below. Where was Christ in that moment of Eucharistic celebration?

Returning to the Diocese of Virginia and my parish, the questions surrounding Holy Eucharist never left me. I continued to reflect and wonder, my doubt and frustration

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<sup>8</sup> According to a docent at the site.

growing. How would our Episcopal theology be different if we had to answer the questions posed by our treatment of the people we enslaved at Cape Coast Castle? Amidst these questions, I rediscovered the history of my own parish. Our property was donated by a wealthy Virginia plantation owner. We had known for decades the names, ages, and genders of nineteen people held enslaved by the family who donated our land, and had done nothing in response.<sup>9</sup> The altar at which I consecrated bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ sits atop land saturated with the bodies, blood, sweat, and toil of people enslaved, just like at Cape Coast Castle.

On August 12, 2017, responding to a diocesan-wide call from my bishops, I travelled with other clergy from the Diocese of Virginia to attend a counter-protest to white supremacist rallies in Charlottesville, VA. As we gathered in the basement of a church adjacent to the park containing the statue that was the ostensible cause of the protests that day, a woman announced hurriedly that they needed all the clergy to go to the church parking lot. We were to form a human barrier against neo-Nazis that were marching past. As I proceeded to the stairway, I asked the woman if she had any specific instructions. She looked directly at me, replying clearly and firmly, “You, stand in front.”

My experiences in Ghana, my questions about Holy Eucharist, and the admonition of Charlottesville continue to fuel my questions and pursuit of graduate studies. God continues to use my disruptive experiences and God’s disruptive Spirit in and through my life to affirm my call to ministry as an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Virginia, interrupting normative white supremacy in the church.

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<sup>9</sup> Historic Records Division, Will Book W, No. 1, Fairfax County Circuit Court, Fairfax County, Virginia, 211-212.

## Ministry Context

Headquartered in the historic downtown district of Richmond, Virginia, in an antebellum mansion donated by a wealthy 19<sup>th</sup>-century tobacco merchant, The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia traces its origins to the Anglican Church in the British colonies in North America and the first celebration of Holy Communion at the first Anglican parish in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. Organized formally in May of 1785, the Diocese of Virginia was one of the founding members of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. In 1790, The Rev. James Madison<sup>10</sup> was consecrated in England as the first Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia. Then, between 1790 to 1812, the diocese first grew to 108 parishes and then declined steadily to only 40 as it struggled with post-Revolutionary War governments and the increasing influence of other denominations across the United States.<sup>11</sup>

Fully integrated with the systems and economics of chattel slavery since Jamestown, the Diocese of Virginia entered the Civil War years with 82% of its clergy as enslavers.<sup>12</sup> By 1861, the diocese had rebounded in numbers and re-established its prominent place in the Commonwealth of Virginia when it decided to affiliate with Episcopal dioceses in other secessionist states to form the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America.<sup>13</sup> During the Civil War, St. Paul's Episcopal Church,

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<sup>10</sup> Second cousin to the US President of the same name.

<sup>11</sup> "History," The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <https://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/history/>

<sup>12</sup> Edward Bond and Joan R. Gundersen, *The Episcopal Church in Virginia, 1607-2007* (Richmond, VA: Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, 2007), 264.

<sup>13</sup> Bond and Gundersen, 289.

Richmond, served as the “Cathedral of the Confederacy” and was the spiritual home and worshipping congregation of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis.<sup>14</sup>

Following the Civil War, the diocese divided and created the Diocese of West Virginia in 1877 and the Diocese of Southern Virginia in 1892. The creation of the latter left only 3 of the original 13 Black ministers and only 148 of the original 1,314 Black parishioners within the new borders of the Diocese of Virginia.<sup>15</sup> Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the Diocese of Virginia was lead by a series of white male bishops,<sup>16</sup> until April of 2012 when a special Council elected the Rev. Susan Goff as suffragan bishop.<sup>17</sup> In 2019 after the sudden retirement of the thirteenth Bishop of Virginia and after a short-term replacement couldn’t be found, the Rt. Rev. Susan Goff was asked to assume the role of ecclesial authority in the diocese.

Today, the Diocese of Virginia is one of the largest diocese in the Episcopal Church, with 179 congregations, 6 church schools, 6 diocesan homes,<sup>18</sup> 425 active and retired clergy, and more than 68,000 people.<sup>19</sup> Its total membership fell by approximately 10,000 people from 2008 to 2018 and its average Sunday attendance fell by approximately 3,600 people over the same period. The Diocese collects an annual combined plate and pledge total of over \$60,000,000 across its congregations, down \$4.3

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<sup>14</sup> Heather Beasley Doyle, “‘Cathedral of the Confederacy’ reckons with its history and charts future.” The Episcopal Church, June 18, 2017, <https://episcopalchurch.org/library/article/cathedral-confederacy-reckons-its-history-and-charts-future>.

<sup>15</sup> Bond and Gundersen, 289

<sup>16</sup> “History,” The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <http://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/history/>. One African-American man, Rev. Canon Antoine Lamont Campbell, was elected in 1993 but was asked to withdraw prior to his consecration due to allegations of sexual misconduct by two women.

<sup>17</sup> From the Glossary of the Episcopal Church - A suffragan bishop is an assisting bishop who does not automatically succeed a diocesan bishop. A suffragan bishop may be elected bishop or bishop coadjutor. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/suffragan-bishop/>

<sup>18</sup> “Organizations,” The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <http://www.thediocese.net/resources/organizations/>

<sup>19</sup> “Homepage,” The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <http://www.thediocese.net/>

million since 2008 adjusted for inflation.<sup>20</sup> While a statistical breakdown by race and gender of the Diocese of Virginia is not available, a Pew Research Center 2014 study estimated the Episcopal Church as “90% white, 4% Black, 1% Asian, 3% Mix/Other, and 2% Latino.”<sup>21</sup>

While the character of any such large organization or community can vary by time and location, a few values within the Diocese continue to dominate. The Diocese of Virginia treasures its claim to historical significance. The diocesan website address is "thediocese.net," claiming and highlighting Virginia's unique place in the history of the Episcopal Church. The diocesan coat of arms<sup>22</sup> contains the image of three ships, invoking the three ships which carried the original Jamestown settlers. The diocesan headquarters continues to occupy Mayo House, a pre-Civil War mansion in the heart of Richmond, despite the racist history of the money which originally financed it and the violence the building and its décor inflicts on visitors. Large oil-painting portraits, only recently moved to less prominent places, still adorn the walls, including the first bishop of Virginia, enslaver The Rt. Rev. James Madison.<sup>23</sup>

The Diocese of Virginia values its longstanding relationships with other members of the Anglican Communion around the world, including in Ghana, the United Kingdom, Haiti, Brazil, South Africa, the Philippines, Myanmar, South Korea, Puerto Rico,

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<sup>20</sup> “Research and Statistics,” The Episcopal Church, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <https://episcopalchurch.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/76003689d9944d1cb82851513b0be2b3>

<sup>21</sup> "How Racially Diverse are US Religious Groups?" The Pew Research Center, accessed June 6, 2020, [https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/07/27/the-most-and-least-racially-diverse-u-s-religious-groups/ft\\_15-07-23\\_religiondiversityindex-1/](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/07/27/the-most-and-least-racially-diverse-u-s-religious-groups/ft_15-07-23_religiondiversityindex-1/)

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix F: Photographs & Images

<sup>23</sup> “Randle’s Economic Benefit of Slavery Article - The Diocese of Virginia Committee on Race and Reconciliation.” Accessed June 8, 2020. <https://sites.google.com/site/dovracerelations/the-economic-benefit-of-slavery-to-the-episcopal-church-in-virginia>.

Guatemala, and more.<sup>24</sup> The Diocese also values its role of raising-up priests not just for its parishes but for the entire Episcopal Church. The Diocese of Virginia values its self-image as a model of decency and as a proper, polite, progressive community, despite recent legislative actions which indicate its continued entrenchment in a culture of white supremacy.<sup>25, 26</sup> The Diocese of Virginia values lay leadership and local control which its member parishes have used throughout its history to oppose reform and limit accountability to ecclesial authority.<sup>27, 28, 29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> “Mission Areas & Ministry Teams.” Accessed June 10, 2020.

<https://www.thediocese.net/resources/ministries/office-of-mission-and-outreach/mission-areas-and-ministry-teams/>

<sup>25</sup> Robert W. Prichard. *A History of the Episcopal Church* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1999), 145. In the 1860s, the Diocese changed the name of its legislative body to Annual Council, matching the 1861 language of the General *Council* of the Confederate States of America and setting itself apart from the General *Convention* of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Following the post-war reunification of the Diocese of Virginia and the Episcopal Church, the Diocese retained the name for 150 years. In 2015, the Annual Council of the Diocese voted to change the name of its legislative body back to the pre-Civil War "Annual Convention," doing so in a one-sentence resolution and with a "spirit of reconciliation" without addressing the legacy of slavery or the cause for the original name change. Virginia was the last secessionist diocese to officially return to the Episcopal Church.

<sup>26</sup> “224<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention Recap”, R-2 Diocese of Virginia Response to Pittsburgh Synagogue Massacre, The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <http://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/governance/annual-convention/224th-annual-convention-2018-/224th-annual-convention-recap/>. In 2018, the Annual Convention of the Diocese passed a resolution in response to the shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA. That resolution referenced the “strong support expressed for the Jewish community by “Virginia Episcopalian, President George Washington,” and asked all clergy and people of the diocese to “carefully study” his 1790 letter to the Hebrew congregation at Newport. Washington’s letter reads in part, “our Government shall give to bigotry no sanction and to persecution no assistance...and that all possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship...” yet the resolution commending this letter to the Diocese omitted any repudiation or mention of the deadly policies and the systems of slavery of President Washington or the United States government.

<sup>27</sup> “History,” The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <http://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/history/>. From the founding of the first Anglican parish in Virginia in 1607, the Diocese spent 183 years without a bishop and adopted canons early in its history which strictly limited the role and powers of any such diocesan bishop.

<sup>28</sup> “The Virginia Plan for Proportionate Giving,” Ministry Tools, Stewardship & Gratitude, [http://www.thediocese.net/CustomerContent/www/CMS/files/Finance\\_and\\_Management/Church\\_Pledge/The\\_Virginia\\_Plan\\_for\\_Proportionate\\_Giving\\_2017\\_1.pdf](http://www.thediocese.net/CustomerContent/www/CMS/files/Finance_and_Management/Church_Pledge/The_Virginia_Plan_for_Proportionate_Giving_2017_1.pdf). Since at least 1958, local congregations have maintained the power of the purse by voting down or tabling resolutions that would have established mandatory giving by parishes to diocesan operating funds controlled by the bishop. The Diocese has opted instead for a voluntary giving plan with no consequences for member parishes that provide reduced or no payment of the suggested amounts. This system is called "The Virginia Plan."

<sup>29</sup> “Way of Love” Rule of Life in the Diocese of Virginia, The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020, <http://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/governance/annual-convention/224th-annual-convention-2018-/224th-annual-convention-recap/>; “Resolutions”, Resolutions R-1 Adoption of the “Way of Love” Rule of Life in the Diocese of Virginia, The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, accessed Feb 16, 2020,

Currently, I serve in the Diocese of Virginia as the rector of All Saints Episcopal Church Sharon Chapel in Alexandria, Virginia, one of only a few integrated, multi-racial parishes. As the senior staff member and the only clergy with my parish, I have been able to address issues of racial justice and white supremacy in our church through liturgical planning, preaching, and adult formation. These efforts were met with dissent and apathy from some of our white members and with welcoming encouragement and support from many of our Black members.<sup>30</sup> Over the past five years, the parish has slowly begun to shift to a posture of deeper understanding and engagement.

All Saints Sharon Chapel is one of four Episcopal parishes which form the Potomac Episcopal Community. This group of churches is exploring merging to form one new parish to be church in a new way and to provide a progressive sacramental presence in Alexandria. I am one of two clergy leaders of this community.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to my parish responsibilities, I serve at the diocesan level as the co-chair of the Triangle of Hope planning team, a member of the Standing Committee,<sup>32</sup> and as a member of the Committee on Priesthood. I have served as a member of the

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<http://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/governance/annual-convention/224th-annual-convention-2018-/resolutions/>. In 2018, the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Virginia refused to pass a resolution that would have required parishes and the diocese to report their activities under “The Way of Love”, a national ministry framework promulgated by the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, the first Black presiding bishop in its history, amending the resolution to remove any mention of reporting or reports. Compare R-1 as adopted to R-1 as submitted.

<sup>30</sup> Negative feedback included such stereotypical comments as, “We aren’t responsible for slavery,” and “Politics does not belong in the pulpit.” Some parishioners walked out in the middle of adult formation programs or stopped attending and transferred membership.

<sup>31</sup> There have been as many as four clergy serving this community, but at the time of writing in January 2022, only two active clergy are employed by the four member-parishes.

<sup>32</sup> The Standing Committee is an elected body of lay and ordained leaders who provide a "counsel of advice" to the Diocesan Bishop or Ecclesial Authority and approve and oversee clergy formation and disciple, property matters, and parish indebtedness.



Executive Board<sup>33</sup> and as chair of the diocesan Pay Equity Task Force. As part of my duties as a priest canonically resident in the Diocese, I actively participate in the legislative processes at Annual Convention,<sup>34</sup> speaking frequently at open hearings and during floor debates. These various roles have allowed me to initiate conversation and some action toward undoing structural and systemic problems in our governance and enabled me to influence reform in our ordination process. My legislative amendments and inputs have been challenged directly at the Annual Convention and defeated on the floor when I've offered them. Many of my suggestions on Executive Board were met with a mix of opposition and support, encouragement to continue raising issues, and little measurable change.

Outside of formal channels and still within the Diocese, I serve as one of the leaders of a grassroots organization advocating for racial justice through reparations in the Diocese. In the Fall of 2021, this organization, "Good Trouble, Diocese of Virginia," introduced and successfully passed a diocesan resolution establishing a \$10 million fund for reparations and a BIPOC-lead task force to administer that fund.

## **Ministry Approach**

My approach to ministry centers on identity, the sacraments, and racial justice. Identity defines who I am in relationship and in community – relationship to and with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and community between and among ever-widening circles of people around me. As we and I understand and experience more fully who we

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<sup>33</sup> The Executive Board is the diocesan leadership committee made up of elected representatives from the sixteen Regions of the diocese, which has canonical responsibility for acting for the Annual Convention when the Convention is not in session, overseeing programs and budget.

<sup>34</sup> The diocese's legislative body.

are as beloved children of God, we can become more fully who God created us to be in relationship. Identity in Jesus Christ encourages me to find more and more of myself in relationship with Jesus instead of in the values of white supremacy culture. As I continue to encounter more of the sinful foundational experiences and theologies of the white Church, even my Christian identity, my identity found in word and sacrament, must be surrendered to the work of the Holy Spirit and subsumed in relationship to God's justice.

The sacraments, primarily Holy Eucharist and Baptism, are the core of my priestly identity, vocation, and joy. I experience intimacy and holiness participating in the celebration of Holy Eucharist, whether celebrating or receiving. Communion encapsulates and enacts the ground of my being and the anamnesis of my salvation. It is the foundation of what it means to be loved and so to love, at once drawing me closer to the Source of Love and driving me into the world in obedience to that love. In Holy Eucharist and Baptism, I encounter God's movement toward all humanity, God's action in our lives, God's powerful initiative toward us who cannot comprehend and who do not reciprocate.

Driven by Jesus' incarnate example to grace and forgiveness through a sense of my sin and participation in sinful systems, I see racial justice as central to the Gospel and the only means of addressing the original sin of white supremacy in the United States and the Episcopal Church. Racial justice is inseparable from Gospel. There is no Gospel without justice – incarnate in our history and in this age as racial justice particularly. American's sins of white supremacy are existential – foundational to its own identity, mythology, history, and self-understanding – and so can only be addressed with a fundamentally existential reality, with the ultimate reality, with Gospel. Sin separates us

from God, individually, as a church, and as a nation. Sin distorts our relationships and traumatizes our identity. The Gospel as racial justice is necessary if we and I are ever to eliminate the idols of white supremacy, (re)claim our identity in Christ, and participate fully in the holy relationship sacraments incarnate.

I value truth, authenticity, honesty, duty, and responsibility. I believe that the Episcopal Church has a duty to end the trauma and violence we are visiting upon our siblings, sisters, and brothers and ourselves. We must be honest with ourselves about our sin, our relationship with God, and so about our theology, particularly about our sacraments. We cannot be still and silent in the face of white supremacy and be faithful children of God.

Though raised as a leader, shaped as a Marine, and given power and privilege, it is through identity with Christ that I am called as a witness. I am a near-perfect product of the system which seeks to recreate me in its image. Reluctant as I am and though intended by country and church for another purpose, I am working to claim my role as a disruptor of systems in an ever-deepening effort to rid the Episcopal Church and this country of white supremacy and its ongoing effects.

## CHAPTER 2: THE STATE OF THE ART FOR THE MODEL OF MINISTRY

The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia has built its wealth and its social, cultural, and political power on the foundations of its participation in the transatlantic slave trade.<sup>35</sup> This deep and ongoing connection with systemic white supremacy is displayed throughout the Episcopal Church: in our parish buildings and the myriad images of white Jesus in art, stained glass, bulletin covers, and elsewhere;<sup>36</sup> in the racial makeup of our congregations;<sup>37</sup> in the historical structures and documents explicitly defending the institution of chattel slavery;<sup>38</sup> in the Church's silence in the era of lynching in America;<sup>39</sup> in its late support of the Civil Rights movement;<sup>40</sup> and the list goes on. Yet, despite the election of the first African-American Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in 2015, as well as recent isolated efforts by individual dioceses and intuitions toward formal reparations,<sup>41</sup> the persistent and repeated critiques by Black Liberation Theology, Womanist Theology, Feminist Theology, Postcolonial Theology, and others, continue

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<sup>35</sup> "Randle's Economic Benefit of Slavery Article - The Diocese of Virginia Committee on Race and Reconciliation," accessed June 8, 2020, <https://sites.google.com/site/dovracrelations/the-economic-benefit-of-slavery-to-the-episcopal-church-in-virginia>.

<sup>36</sup> Loth, 16. For just one of examples see the "Lee Memorial Window" of St. Paul's Richmond, in which two different depictions of Moses resemble General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Southern forces during the US Civil War, inverting the Exodus narrative and casting the man who was leading the military fight to keep people enslaved instead in the role of liberator of white life.

<sup>37</sup> Pew Research, "The Most and Least Racially Diverse US Religious Groups."

<sup>38</sup> Gardiner H. Jr. Shattuck, *Episcopalians and Race: Civil War to Civil Rights* (Lexington, Ky: Univ Pr of Kentucky, 2000), 9. Particularly, see the creation of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 25. The Episcopal Church was silent from the revival of the KKK in 1915 until the 1919 General Convention when it passed the first "churchwide" antilynching resolution, born mostly out of racial paternalism rather than justice.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 127-128. The Episcopal Bishops diocesan and co-adjutor of the Diocese of Alabama, The Rt. Rev. Charles Carpenter and The Rt. Rev. George Murray signed the statement by five white Birmingham clergymen which prompted the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's now-famous response, "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

<sup>41</sup> Virginia Theological Seminary, the Episcopal Dioceses of New York and Maryland, or even our own recent reparations fund and task force in the Diocese of Virginia

unheeded while the foundation of white supremacy within the Episcopal Church remains largely unexamined and unchanged. For example, only in March of 2019, did the Episcopal House of Bishops ask their Committee on Theology to begin to develop “a fuller theological and historical account of white supremacy and its impact on The Episcopal Church.”<sup>42</sup> Only in 2006, did the Annual Convention of the Episcopal Church adopt a resolution supporting even *asking* the US Congress to support the *study* of reparations for chattel slavery.<sup>43</sup> Further legislative exploration reveals that “white supremacy” is mentioned only once in the complete acts of Convention.<sup>44</sup> A similar search through the legislative actions of the Diocese of Virginia reveals even less engagement. Reparations is entirely absent from the resolutions of Annual Convention from 1999 to 2019 and ‘white supremacy’ is mentioned only once in a 2017 resolution in support of the Triangle of Hope.<sup>45</sup>

White supremacy goes unaddressed not only in our governance but also in our theology and worship. Even the Episcopal Church’s most sacred aspect of worship, the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, is built on, influenced by, and subject to the forces of white supremacy. From separate seating during Eucharistic services,<sup>46</sup> to attempts to found

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<sup>42</sup> Episcopal Church, “House of Bishops Theology Committee Examining ‘Infection’ of White Supremacy.

<sup>43</sup> [https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\\_resolution.pl?resolution=2006-C011](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=2006-C011), That resolution, 2006-C011, does not mention “white supremacy” or “repentance” but instead urges the Church to *ask* “Congress and the American People” to support “*initiating study of and dialogue about* the history and legacy of slavery in the United States and of proposals for monetary and non-monetary reparations to the descendants of the victims of slavery,” (emphasis added). The legislative history of the resolution reveals that the proposal was amended in the House of Bishops to remove the mention of direct support of legislation of a commission on reparations, to remove a request to “specifically research and report on the historical role of the Episcopal Church in these systems of slavery and racism so that we as a people of God can come to make a full, faithful and informed accounting of the legacy we inherit and better understand how we can work, both individually and collectively, to ‘repair the breach’,” and to remove a reporting requirement.

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\\_search.pl](https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_search.pl), 2018-D016, “Create a Task Force for Women, Truth, and Reconciliation.”

<sup>45</sup> From a search of [www.thediocese.net](http://www.thediocese.net); resolution submitted by the author.

<sup>46</sup> Shattuck, 8.

entirely separate racially-segregated dioceses,<sup>47</sup> both the enacted and doctrinal Eucharistic theologies of the Episcopal Church have ignored the events of the transatlantic slave trade in their development. How might the Eucharistic life of the Episcopal Church be different if the events of the transatlantic slave trade were as evident and alive in our theology as they are in the lives of African Americans today? I am working on Episcopal Eucharistic theology in relationship to the events of the transatlantic slave trade because I want to uncover how these events should reshape our Eucharistic theology so that I can help the Episcopal Church, in the context of Triangle of Hope,<sup>48</sup> and the Diocese of Virginia understand how white supremacy separates the white Church from a free, authentic, deep, and intimate relationship with God.

Through this literature review, I intend to show that the events of the transatlantic slave trade and Episcopal participation therein are absent or ignored in our Eucharistic theology. From those theologians who have taken seriously the events of the transatlantic slave trade, I intend to review how they have advocated for theological change in their context, particularly Black Liberation and Womanist theologians, whose insights and wisdom can help shape an Anglican response to white supremacy.

This literature review will not cover in any depth the traditional sources of Anglican or Episcopal Eucharistic Theology.<sup>49</sup> Nor will I review the literature arguing

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<sup>47</sup> Prichard, 179.

<sup>48</sup> Working to expose and address "the ongoing effects and continuing presence of slavery in our world through repentance, reconciliation, and mission," the Anglican dioceses of Kumasi, Ghana; Liverpool, UK; and Virginia, United States, have formed a "covenantal community" called the Triangle of Hope. This relationship seeks to redeem the "Golden Triangle" of the slave trade amongst the three dioceses and find redemption and reconciliation.

<sup>49</sup> Scripture, tradition, and reason constitute the "three-legged stool" of Anglican faith, drawing also from Church Mothers and Fathers, early Western theologians and philosophers, as well as cultural history. These are well documented and far too broad to cover in this effort. More importantly, they have created the broken systems we have today. Others have focused on their critique. I am attempting to focus where others have not.

about human experience as an authoritative source for theology; such authority will be assumed throughout. Finally, this document will not attempt to survey the work of exposing the vast history of the events of the transatlantic slave trade. Instead, I will focus on demonstrating the gaps in Episcopal Eucharistic theology in relation to the events of and our participation in the transatlantic slave trade and in critiquing the few attempts that have been made to influence Eucharistic theology based on those events.

Throughout this document I will be using ‘white supremacy’ in much the same way Grimes defines a “white supremacy approach,” as one which focuses on “the power and dominance white people amass,” to which I will add the explicit context of systems as well as ‘people.’ For the terms ‘Anglican’ and ‘Episcopal Eucharistic theology,’ I intend to specifically address the foundational theology and understanding of the sacrament of Holy Eucharist itself as distinct from the liturgical acts which constitute the celebration of Holy Eucharist, also known as Holy Communion, Communion, and The Lord's Supper. However, there is not a clear dividing line, nor should there be, between theology and liturgy, so my discussion will at times and by necessity blend the two. Finally, I will keep any source author’s original language intact when discussing or quoting terms with contested usage like 'Black', 'black,' 'African American,' 'slave,' 'enslaved people,' and ‘people enslaved.’ Finally, I will use the term ‘Anglican’ as including the Episcopal Church and the term ‘Episcopal’ when referring specifically to the Episcopal Church as the single recognized member in the United States of the Worldwide Anglican Communion.

This review begins with a brief overview of current Anglican Eucharistic Theology and by demonstrating the absence of theological influence from the events of

the transatlantic slave trade within Anglican Eucharistic Theology. The review continues with an attempt to scope the events of the transatlantic slave trade within the context of the three Anglican dioceses which comprise the Triangle of Hope covenantal community,<sup>50</sup> then moves to engage those few sources which have seriously addressed the events of the transatlantic slave trade and Eucharistic theology in their own contexts within the white Church. I will then review the insights and wisdom that Black Liberation, Womanist, and Postcolonial Theology offer, before concluding with an assessment of how the current state of Anglican Eucharistic Theology affects the Anglican Church.

Common prayer is a central tenant of Anglican identity around the globe. Prayer books from the dioceses of Kumasi, Liverpool, and Virginia both embody the theology present within their institutional churches and teach that theology to the people who are the Church. These same common prayer books testify to the absence of the events of the transatlantic slave trade in their respective Eucharistic theologies. For example, in the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer (BCP), the term "slave" appears seven times. Four of those references are in collects, (or prayers), with the term occurring in the exact repeated phrase, "Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule." By casting not just all worshipers but "all the peoples of the earth" in the role of 'slave' or 'enslaved' the Church spiritualizes slavery, diminishes its ongoing effects, and further obscures the physical enslavement of people by the omission of any historical context elsewhere in the book.<sup>51</sup> The fifth reference in the BCP comes in the liturgical climax of the year at the Easter

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<sup>50</sup> Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, "Africa, Virginia & England"

<sup>51</sup> Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 185, 203, 236, 254.



Vigil, during the lighting of the Paschal candle. In an optional pronouncement, the deacon states, “How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a *slave*, you gave a Son.”<sup>52</sup> Once again, all believers are portrayed as slaves without context, erasing the physical enslavement of millions of people. The final two references in the BCP appear in a Psalm and in a reference to the Exodus narrative during a prayer.<sup>53</sup>

The Diocese of Liverpool of the Church of England has authorized for worship its 1662 Book of Common Prayer and a collection of modern and evolving resources called simply "Common Worship." The 1662 Book of Common Prayer contains no reference to 'slave' in any form. The Common Worship resources available online mention 'slave' five times in the Eucharistic Prayers section – all of which mirror the use of the Episcopal Church, referencing either people enslaved by sin or particular scripture verses. Similarly, the Diocese of Kumasi, Ghana, uses a modified version of the Church of England 1662 prayer book, “THE ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER OR HOLY COMMUNION (COMMONLY CALLED THE MASS),”<sup>54</sup> also containing no references to ‘slave’ or ‘slavery’ in any form.

Moving from the lived theology of the people to the theology of the Academy, we see a similar dearth of material on the events of the transatlantic slave trade as a central theme or organizing frame for reflection. Episcopal priest, professor, and theologian, Lauren F. Winner focuses her examination of Eucharistic practice on arguing that honest evaluation of the sacraments requires acknowledging both the “goods” of the Eucharist

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 287. Emphasis added

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 289, 739.

<sup>54</sup> <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/Ghana/hc.html>

and the ways in which those goods might be perverted. While Winner cites examples to support her thesis, she does not address the particularities of white supremacy or engage the events of the transatlantic slave trade as anything more than one example among many histories which challenge sacramental praxis.<sup>55</sup> James Perkinson's work in white theology offers powerful critiques of the ongoing effects of the slave trade through modern white supremacy, yet his work stops short of addressing specific doctrinal aspects, like sacramental or Eucharistic theology.<sup>56</sup> Andrew Wymer and Christopher John Baker, address sacramental theology and white supremacy in their work on Baptism, but do not touch on the Eucharist. Jennifer Harvey has written about white supremacy, identity, the white Church, and calls to action for white Christians, but without a sacramental focus. Both Kristopher Norris and Katy Walker Grimes approach anti-racism and anti-white supremacy studies from the perspective of Christian ethics. Norris cites Hauerwas as emblematic of the failure of white theologians to address white supremacy<sup>57</sup> and provides a specific example of Grimes' charge that Christian ethicists have yet to engage or codify what they believe about whiteness.<sup>58</sup> Only Grimes has directly engaged Eucharistic theology and the ongoing effects of the events of the transatlantic slave trade through modern white supremacy, though from the Catholic perspective.<sup>59</sup> Overall, white

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<sup>55</sup> Winner, Lauren F. *The Dangers of Christian Practice: On Wayward Gifts, Characteristic Damage, and Sin*. New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2018.

<sup>56</sup> Perkinson, James W. *White Theology: Outing Supremacy in Modernity*. Black Religion, Womanist Thought, Social Justice. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

<sup>57</sup> Norris, Kristopher. "Witnessing Whiteness in the Ethics of Hauerwas." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 47, no. 1 (March 2019): 95.

<sup>58</sup> Grimes, Katie. "Breaking the Body of Christ: The Sacraments of Initiation in a Habitat of White Supremacy." *Political Theology* 18, no. 1 (February 2017): 22–43.

<https://doi.org/10.1179/1743171915Y.0000000005>. xxiv.

<sup>59</sup> Grimes, Katie Walker. *Christ Divided: Antiblackness as Corporate Vice*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017.

theologians who have raised their voices to examine white supremacy's theological implications, Eucharistic or otherwise, are still the exception.<sup>60</sup>

Driving much of the development of the small portion of white theology working with and around the events of the transatlantic slave trade, Black Liberation, Womanist, Liberation, and Postcolonial Theology offer a powerful critique of the current white theological landscape. However, even these authors approach the topic more often through liturgical practice rather than explicit Eucharistic or sacramental theology.

This focus on other-than-sacramental theology, particularly the Holy Eucharist, can be seen in Cannon's editorial work on *The Oxford Handbook of African American Theology* which, citing the work of Townes, Cannon, and Mitchem,<sup>61</sup> definitively describes the events of the transatlantic slave trade as an "entry point" for Womanist theology, but which includes no references to communion, (Holy) e/Eucharist, The Lord's Supper, or sacrament(s) in either the table of contents or index. Similarly, Reddie's book, *Black Theology, Slavery and Contemporary Christianity*, addresses slavery, biblical hermeneutics, capitalism, race, and many other topics without mentioning the Eucharist or its synonyms.<sup>62</sup>

When theologians mention Eucharist, communion as unity is often a primary reflection framework. Gutierrez's work is frequently cited and is still representative of and influential in the view of the liturgical celebration of Holy Eucharist as a driving

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<sup>60</sup> Van Wyngaard, Cobus. "White Theology in Dialogue with Black Theology: Exploring the Contribution of Klippiess Kritzinger." *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 72, no. 1 (2016): 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v72i1.3033>, 1.

<sup>61</sup> Cannon, Katie G., ed. *Oxford Handbook of African American Theology*. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, 18.

<sup>62</sup> Reddie, Anthony, ed. *Black Theology, Slavery, and Contemporary Christianity*. Farnham, Surrey, England ; Burlington, Vt: Ashgate, 2010, Table of Contents.

force for unity among peoples to transform society.<sup>63</sup> Unity-focused critiques of Holy Eucharist speak of the power of a shared meal and the joining of participants into the Body of Christ,<sup>64</sup> while highlighting the belief that the act of sharing in the liturgical celebration does, in fact, have the power to transform white-supremacist structures.

While the inherent power of the Eucharist is largely unchallenged by theologians, the structure of these celebrations, enacted in both white and Black church contexts, is being critiqued by some as inherently ineffective in propelling meaningful change.<sup>65</sup> Smith reflects multiple aspects of both hopeful and doubtful engagement with Eucharistic practice, stating explicitly that the Eucharist “can actualize the destruction of oppressive superstructures”<sup>66</sup> while at the same time expressing the possibility that the Eucharist might not be necessary for worship. Holding to the primacy and importance of Black experience and benefit as the arbiter of liturgical planning, Smith wonders, “*IF* the eucharist is to be used in Womanist and Black theology, what shape would it take?”<sup>67</sup> While calling-out white theology as “haunted by the ghosts of slavery”<sup>68</sup>, unity-focused critiques often argue that only by dealing with the honest realities of slavery, in their violent and traumatic fullness, will the Church be able to engage the depths of human freedom and unity encountered in Eucharist.<sup>69</sup> Centering the oppressed, generally, or a particular group, as Womanist theologians argue,<sup>70</sup> shifts the focus and foundation of

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<sup>63</sup> Albertine, Richard P. “The Eucharist in a Liberation Context.” *AFER* 31, no. 6 (December 1989): 352–61, 356.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 356-357.

<sup>65</sup> Albertine, Richard P. “The Eucharist: Key to Liberation.” *AFER* 42, no. 5–6 (October 2000): 186–93, 35.

<sup>66</sup> Smith, Beverley P. “The Eucharist as a Liberation Praxis.” *Black Theology in Britain: A Journal of Contextual Praxis*, no. 2 (April 1999): 57, 57.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 58. Emphasis added.

<sup>68</sup> Copeland, M. Shawn. *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being*. Innovations. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010, 3.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, 12,

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, 1-3.

theological inquiry, taking one from a focus on the theology of “the precise manner of the Eucharistic presence” toward Eucharistic theology of empathy, connection, and reconciliation.<sup>71</sup>

Far more than other critiques, Postcolonial Theology has and is addressing liturgical and Eucharistic praxis and theology.<sup>72</sup> For example, in his 2015 collection, Carvalhaes engages sacramental theology, including the Eucharist, around the world with the pointed echo of Audre Lord’s words reverberating throughout, “The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.”<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Suna-koro argues for the necessary centrality of sacramental theology while advocating for “confronting and working through history to free sacraments.” Suna-koro even challenges the sacramentality of the sacraments when justice is not present.<sup>74</sup>

Despite white theologians’ general lack of engagement with their whiteness, like white people in all walks of life, they have been writing and talking about race all along.<sup>75</sup> Few are willing or able to explicitly center white theology, white supremacy, or the events of the transatlantic slave trade in their work. Two important exceptions are James W. Perkinson’s “White Theology: Outing Supremacy in Modernity” and Katie Walker Grimes’ Eucharistically-centered, “Christ Divided: Antiblackness as Corporate Vice.” Perkinson takes an interdisciplinary approach to examining white culture in the

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<sup>71</sup> Smith, 66. Williams, Khalia Jelks. “Liturgical Undoing: Christ, Communion, and Commodified Bodies.” *Review & Expositor* 115, no. 3 (2018): 351–61, 358.

<sup>72</sup> Though Jagessar and Burns, writing in 2007, do note that Christian worship has not yet been critiqued to the same degree as systematic, biblical, and other theological disciplines. “Liturgical Studies and Christian Worship,” 39.

<sup>73</sup> Carvalhaes, Cláudio, ed. *Liturgy in Postcolonial Perspectives: Only One Is Holy*. First edition. Postcolonialism and Religions. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 1.

<sup>74</sup> Suna-Koro, Kristine. *In Counterpoint: Diaspora, Postcoloniality, and Sacramental Theology*. Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2017, 187.

<sup>75</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 190.

United States and the foundations of white supremacy as an inherently theological framework for living.<sup>76</sup> Grimes focuses tightly on a Catholic Christian Ethics approach to critiquing white privilege and white supremacy on her way to advocating for “antiblackness supremacy” and recognition that “Catholic theology has yet to recognize chattel slavery's fundamental theological significance”<sup>77</sup> through a shift in Eucharistic practice in the Catholic Church.<sup>78</sup>

These few white theologians advocate for the centrality of truthful grappling with white supremacy flowing from the events of the transatlantic slave trade in theological work, though without calling for the death (and presumably, the resurrection) of white Eucharistic practice or the white Church more broadly. Citing the deep need for white theologians and theology to come face-to-face with the death, violence, trauma, and suffering caused by white supremacy throughout history and the present, Perkinson, for example, advocates forcefully for the end of white supremacy as white culture has constructed it and the radical reorientation of white life overall.<sup>79</sup> By contrast, Grimes narrowly focuses on critiquing Eucharist by declaring “antiblackness supremacy” a “vice” and advocating for a “sacramental realism” whereby the Church eschews the “cultic eucharist” in favor of a “real meal” as a praxis-grounded antidote for the current state of Catholic Eucharistic practice.<sup>80</sup>

These few theologians are calling for radical transformation and re-imagination that requires recognizing and admitting different understandings of history, different

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>77</sup> Grimes, *Christ Divided*, xvii.

<sup>78</sup> Later in this work, I will discuss the space Grimes tries to occupy between liturgical praxis and theological foundations.

<sup>79</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 214.

<sup>80</sup> Grimes, *Christ Divided*, xvii, 205-206, 221-222, 230.

understandings of the threats facing the Church,<sup>81</sup> and a new understanding of vocation for white Christians.<sup>82</sup> Instead of consuming Black life, the white Church and its theologians must be formed under Black authority and shaped by Black culture and spirituality through the work of white people themselves,<sup>83</sup> without requiring Black heroes to teach or to save because, as it stands now, the white Church is limiting or even preventing the celebration of Eucharist.<sup>84</sup> Ultimately, however, like Suna-Koro and most theologians, white and Black, even Perkinson's and Grimes' rare white theological stances, echo Balasuriya's contention that the violent and vile history of Christianity "does not exhaust [the Eucharist's] redemptive thrust and healing potential,"<sup>85</sup> leaving the fundamental nature of Eucharistic theology unchanged.

The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia is directly connected to the earliest settlements of colonial Britain in what is now the United States of America. Its wealth, land, power, position, and prestige are inexorably linked with the foundations of its country in the economy of stolen land and stolen bodies.<sup>86</sup> Numerous diocesan parish buildings and altars on which we celebrate Holy Eucharist sit atop the body and blood-soaked lands of former plantations. The altar at which I, an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Virginia, celebrated Holy Eucharist every Sunday is built on top of land donated from a plantation owner in whose will are recorded twenty people enslaved.<sup>87</sup> The Diocese of Liverpool in the Church of England is directly connected to the ships of the Middle Passage. Its

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 210.

<sup>82</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 236-237.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 241-243.

<sup>84</sup> Grimes, *Christ Divided*, 201, 227.

<sup>85</sup> Suna-Koro, 173.

<sup>86</sup> Kendi, Ibram X. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. New York: Nation Books, 2016, 1-158.

<sup>87</sup> Fairfax County *Will Book W-1*, 161, 211-212. Fairfax County, *Deed Book L-2*, 414. Fairfax County, *Deed Book O-3*, 161.

buildings bear the architectural imprint of slavery in their motifs, decorations, and grandeur.<sup>88</sup> The Diocese of Kumasi, Ghana, is home to the Asante Empire, central participant in Ghana's "descent from Gold Coast to Slave Coast."<sup>89</sup> These are just three of the dioceses in the worldwide Anglican Communion, which, through shared history and common theology, are perpetuating oppression through the continued practice of unexamined white Eucharistic theology and who may be celebrating the Eucharist "unworthily"<sup>90</sup> to their condemnation. The language and praxis of Anglican theology continues to diverge from the experiences of its members, especially its Black members, further isolating human life from the Source of Life. If, as Perkinson and others contend, white supremacy and racism are at their root existential and theological issues, then the only hope for an increasingly violent and divided world rests with God and should flow from God's church.

White theology and white Eucharistic theology, bound by white supremacy and unexamined racism, continue today as idolatry<sup>91</sup> that is killing Black bodies. Efforts toward racial reconciliation without repentance, toward justice without truth, toward ineffective Eucharistic practices which do not take seriously the existential and eternal nature of sacramental reality are beyond ineffective; they are actively perpetuating and supporting the evil and violence they claim to counter. Current efforts in the white Church and the Anglican Communion are insufficient to the task.

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<sup>88</sup> Pey, 74.

<sup>89</sup> Cannon, "An Ethical Mapping", 33. Sparks, Randy J. *Where the Negroes Are Masters: An African Port in the Era of the Slave Trade*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2014, 123.

<sup>90</sup> 1 Cor 11:27, NRSV.

<sup>91</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 192.



A few Black Liberation, Womanist, and Postcolonial theologians are actively engaged in reflecting on Eucharistic theology in light of the events of the transatlantic slave trade. Yet, despite continued challenges from the same, white theologians continue ignoring the events of the transatlantic slave trade and its aftermath. Few white theologians are addressing white supremacy, fewer still the events of the transatlantic slave trade specifically — even fewer approach theological work from the perspective of sacramental or Eucharistic theology. Most theologians focus on unity, expanding action, or altering existing practice to get closer to the “true” expression of a Eucharistic theology that is already embedded in their faith without engaging the historical realities of the events of the transatlantic slave trade. I have found no white theologians writing from the Anglican tradition about the events of the transatlantic slave trade and Eucharistic theology. Grounded in the context of covenantal relationship within the Anglican Communion through partner dioceses in Liverpool, England; Kumasi, Ghana; and Virginia, USA, my research will begin to fill the gap within the Episcopal Church and, perhaps, within the Anglican Communion, providing analysis framed within the particularities of the historic realities of the events of the transatlantic slave trade to address the central organizing principle of Anglican worship and the single most prominent and prolific way by which individual parishioners encounter and enact Anglican theology, the Eucharist. Finally, to enact the change I hope to help drive, my research will be done subject to the authority, supervision, and oversight of Black power in the institution and faculty of the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University.

## CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FOUNDATION FOR THE MODEL

### **Theological Vision**

We, the people of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, worship White Jesus. We have used this idol for over 400 years to support our life of power and privilege under white supremacy. White Jesus blesses our efforts to move slowly and cautiously, in the vague direction of equality, while we avoid fundamental shifts in systemic power. White Jesus teaches us that All Lives Matter while we maintain the entrenched theologies, symbols, language, architectures, and images that devalue the lives of anyone outside of normative white culture. White Jesus graces us with the authority to exercise dominion over Black, Brown, female, trans, and bodies we label “other” while we give the appearance of equality. White Jesus enabled our ancestors in the faith to celebrate Holy Eucharist on top of the male slave dungeon, just yards from the female slave dungeon, at Cape Coast Castle, Ghana,<sup>92</sup> claiming the light of Christ’s presence in Body and Blood while bodies stood bloody in the darkness below. Today, White Jesus enables us, enables me, a priest of God’s Church, to celebrate Holy Eucharist at altars atop plantation land worked by people enslaved. Today, White Jesus is keeping the Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia from right relationship with God, that is, from salvation.

The theological shift needed in the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, and in the white Church as a body, is the humility to (a) take seriously the historical and contemporary experiences of Black people as necessary sources of Eucharistic theology,

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<sup>92</sup> *Door of Return: The Most. Rev Michael Curry - Door of Return: Racial Truth and Reconciliation Pilgrimage to Ghana*, 2014, <https://episcopalchurch.org/reconciliation-pilgrimage?wchannelid=5qemg0evv4&wvideoid=bxpdbhftt5>.

(b) heal the moral injury of whiteness in the lives of white people and the white Church, and (c) enable Episcopal Eucharistic theology to become a driving force for God's love as justice in our world. I propose a theology of Eucharistic humility as a starting point for the Diocese of Virginia and the white Church toward dethroning White Jesus and undoing white supremacy in our midst.

### **Theology of Eucharistic Humility**

Psychological descriptions of humility explored by Practical Theologians from Boston University provide a solid starting point for examining humility as it is generally understood in the pews. Their descriptions broadly include four categories: "willingness to perceive the self accurately", "other-orientedness and avoidance of excessive self-enhancement", "openness", and "the ability to acknowledge one's limitations and mistakes." Such psychological descriptions may also allow for the addition of such themes as "appreciation of value in others" and "avoidance of grandiose behaviors."<sup>93</sup> However, these secular definitions tend to focus on the individual and are largely silent regarding humility in community and in relationship to the divine.

When secular philosophers do explore Christian humility, they often define it as "low-estimate" or "low-self-estimate." Secular philosophy points to three key Christian narratives to support this view: "the divine perspective story, the sin story, and the grace story."<sup>94</sup> These three stories can, in turn, be summarized as "No matter what we are or have accomplished, our being and doing pales in comparison to God's," (for divine

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<sup>93</sup> Claire E Wolfteich et al., "Humility: Empirical Psychological Research in Dialogue with Practical Theology 1," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 20, no. 1 (2016): 143–55, <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2015-0055>; 147

<sup>94</sup> Kent Dunnington, "Humility: An Augustinian Perspective," *Pro Ecclesia* 25, no. 1 (2016): 18–43; 19.

perspective); “Low self-estimate is appropriate because we are quite bad,” (for sin story); and “When you do something good, it is only because God helped you do it,” (for grace story).<sup>95</sup>

Anglican lay theologian and writer C.S. Lewis bolsters these secular definitions when he writes in *Mere Christianity*, “The real test of being in the presence of God is that you either forget about yourself altogether or see yourself as a small, dirty object.”<sup>96</sup> Similarly, the Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms defines humility as, “The proper valuing of oneself and proper love of oneself, in contrast to ‘pride.’”<sup>97</sup> References to humility in the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer*, the source of practice and statement of theology for the Episcopal Church, provide no real alternative to these secular or Christian definitions. In the BCP, the term ‘humility’ appears almost exclusively in reference to Jesus’ life on earth as an example believers are to follow, without ever defining what such a life of humility might look like for a contemporary Christian. Similarly, the term ‘humble’ is used in petition-related phrases, e.g., “humble thanks,” in describing people's spirit or heart or in the context of sin, confession, and repentance. The BCP describes worshipers in both prayers for the daily offices and in one service of Holy Eucharist as “unworthy servants” and “unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice,”<sup>98</sup> further reinforcing the view that a “low self-estimate” is both important and appropriate.

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>96</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 1st Touchstone Ed edition (New York: Touchstone Books, 1996), 112.

<sup>97</sup> Donald K. McKim, *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, electronic resource, Second edition, revised and expanded (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), <http://0-search.ebscohost.com/librarycatalog.vts.edu/login.aspx?profile=ebooks&direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=780304>; 179.

<sup>98</sup> Episcopal Church et al., eds., *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church: Together with the Psalter or Psalms of David According to the Use of the Episcopal Church* (New York : [Greenwich, Conn.]: Church Hymnal Corp. ; Seabury Press,

While proper understanding of one's relationship to the divine is a critical component of faithful living, the historical record of both the white Church and white society demonstrates that the "low self-estimate" understanding of humility has been insufficient to the task of countering white supremacy. It may be that holding to such a narrow understanding of humility is actually part of the white Church's ongoing participation in and support of white supremacy culture. The "low self-estimate" definition is easy to rationalize away while convincing people that proper intellectual understanding of one's status, rather than embodiment of that understanding, is all that's required.

Rather than accept the general secular definition or the operable definition within the Church of a cognitive-based theology of humility, we must press deeper to the fuller account of humility found in the earliest foundations of Western Christian thought, St. Augustine. Augustine's journey of faith, chronicled in his *Confessions*, demonstrates that while he understood himself as both sinful and much less than God, his conversion to Christ was complete only once he submitted his will to God's.<sup>99</sup> Submission, moving beyond intellectual assent to altering one's actions and living according to the will of God, adds the necessary element of embodiment to the humility needed for the white Church today.

However, humility and submission in Western Christian thought, often in the form of a sacrificial or servanthood ethos, has brought violence and oppression to the

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1979); 71, 125, 336, 159, 168, 211, 219, 272 – with one exception on page 876 in historical documents which references the Episcopal Church in "humility to forego all preferences of her own" in human matters, choices, and disciplines related to worship in the context of ecumenical relationships. Of 89 uses of some form of the word humble (humbled, humbly, etc.), 35 relate to petition, 17 to people's spirit, 14 to sin, confession, etc.

<sup>99</sup> St Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding (Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 2002), 7.7.1, 9.1.1, 7.9.14. Dunnington, 29.

perceived enemies of straight white cisgender manhood for hundreds of years, i.e., calls for submission of wives to husbands even unto violence and death, justification of chattel slavery, theologies of sacrifice or servanthood unequally applied, and more. Black Liberation, Feminist, and Womanist theologians rightly declare that “servanthood, in this country, in effect, has been servitude.”<sup>100</sup> Speaking particularly from the lives of Black women, Townes asserts that the, “sin of women of color...is too much humility.”<sup>101</sup> She and others challenge any broad application of a theology of humility, questioning, how one could “justify teaching a people that they are called to a life of service when they have been imprisoned by the most exploitative forms of service?” Townes writes that “to speak of service as empowerment, without concrete means or plans for economic, social, and political revolution that in fact leads to empowerment, is simply another form of 'overspiritualization'.”<sup>102</sup> These critiques help to set the limits of any proposed theology of Eucharistic humility, particularly one which includes submission, and demand that humility moving forward be redefined not as the weapon of violence it has been, but as submission of power, privilege, and all of who we are – including submission of our identity within white supremacy culture and even our Christian identity – to God’s justice. Further, these critiques highlight the necessity of applying such a theology of Eucharistic humility firmly within the bounds of the white Church. As such, for this project, the development and application of this theology begins solely with the white members and parishes of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia.

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<sup>100</sup> Emilie Maureen Townes, ed., *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering*, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner Studies in North American Black Religion, vol. 8 (Mayknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1993); 200.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

Focusing on the white church and the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, then, humility, submission, and transformation can become mutually supporting, rather than mutually destructive. Humility forms the foundation. It shapes the posture of our approach to God and provides a container or boundary for the necessary work. Without authentic humility the remaining work of submission and transformation are impossible. Humble submission, then, can and does retain the focus of surrender on us, the members of the white church, on our structures, and on our systems. Humble submission is the work of acknowledging the log in our own eye before trying to look, blind and dangerous as we are, for the spec in our sibling's eye. Humble before God and our neighbors, submitting our power, privilege, and identity to God, we can then accept, enact, and sustain the transformation we so desperately need, rather than continuing to be conformed to the world we and white supremacy have made.

I propose a theology of Eucharistic humility for the white Church as the practice of acknowledgment, submission, and transformation that enables us to abandon our worship of White Jesus and to live in right relationship with God.

*Acknowledgment:* The foundation for a theology of Eucharistic humility is the acknowledgment of three fundamental truths underlying Eucharistic theology in the Diocese of Virginia: (a) acknowledgment of the particular historical, economic, and theological realities of both the theory and embodiment of Holy Eucharist; (b) acknowledgment that both the historical and present status and embodiment of Eucharistic theology is perpetuating white supremacy violence and trauma against our Black and Brown siblings, sisters, and brothers; and (c) acknowledgment that

contemporary Eucharistic theology is the result of and perpetuates the moral injury of our white siblings, sisters, and brothers.

The historical foundations of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia in systemized white supremacy are well documented - from Jamestown as the site of both the first Anglican worshipping community in the British colonies and the first sale of enslaved Africans,<sup>103</sup> through the “Cathedral of the Confederacy” at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia, to opposition of integration and racial justice reforms into the modern era.<sup>104</sup> What remains largely unacknowledged in the Diocese, however, is the inextricable bond of this history and Holy Eucharist. Throughout the violence and oppression of our diocese's and our country's history, we continued to celebrate Holy Eucharist. Through our ongoing celebration, we demonstrated for over 400 years that it is “meet and right,”<sup>105</sup> to make Eucharist while ignoring the trauma of the day and while denying the ongoing realities of our history. We demonstrated that the ongoing history of segregation, of severing one part of the Body of Christ from another part of the Body of Christ, did not and does not impede the presence of (White) Jesus in our celebration of Holy Eucharist. We have spoken words of anamnesis, of remembering as making present, the lynching of Jesus while supporting “in thought, word, and deed”<sup>106</sup> the lynching of

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<sup>103</sup> “Randle’s Economic Benefit of Slavery Article - The Diocese of Virginia Committee on Race and Reconciliation,” accessed June 8, 2020, <https://sites.google.com/site/dovracerelations/the-economic-benefit-of-slavery-to-the-episcopal-church-in-virginia>.

<sup>104</sup> Edward L. Bond and Joan R. Gundersen, *The Episcopal Church in Virginia, 1607-2007* (Richmond, VA: Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, 2007), 168; *Bending Toward Truth: History and Reflections*, accessed June 8, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyQjj9ivtde>.; Gardiner H. Jr. Shattuck, *Episcopalians and Race: Civil War to Civil Rights* (Lexington, Ky: Univ Pr of Kentucky, 2000); Heather Beasley Doyle, “‘Cathedral of the Confederacy’ reckons with its history and charts future.” The Episcopal Church, June 18, 2017, <https://episcopalchurch.org/library/article/cathedral-confederacy-reckons-its-history-and-charts-future>.

<sup>105</sup> Episcopal Church et al., *The Book of Common Prayer*, 340.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 79 – from the statement of confession used in the daily service of Morning Prayer.



African Americans in Virginia and across the country. Our practice and our theology have always been about race and the racial history of our land.<sup>107</sup> We must now acknowledge that our history continues to affect our practice and theology of Holy Eucharist.

The economic foundations of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia in systematized monetized white supremacy are well documented – from colonial glebes that were worked by people enslaved, clergy paid in slave-produced tobacco, and parish lands now worth millions of tax-free dollars carved out of plantations that were themselves stolen from indigenous peoples, to centuries of savings multiplied in compound interest inheritance and tithed from a growing wealth gap between Black and white in the Commonwealth of Virginia and across the country.<sup>108</sup> What remains largely unacknowledged in the Episcopal Church is the inextricable bond of these economics and the Holy Eucharist. Throughout the violence and oppression of our diocese’s and our country’s economic policies and practices, we continued to celebrate Holy Eucharist. Through our ongoing celebration, we demonstrated that grand edifices built by slave labor and adorned with silver and gold from the blood and sweat of stolen bodies could house the Lord’s table and host the Lord’s Supper.<sup>109</sup> We demonstrated that it was acceptable in God’s eyes to offer ourselves at the altar of the Lord in our tithes and

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<sup>107</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 190.

<sup>108</sup> *Bending Toward Truth*.; “40 Years Later: The Unrealized American Dream,” *Traces of the Trade* (blog), June 20, 2008, <http://www.tracesofthetrade.org/guides-and-materials/racial-wealth-divide/40-years-later-the-unrealized-american-dream/>. See also the history of my own parish, All Saints Episcopal Church Sharon Chapel, Alexandria, Virginia whose land was donated from a plantation as documented in Fairfax County Circuit Court, Fairfax County, Virginia, Historic Records Division, Deed Book O3, 161. Fairfax County Circuit Court, Fairfax County, Virginia, Historic Records Division, Will Book W, No. 1, 211-212. Unfortunately, The Diocese of Virginia does not have comprehensive data on parishes built on plantation land or from donations of wealth from the slave economy.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*

offerings from whites-only jobs, homes, schools, swimming pools, lunch-counters, golf-courses, and board rooms, and for our gifts to reverently share space with (White) Jesus' body and blood without protest, reflection or remorse. We demonstrated that in Eucharistic blessing through White Jesus, we “become what [we] consume,”<sup>110</sup> becoming ever more a system that consumes Black life through our systems of chattel slavery, peonage, convict leasing, and Jim Crow, a prison-industrial complex, and the school-to-prison pipeline. Our practice and our theology have always been about race and the racial economics of our land. We must now acknowledge that the economics of our church and our country continues to affect our practice and theology of Holy Eucharist.

That the theological foundations of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia rest in systematized and sanctified white supremacy is not well documented – from the Anglican chapel atop the male slave dungeon at Cape Coast Castle, Cape Coast, Ghana, and sermons preaching “slaves obey your masters,” to segregated seminaries, and more<sup>111</sup> – the inextricable bond of our Eucharistic theology with our participation in transatlantic slavery, white supremacy, and White Jesus remains largely unspoken and unacknowledged. Throughout the violence and oppression of our diocese’s and our country’s incarnation of white supremacy, we have continued to celebrate Holy Eucharist while claiming the former does not affect the latter and showing that the latter hardly affects the former. We demonstrated that proper formation-preparation for ordination to a sacred order’s sacerdotal duties need never utter “white supremacy.”<sup>112</sup> We demonstrated that where two or three, or two hundred or three hundred, are gathered, they need only be

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<sup>110</sup> Quote attributed to St. Augustine Easter Sermon, 227, “Receive the Body of Christ. Become what you consume.”

<sup>111</sup> Shattuck, 46-48.

<sup>112</sup> From my own experience as a student at Virginia Theological Seminary 2009-2012.

white for Christ to be present.<sup>113</sup> We demonstrated that receiving Holy Eucharist, we can remain unaffected by the historical, economic, cultural, psychological, fundamentally deadly racism of people, priests, deacons, and bishops within our church. Our practice and our theology have always been about race and the racial theologies of our faith.<sup>114</sup> We must now acknowledge that the theology of our church and our country continues to affect the Holy Eucharist.

The white supremacy incarnate in our history, economics, and theological foundations have done and continue to do damage to our Black and Brown siblings, sisters, and brothers throughout the Diocese of Virginia and the white Church. White priests continue to dominate the leadership of Eucharistic celebration in the Diocese of Virginia. The Commonwealth of Virginia is approximately 20% Black.<sup>115</sup> Only in 2019 did we initiate an audit of our ordination processes to determine where and how racial bias has impacted and continues to impact our priestly leadership. Yet even with such a clear demonstration of the ongoing effects of racial discrimination, we continue to claim the theological authority to celebrate Holy Eucharist in the same ways we have always done, thereby embodying our acceptance of and support for this reality and demonstrating that such racial realities, while troubling, are ultimately inconsequential to our theology. We do not need equality to embody our current Eucharistic theology.

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<sup>113</sup> Pew Research statistics place the Episcopal Church at 5% Black, 89% White. NW, Washington, and Inquiries, "Episcopalians/Anglicans in the Mainline Tradition - Religion in America." <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-family/episcopaliananglican-family-mainline-trad/>

<sup>114</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 190.

<sup>115</sup> US Census data projections for July 2019 indicate 19.9% of the population identifies as "Black or African-American alone" while 3.1% of the population identifies as "Two or More races," [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

Like our damaging failure to represent the body of Christ in our leadership, we claim that (White) Jesus is present in our violent spaces. Not only are our priests white, so are our naves and sanctuaries. While we have no comprehensive audit of the numbers or locations of white supremacist art and images in our parish buildings,<sup>116</sup> they are legion. From the Civil-War-glorifying windows of Jefferson Davis in St. Paul's, Richmond, to the white-skinned red-headed Jesus of my own parish's nave, the stained-glass imagery alone is testimony to what Perkinson observes, that, "Space cooperates with whiteness; white people have 'place.'"<sup>117</sup> Add to the stained glass the numbers of buildings (also currently undocumented) built on former plantation land or by the labor of people enslaved; the number of looming portraits of old white male historic clergy – many themselves enslavers;<sup>118</sup> and the antebellum mansion which houses our diocesan offices which was built with money from Richmond's slavery-based economy and our theology crystalizes. Holy Eucharist can cohabit with whiteness in spaces that deny the humanity of our Black siblings in Christ. The Eucharistic Feast can be served at the whites only lunch counter.

Not only are our priests white and our spaces white, but our words are white. In both our speech and our silences, our modes of verbal communication are imbued with culturally controlled values. "It [white speech] is periodized in well-regulated time and

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<sup>116</sup> Which, in and of itself, is an indication of the priority or lack thereof given to minimizing or removing damaging images from our worship spaces and the privilege given to white comfort, white history, and the status quo.

<sup>117</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 177.

<sup>118</sup> "Randle's Economic Benefit of Slavery Article - The Diocese of Virginia Committee on Race and Reconciliation." – from the article, "These census records document the slave ownership of the first four Bishops of Virginia, James Madison, Richard Channing Moore, William Meade, and John Johns, and early VTS professors Edward R. Lippitt, Joseph Packard, and Williams Sparrow. The Episcopal clergy of the Diocese of Virginia were enslavers as well. Of the 112 Episcopal clergy canonically and physically resident in the Diocese of Virginia in 1860, 103 could be located in the US Census of that year. Eighty-four of the brethren, or 82 percent, possessed at least one slave, while some owned dozens."

timing, wedded to segregations of meaning, and turn-taking in argument, and clarity of intentionality rooted in a thing called an ‘individual.’”<sup>119</sup> This emphasis on proper, regulated speech is evident in our *Book of Common Prayer*, where clear rubrics delineate speaking roles and turns and where approved language is populated with only a few short optional bursts of controlled improvisation. Large portions of our authorized hymnody, Eucharistic and daily prayers, (including The Lord’s Prayer), as well as Psalms and Canticles, are used in versions with ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ Old English language. The *Book of Common Prayer* was written and developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s and formally adopted in 1979, yet the Episcopal Church hardly speaks of the influence race and the liberation movements of that era had on our theology captured and reflected in the liturgies therein. A search of the ATLA Religion Database for “‘race AND ‘book of common prayer’” returned zero results. What we choose to say reinforces whiteness. The whiteness of our language, in turn, reinforces the value of culturally normative white modes of speech, associating only those approved linguistic patterns with the divine rites of soteriological grace bound in Holy Eucharist, damaging and excluding people that deviate.

At the same time, our silences incarnate “whiteness [as] a conspiracy of silence about history.”<sup>120</sup> We do not talk about race in our liturgy. We deny it any place in our Eucharistic language and in our incarnate Eucharistic theology. We refuse to acknowledge whiteness and, in so doing, pick and choose which portions of our past and our present may speak, excluding vast swaths Black experiences and history and

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<sup>119</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 182.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

damaging Black lives in the process.<sup>121</sup> What's more, such a "silence about history" is antithetical to anamnesis – the remembering so deep, so holy, that it makes present what was past – the very power we claim in our Eucharistic prayers and one of the foundations of our enacted Eucharistic theology.

White speech and white silence not only damage Black people but also perpetuate the moral injury of white parishioners. The concept of moral injury grew out of work with combat veterans in the 1990s, following the Persian Gulf War when PTSD-like symptoms were reported by people who did not have an accompanying triggering-event that met the formal definition for trauma.<sup>122</sup> Pastoral Theologian Larry Kent Graham defines moral injury as "the burden of harm and the diminishment of vitality that arises in individual and communities when we (or others) violate our moral compasses...Moral injury comes about when our lives and the lives of our social groups diverge from what we believe to be the best in ourselves, or when our moral actions lead to a diminishment of value for self and others."<sup>123</sup> The Rev. Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes applies the term moral injury to, "the psychospiritual impact of participating in the subjugation, abuse, and murder of other human beings," recognizing that these acts "violate our core beliefs about what it means to be human, to be moral, and to be Christian."<sup>124</sup> Focusing on the

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<sup>121</sup> While much of our Eucharistic language in particular and our prayer book language as a whole is biblically-based, there is still more than sufficient room within our liturgies to incorporate modern concepts. For example, Eucharistic Prayer C (page 370) reads in part, "At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home." If we can find room for advances in scientific understanding like "interstellar space" then there is room enough for racial justice.

<sup>122</sup> Chanequa Walker-Barnes, *I Bring the Voices of My People: A Womanist Vision for Racial Reconciliation*, electronic resource, Prophetic Christianity (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2019), <http://0-search.ebscohost.com/librarycatalog.vts.edu/login.aspx?profile=ebooks&direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&AN=2260636>; 72-73.

<sup>123</sup> Larry Kent Graham, *Moral Injury: Restoring Wounded Souls* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2017), 13.

<sup>124</sup> Walker-Barnes, 72.

Episcopal Church's role in and profit from the transatlantic slave trade, Tom DeWolf asks in *Traces of the Trade*, "What does it mean to know that a system is evil and to participate in anyway?"<sup>125</sup>

Moral injury, though far less injurious than the past and continued trauma and violence visited on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color,<sup>126</sup> gives a name to the damage being done to white Christians by the failure of white Christianity, namely its "failure to grapple with white supremacy, including its past and contemporary expressions."<sup>127</sup> The ongoing result of this damage is what Walker-Barnes describes as "splitting":

One of the legacies of slavery in White racial ideology is the widespread use of splitting... Essentially, White Christians learned to separate their personal ethics from their social ethics. In order to preserve their self-images as good people, they had to minimize, repress, and deny their sinfulness—their active participation in racial oppression or silent complicity with it. Further, they had to create theologies and ecclesiologies that supported this minimization, repression, and denial. Thus, Christian identity became a matter of orthodoxy rather than orthopraxy... Meanwhile, denominational doctrine redefined slavery so that it no longer constituted a sin. Confession in Protestant worship was watered down to liturgies that included general statements of failing to be obedient with little reflection upon and no spoken acknowledgment of one's specific sinfulness. The cessation of US chattel slavery did not put an end to this.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Walker-Barnes, 72. While there is a critique of the term "moral injury" in application to the Church given its rise from the experiences of war, Walker-Barnes and Guth seem to argue in support of sufficient similarities in the presence of existential questions as well as high moral standards in both settings to make the use of the term appropriate in the Christian context.

<sup>126</sup> Walker-Barnes, quoting Shannon Sullivan notes that "understanding racism's harm upon White people is not a reason to feel sorry for white people or to view them as 'victims' of white domination, as if white domination harmed and/or benefitted everyone equally. To recognize the spiritual damage done to white people by white racism is instead to acknowledge that one of the messes of white racism for which white people need to take responsibility is white people themselves."

<sup>127</sup> James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011); 159.

<sup>128</sup> Walker-Barnes, 81.

Evidence of such splitting in the White Church abounds, calls to keep politics out of the pulpit, repeated attempts to jump to racial reconciliation without first addressing repentance, failure to ask whether reconciliation (as a return to what has been lost) is even possible since we have never had equality and justice in the Diocese of Virginia or the white Church. Splitting can be seen in the ongoing debates about Confederate flags, statues, and stained-glass imagery in our cities and sanctuaries and in the difficulty of even naming whiteness as a force in our church, our theology, our practice, and our faith.<sup>129</sup> Given the prevalence, depth, and power of moral injury, not even our most central theological tenants, our Eucharistic theology, can escape its damaging reach.

Throughout our Diocesan history, we have practiced a Eucharistic theology that allowed communing congregants separately by race, (when Black parishioners were admitted to a church at all), and which continues in the form of largely segregated Sunday morning parish demographics.<sup>130</sup> We continue to practice a Eucharistic theology that countenances inviting the presence of Christ to inhabit elements sitting under the watchful eyes of Confederate “saints” who killed, fought, and died to keep people enslaved.<sup>131</sup> We continue to practice a Eucharistic theology that in its liturgical language never mentions “justice” in any Eucharistic prayer from the 1928 or the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. Our Eucharistic theology is locked in a “fiction of independence” that it and we can somehow persist in a state of grace entirely separate from the presence and full humanity of our Black and Brown sisters, siblings, and brothers and separate from our whiteness. We and our Eucharistic theology require humility.

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<sup>129</sup> Walker-Barnes, 76.

<sup>130</sup> While demographic details by parish are not kept, Pew Research lists the Episcopal Church at between 4-5% Black, and 90% White.

<sup>131</sup> *Bending Toward Truth*.



Eucharistic humility requires that the Diocese of Virginia acknowledge the historical, economic, and theological foundations of Holy Eucharist; acknowledge our perpetuation of white supremacy violence and trauma in our Eucharistic theology; and acknowledge the ongoing moral injury to our white parishioners. Once we have acknowledged these realities, we will be able to begin repair by submitting to God's justice.

Submission: While the foundation of Eucharistic humility is the acknowledgment by the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia and the white Church of the historical, economic, and theological realities of our Eucharistic life and theology, the incarnation of Eucharistic humility is submission.

St. Augustine states in his *Confessions* that “humility is a disposition of the will” and that “submission to God is the characteristic expression of humility.”<sup>132</sup> Submission of our will to God's justice compels us to act.<sup>133</sup> Submission propels us to shift our primary mode of racial justice efforts from reconciliation to repentance and restoration. As Walker-Barnes highlights, reconciliation as currently defined and practiced by white people, “does nothing to repair the harm of systemic racism or to dismantle the system of white supremacy. It is a therapeutic approach designed to make white people feel better about the unjust system in which they live and with which they are complicit.”<sup>134</sup> Submission to God's justice, instead of reconciliation, requires acknowledging, before God and our siblings, the sinful ongoing excuses and false identities we use to keep us in our comfort zones. Submission to God's justice demands restorative actions, like those of

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<sup>132</sup> Dunnington, Kent. “Humility: An Augustinian Perspective.” *Pro Ecclesia* 25, no. 1 (2016): 18–43, 29. St. Augustine, 9.1.1.

<sup>133</sup> Dunnington, 278.

<sup>134</sup> Walker-Barnes, 86.

Zacheus, who paid back four-fold what he stole,<sup>135</sup> by the Diocese of Virginia in relation to land, wealth, and the buildings and altars with which we enact our Eucharistic theology.

Submission to God's justice invites the white Church to recognize our excommunication. We have already affected our separation, the exclusion of ourselves from full communion with God through our ongoing self-exclusion from full communion with our Black siblings, sisters, and brothers. In *Torture and Eucharist*, Catholic theologian William Cavanaugh explores Eucharistic practice and theology in relationship to the violent regime of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet. Cavanaugh concludes that excommunication is appropriate for sins “which impugn the identity of the body of Christ”<sup>136</sup> and that excommunication was the proper response to torturers, to those who incite, solicit, or order torture, or to those in a position to stop it who fail to act.<sup>137</sup> The white Church and the Diocese of Virginia have been and continue to be in all of those roles with respect the people we enslaved and the systems of violence which we sanction.<sup>138</sup>

The *Disciplinary Rubrics* of the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer* state that anyone “living a notoriously evil life” should be told that they may not receive communion until they “have given clear proof of repentance and amendment of life.”<sup>139</sup> These rubrics only intensify when used as a lens by which to view the institutional life of the Diocese. The Diocese of Virginia helped build the systems of white supremacy that

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<sup>135</sup> Luke 19:8.

<sup>136</sup> William T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ*, Challenges in Contemporary Theology (Oxford ; Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 247.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 254, 256.

<sup>138</sup> *Door of Return*.

<sup>139</sup> Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 409.

continue to operate in our country today. Until those systems are dismantled repentance and amendment of life might not be possible.

Yet even if we allow for the healthy difference as to the depth of sin and responsibility that this generation of the white Church bears for chattel slavery; and even if we allow for reasonable differences as to the degree of notoriousness of the evil in which white Christians actively participate and which the white Church perpetuates today; and even if we allow for faithful differences as to the levels of repentance and amendment of life already demonstrated by the white Church through its various services, litanies, scholarships, ministries, programs, and conferences; we are still left with excommunication. The disciplinary rubrics continue with the further admonition that the same procedure, i.e., telling someone they “may not come to the Holy Table,” shall be followed with both those who have “wronged their neighbors” and have not yet “made restitution” or “promised to do so” as well as with those who have not overcome their hatred for another member of the congregation.<sup>140</sup> We, the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, have wronged people and not yet made restitution. These admonitions clearly outline the path of voluntary excommunication as a necessary piece of Eucharistic humility in submission to God's justice for us so that our common life may be brought into right relationship with God and our neighbor.

*Transformation:* Whiteness and white people have been made deities by white supremacy. Whiteness carries the power of life and death over Black and Brown bodies in the United States, taking life with impunity by just a phone call to police,<sup>141</sup> or by the

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 409.

<sup>141</sup> George Floyd, Sandra Bland, Trayvon Martin, Pamela Turner, Breonna Taylor, Tamir Rice, Stephon Clark, Natasha McKenna, Eric Garner, Michelle Shirley, Atatiana Jefferson, and more.

claim, “I was scared for my life,” or simply by the laws of stand-your-ground.<sup>142</sup> White people have been shaped and conformed to the culture white supremacy has made, and we bear the marks.<sup>143</sup> Therefore, we must seek not to be conformed further to this world but to be transformed.<sup>144</sup>

We white people believe we have a right to comfort.<sup>145</sup> We believe that we have a right to be comforted in our Eucharistic theology and practice. For us, White Jesus is always present, always giving grace, always loving us without challenge or conviction. We believe worship should feed us and bring us peace and that Holy Eucharist is never about judgment or correction. We believe these things, and we are comforted.

We white people believe we can trust the systems we have built<sup>146</sup> and so we trust uncritically and completely the Eucharistic theological system built mainly from the experiences of and by white Western European men. We believe that if there is a problem, then all we need to do is embrace more fully, more deeply, our Eucharistic theology as it stands, not fundamentally rethink how we believe. We believe we can trust the inherent goodness of our system and the inherent truth of the myths we and our system tell about ourselves:<sup>147</sup> that we are a progressive people with a Black Presiding Bishop who welcomes everybody so our Anglican Eucharistic theology can't be racist or affected by white supremacy.

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<sup>142</sup> These are just a few examples of how white people and structures exercise power over Black and Brown bodies.

<sup>143</sup> Walker-Barnes, 78.

<sup>144</sup> Romans 12:2

<sup>145</sup> Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*, Reprint edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018), 100.

<sup>146</sup> Walker-Barnes, 78.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 78, 80.

We white people must instead empty ourselves of our power, idolatry, rights, comfort, trust, and mythology. We must surrender the authority, privilege, and conformity we have created through chattel slavery and maintained under white supremacy. To do so, we need kenotic transformation.

Such transformation, as described previously, begins with the acknowledgment of our reality, confronting honestly the truth of our situation, or as Perkinson describes it, a “pedagogy of horror”<sup>148</sup> by which white people face “the midnight horror of [their] own racialized history.”<sup>149</sup> Transformation continues through humble submission to God’s justice, where we incarnate justice which is more than “mere equality.” Transformation means “that some will give-up, and some will gain; but all will become disciples; that is, simultaneously, oppressors must give up or lose oppressive power, as oppressed people are empowered for discipleship.”<sup>150</sup> Transformation ends with a kenotic self-emptying of our identity in deified whiteness by adopting a Eucharistic humility which redevelops Anglican Eucharistic theology so that it can answer the questions, “Where was Jesus at the Cape Coast Castle celebration of Holy Eucharist atop the male slave dungeon?” and, “Where is Jesus at our celebrations of Holy Eucharist atop altars in buildings built on plantation land by people enslaved?”

## **Christology**

A theology of Eucharistic humility is built upon a Christology that is dependent upon the experiences of Black people and upon the historic and contemporary lives of the

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<sup>148</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 186.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

<sup>150</sup> Townes, Emilie Maureen, ed. *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering*. Bishop Henry McNeal Turner Studies in North American Blackreligion, vol. 8. Mayknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1993, 216.

marginalized and oppressed of our world; a Christology that is so completely incompatible with blond-haired, blue-eyed White Jesus that it cannot even be in the presence of such theology and imagery; a Christology that embodies the tragic mystery of Holy Saturday and the pedagogical horror of Good Friday as much as the resurrection glory of Easter Sunday; a Christology that requires us not simply to live more fully into our current theology grounded in white supremacy but that demands we believe whom we have shown ourselves to be through more than 400 years of violence, oppression, larceny, and murder; and a Christology that recreates our very understanding of the nature of Jesus Christ.

For us, as for St. Augustine, it is impossible to live in deep submission to God's will, to live in Eucharistic humility, without the example of Jesus.<sup>151</sup> Christology begins, then, in the revelatory relationship of God to all humanity in and through the particular relationship of a brown-skinned child born into an oppressed people in an occupied land who lived for decades rooted in his community before proclaiming an eternal-new reality in the Kingdom-of-God-come-near through his own body and then was executed as a religious-political criminal at the hands of the state and colluding religious authorities. Yet despite personal and scriptural witness to the excruciating and scandalous specifics of Jesus' life, the Christology of the early Church quickly became systematized at the direction of empire by male ecclesial authorities.<sup>152</sup> The resulting creedal statements of Christology and similar subsequent works of standardization are still in use today by the Episcopal Church – The Nicene Creed, for Holy Eucharist; The Apostles' Creed, for

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<sup>151</sup> Dunnington, 29.

<sup>152</sup> McKim, *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. The Council of Nicea called by Emperor Constantine in 325.

daily prayers and at weddings and funerals; and, to a much lesser extent, The Creed of Saint Athanasius, referenced as a historical document and used for Trinitarian theology. The Nicene Creed moves directly from Jesus' incarnation to his crucifixion, resurrection, and return with no affirmation or mention of his earthly life, experience, or the particular human identity he took unto himself and sanctified through his actions.<sup>153</sup> The Apostles' Creed exclusively uses action verbs to describe Christ's human incarnation, saying nothing of his earthly *being* or *identity* that would affirm or contextualize his life.<sup>154</sup> The Creed of Saint Athanasius works exhaustively to explain and maintain the divinity and humanity of Jesus in trinity of unity while by its silence denying the particularity of Christ's Brown, poor, oppressed identity.<sup>155</sup>

Moving forward sixteen centuries, the Christological landscape of our Eucharistic theology and prayer book continues these patterns. In addition to the omitted language and details in the formulation of our Eucharistic prayers, these same omissions are present for the Episcopal Church in the teaching documents of the 1979 Prayer Book section, *An Outline of the Faith commonly called the Catechism*. The Catechism states that the "nature of God revealed in Jesus" is "love," omitting any mention of justice, liberation, or freedom. The Catechism goes on to describe the divine act of incarnation simply as Jesus receiving "our human nature" from Mary, omitting the Jewishness or brown skin or poverty or oppression or occupation or anything else in all creation that helped make him who he was and is in the fullness of his salvific humanity.<sup>156</sup> Our

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<sup>153</sup> Episcopal Church, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 358-359.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 864-865.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 849.

Christology is vague and insufficient. We need a new Christology that recognizes and engages the theology of the cross as Rev. Dr. John Kinney describes, the cross as a

“...radical prophetic statement. It is not the activity of victim. It is the expression of the courageous, who refused to be defined by reality or to compromise with a reality that would allow people to have a religion without a relationship with a God that requires an embodied existence that transcends the characteristics of your present moment... When you really understand what Jesus did, even the statement "Father forgive them" is not a passive acquiescence and it's not sentimental love; it is courageous radical pronouncement that I will not allow your modality, your method, and your patterns dictate the character of my existence or my response.”<sup>157</sup>

We also need a Christology as the Rev. Dr. Eboni Marshall Turman challenges, “What’s the use of talking about the cross while saying nothing of crucified bodies?” We need a Christology of Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

I abhor the Good Friday Episcopal liturgy. I hated it from the first time I worshiped in the Anglican tradition during Holy Week decades ago. The pit of my stomach dropped out, my mouth went dry, and I stumbled over the words that I was supposed to shout, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Every year, every Good Friday, I must force myself to participate fully, shout with a loud voice, and face the trauma that I create and the injury in my soul. This is the pedagogy of horror,<sup>158</sup> the pedagogy of the oppressor, as I sit under the shadow of the cross and the lynching tree,<sup>159</sup> facing the truth of my life and faith laid bare. A Christology grounded in Good Friday exposes the white supremacy that is foundational for and operative in our theology, liturgy, spaces, speech, culture, and modes of being as a church. By seeing Christ's body in the fullness of its

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<sup>157</sup> John Kinney and Greg Howard. “Theological Thinking Podcast | Virginia Union University.” Accessed June 6, 2020. <https://www.vuu.edu/theology/podcast>.

<sup>158</sup> Perkinson, *White Theology*, 186.

<sup>159</sup> Cone, xiii.



problematic nature as a “defiant body” to be feared and guarded against, as a problem for the Church “oppositionally situated” to heterosexual, cisgender, white men<sup>160</sup> and the world white supremacy has created for their benefit, we can rid ourselves of White Jesus. By seeing Jesus’ body as a poor, Black, queer, female body, we can begin to see Jesus as wholly/holy beyond our white selves, our white control, our white power, our white systems, and our white creation. By seeing Jesus Christ’s body, full of the contours of his life and death, hanging on the cross, we will then be ready for Holy Saturday.

I love the Holy Saturday Episcopal Liturgy. I loved it from the first time I worshiped in the Anglican tradition during Holy Week decades ago. I gazed with surprise at the mere half-page of text in *The Book of Common Prayer*<sup>161</sup> as I wondered why there were only two or three other people present that morning when hundreds would be gathering the next day. Now, as rector of a parish, I marvel at how Holy Saturday disrupts everything. All the preparations for Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday, all the decorating, cleaning, fixing, washing, adjusting, polishing, ironing, arranging, everything that points to the first ‘Alleluia!’ of Easter<sup>162</sup> is suspended while we try to face the reality that for three days, the co-eternal, great creator, holder-of-all-things, the one who in the beginning was, was dead. For ten minutes on a Saturday morning, our finite minds try to face the truth of infinite loss, Infinite lost, and ask, “What can it mean?” This too is the pedagogy of horror, the pedagogy of the oppressor, for as much as I would like to identify with the disciples that day and as much as I would like to marvel at the mystery

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<sup>160</sup> Eboni Marshall Turman. *This Is My Body: Black Womanist Christology in Perspective*, accessed June 6, 2020, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf\\_A14XsoAU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf_A14XsoAU).

<sup>161</sup> Page 283

<sup>162</sup> In the Episcopal tradition, ‘alleluia’ is omitted from use in worship during the season of Lent, returning for the first time at the Easter Vigil service, the highest point of the liturgical year.

amidst certain knowledge of Christ's victory, when I realize that Jesus' lifeless suffocated body had been taken down, that souvenirs from the lynching had already been distributed, when we realize that it was and is our human sin which left the world bereft for three days of the one who holds the whole world in his hands, then we face the horror of self-inflicted emptiness-annihilation. A Christology grounded in Holy Saturday opens the eyes of our church to the holy crucifixion-magnitude of our and White Jesus' terrorizing ongoing life. A Christology of Holy Saturday opens our hearts to lynching's present violent spread in all its forms, to attempted genocide,<sup>163</sup> and makes us ask that if one lynching brought communion's end and severed once the sacramental presence between Christ and his created universe-humanity, then why do we assume that the millions since – amidst an unrepentant, unrestorable-unrestored genocide – could not do so again. In Holy Saturday Christology, we must ask if Jesus will be, can be, at the Eucharistic feast when Whiteness comes to the table-altar already satiated by Black bodies consumed in violence, hatred, fear, prejudice, and greed. A Christology of Holy Saturday holds out the only hope that if Jesus is and can be present in our Eucharistic feast, such presence is only ever despite our theology, practice, and belief.

### **Biblical Warrant**

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus demonstrates that “the human being is worth more than any religious rule.”<sup>164</sup> Written at a time resonant with our own, Matthew's

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<sup>163</sup> And though beyond the scope of this project as well as beyond the rights or hopes or dreams due to Whiteness especially today, Holy Saturday could also open our white eyes to surviving, thriving, flourishing, to something that carries over. It is that which we so desperately need and to which we have no right to ask from within Black Church traditions.

<sup>164</sup> Mercedes Navarro Puerto and Marinella Perroni, eds., *Gospels: Narrative and History*, electronic resource, Society of Biblical Literature. The Bible and Women, Number 2.1 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), <https://0-search-ebSCOhost->

Gospel spoke to a community where division among the faithful was typical, where political and religious leaders had been “co-opted”, where masses of people held no formal power, and where insiders and outsiders were separated by stark delineation.<sup>165</sup> Matthew's writings are full of challenges to allegiances and empire,<sup>166</sup> to Jewish and Roman kinship understanding, to complacent religious leaders, and to comfortable congregants.<sup>167</sup> The Gospel redefines qualifying membership-in-community based not on geography or lineage but on baptism, faith, and obedience, i.e., doing the will of the Father.<sup>168</sup> Matthew declares that “loyalty to Jesus will disrupt households,”<sup>169</sup> and reiterates the Jewish tradition that “ethical integrity” takes precedence over the “obligations of the cult.”<sup>170</sup> Specifically, Matthew 5:21-24 outlines a Biblical warrant for the project of a theology of Eucharistic humility for the Diocese of Virginia.

Written, most likely, between 75 and 100 CE, the Gospel of Matthew spoke powerfully to its intended audience of Jewish Christians and Gentile converts.<sup>171</sup> In it, the author develops a strong Christological vision of Jesus as a teacher greater than Moses, from whom we learn both faith and ethics grounded in obedience to God's will.<sup>172</sup> In

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[com.librarycatalog.vts.edu/login.aspx?profile=ebooks&direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&AN=1067290;284](https://com.librarycatalog.vts.edu/login.aspx?profile=ebooks&direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&AN=1067290;284).

<sup>165</sup> Anna Case-Winters, *Matthew : A Theological Commentary on the Bible*, vol. First edition, Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), <https://0-search.ebscohost.com/librarycatalog.vts.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,url,uid&db=nlebk&AN=968039&site=ehost-live&scope=site>; 351.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>167</sup> Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), <https://0-search.ebscohost.com/librarycatalog.vts.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,url,uid&db=nlebk&AN=477135&site=ehost-live&scope=site>; 466.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 465

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 465, Matthew 10:34-37.

<sup>170</sup> Donald Senior, *Matthew*, electronic resource, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), <https://0-ebookcentral-proquest-com.librarycatalog.vts.edu/lib/vtu/detail.action?docID=6122963>; 54.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

Matthew's Sermon on the Mount, and specifically "the antitheses"<sup>173</sup> of verses 21-24, Jesus, echoing Moses on Mt. Sinai, engages what it means to be in right relationship with God. Jesus teaches the crowds to understand the law as a love-focused life driving for "radical obedience to God's commands" that reaches "not only to the level of action but to the intentions and dispositions that lead to action."<sup>174</sup>

'You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not murder"; and "whoever murders shall be liable to judgment." But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, "You fool," you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift."<sup>175</sup>

Jewish tradition required reconciliation with neighbor before one could be reconciled with God.<sup>176</sup> In this teaching, Jesus expands our understanding of what actions required reconciliation, moving beyond just physical violence to encompass more prevalent verbal traumas and "microaggressions," the inner anger and outward speech that can lead to violence. Assuming his audience participates in or is familiar with Temple sacrifice,<sup>177</sup> Matthew shows Jesus prioritizing right relationship with "brother or sister"<sup>178</sup> even over that central act of Jewish worship.

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<sup>173</sup> Many agree Jesus does not contradict the statements of the law but instead deepens and interprets them. See for example Senior, 52, Case-Winters, 80.

<sup>174</sup> Senior, Donald. *Matthew*. Electronic resource. Abingdon New Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998. <https://0-ebookcentral-proquest-com.librarycatalog.vts.edu/lib/vtu/detail.action?docID=6122963>, 53.

<sup>175</sup> Matthew 5:21-24, NRSV

<sup>176</sup> Levine, 11.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 11

<sup>178</sup> While it is unclear exactly how to understand "brothers and sisters," i.e., either Jesus is speaking just to the community of believers or a broader community, either interpretation supports the point.

What I find particularly compelling in this passage is the power of the other-than-self. Even if one had traveled many miles at significant cost and risk to reach the Temple, Jesus commands his disciples to give power and authority to their aggrieved siblings. Jesus' disciples must consider not just how they understand their relationship with God and neighbor but how their neighbor views their relationship with them. The power to determine right relationship is held outside of oneself, outside of the privileged class that Matthew is, most likely, addressing. What's more, not only must we consider the views, opinions, understandings of another, but also we must *act* on them. We must leave our gift and "go" – turning around, repenting of our unreconciled approach to God's altar, surrendering our priority of place in the Temple worshipers, and seek out the one who believes she has been wronged.

The Diocese of Virginia and the white Church more broadly, have been told for over 400 years by so many different people in innumerable ways that our Black and Brown siblings, sisters, and brothers have "something against" us. Nevertheless, we have refused to leave our gifts of bread and wine at the altar. We continue at our great peril with a Eucharistic theology that denies Jesus' teaching and the primacy of relationship over worship. Matthew's Gospel continues in verses 5:25-26 to warn that if one does not "come to terms quickly" with one's accuser, we will be "thrown into prison" and will not find freedom until we have paid everything we owe.<sup>179</sup> Matthew 5:21-24 shows us that it is past time for our church and our diocese to adopt a theology of Eucharistic humility.

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<sup>179</sup> Senior, 54.

## CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

### **Participants**

Participants for this project will be drawn from the parishioners of the Potomac Episcopal Community (PEC) centered in the Alexandria region of Fairfax County, Virginia. PEC is an emerging community formed through the partnership of four Episcopal Churches: Olivet Episcopal Church, Church of the Spirit, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, and All Saints Episcopal Church Sharon Chapel. Through the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, these four parishes share a common church history founded in the transatlantic slave trade and the systems of chattel slavery in the American Colonies. Each member parish has varying degrees of official and unofficial history which connect it to aspects, events, and wealth from the slave trade.

While the racial makeup of the PEC is predominantly white, participants will self-select for the project and may be of any gender, race, or sexual orientation. Participants must be at least eighteen years old. Participants will be recruited for the study through a series of announcements at Sunday morning and mid-week worship, through written invitations included in our weekly church-wide email, posted on the PEC website and social media pages, and through personal invitations to members who have previously expressed interest or participated in racial justice ministries. The full text of the announcements and invitations can be found in Appendix D: Sample Recruiting Material. The demographic goal for participant involvement is to have eight to ten people, though not more than twelve and not less than six, more than half of whom identify as white.

## Ministry Program Design

### Program Curriculum

This project intends to explore the redevelopment of Eucharistic theology to address both the Episcopal Church's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade and its historic and ongoing participation in systems of white supremacy through Womanist Pedagogy to begin building a justice-praxis centered community capable of doing theology to undo white supremacy. Using an action research methodology, a series of six sessions were designed centered on the four-fold shape of the Episcopal liturgy of Holy Eucharist and structured by Womanist Pedagogy first developed by the Rev. Dr. Katie Cannon.<sup>180</sup> These sessions were developed in consultation with the Rev. Dr. Paula Parker, Program Associate for the Katie Geneva Cannon Center for Womanist Leadership at Union Presbyterian Seminary and Principle of Roots Matter, LLC, and the Rev. Dr. John Kinney, Professor of Theology and Director, Center for African American Pentecostalism and Leadership Development at the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University. To ensure appropriate application of Womanist Pedagogy to the project, the detailed plan for each session will be reviewed with Dr. Parker prior to each session and the activities and results of each session will be reviewed with Dr. Parker following each session.

Action research methodology was chosen for this project because it enables the researcher to capitalize on the shared ministry context between him and the participants.

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<sup>180</sup> Katie G. Cannon, "Wheels in the Middle of Wheels," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 8, no. 2 (1992): 125–32, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25002188>.

Action research methodology also enables the researcher to leverage his questions and struggles within that shared context to connect to and build trust with participants, to raise awareness within the larger diocesan and church context, and to identify power structures that will need to be addressed within this context to bring change.

Eucharist theology was chosen as the focus for this first experiment with a justice-centered community doing theology because of the centrality of Holy Eucharist to the faith of Episcopal parishioners. The Service of Holy Eucharist is the principal Sunday service across the Diocese of Virginia and the service with which parishioners are most familiar. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the regularity of Holy Eucharist was interrupted, and the theology of Holy Eucharist was disrupted. Public health mandates resulted in the Diocese of Virginia ceasing the celebration of Holy Eucharist for more than five months,<sup>181</sup> an unheard-of break in modern times. Compared to the speed of other theological developments in the white Church, the Diocese quickly adopted a new theology of spiritual communion, previously practiced only with the sick and dying, for widespread use. In spiritual communion, participants who cannot receive the elements are to understand the desire to receive communion as being as efficacious as receiving the physical elements. This period of Eucharistic famine<sup>182</sup> has brought Eucharistic theology and practice to the attention of the Diocese of Virginia in a powerful and unique way, creating the potential for a broader and deeper engagement by parishioners with this Eucharistically-centered project.

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<sup>181</sup> The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, “Summary of Bishops’ Calls with Clergy August 25.” Many parishes, my own included, celebrated Morning Prayer instead of Communion while grappling with the decisions around Spiritual Communion and celebrating Communion with only some of the Body able to be present.

<sup>182</sup> Term first introduced to the author by the Rev. Dr. Kate Sonderegger as a time of involuntary absence from communion rather than 'fast', which suggests a voluntary withdrawal from the practice.



Womanist Pedagogy was chosen as the framework for the sessions of this project to ensure they were conducted with a proven process that itself was designed to undo white supremacy. Using Womanist Pedagogy enables both the content *and* structure to support the project's goals. Additionally, Womanist Pedagogy's foci of empowerment and authority provide three critical features to this work. First, they provide a pathway toward a theology of humility and submission that minimizes or avoids previous distortions and abuses of submission and humility.<sup>183</sup> Second, they provide the possibility of participation for BIPOC parishioners whose lives have been adversely affected by previous distortions and abuses of submission and humility and who might otherwise avoid such topics. Third, they invite participants to assume and employ their individual and collective power toward a common goal, in this case, building a justice-centered community.

#### *Measurement of Curriculum Effectiveness*

To measure the effectiveness of the curriculum, the study will use quantitative surveys as well as qualitative observations of individual participants and of the community developed by the participants both during and after the sessions. Participants in this study will be asked to complete an anonymous survey before the first session, after the third session, and following the sixth and final session. These surveys will measure shifts in participants' beliefs surrounding Eucharistic theology and Episcopal participation in the systems of chattel slavery, their assessment of the ability of a justice-centered community to do theology as a corrective to white supremacy, and their willingness to participate in a justice-centered community doing theology beyond the end

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<sup>183</sup> See chapter 3 for discussion of submission and humility as the incarnation of empowerment and authority of white Christians in America.

of the project. Additionally, the post-session survey will include questions inviting the participants to rate the effectiveness of the different aspects of the sessions and the project. These results will later be cross-referenced with the quantitative portions of the survey to evaluate the effectiveness of activities within the project. See Appendix B: Pre, Mid, and Post-Test Instruments for the complete assessments.

Development of this community both during and following the sessions will be gauged using tools from Systems Centered Group Theory™, a set of hypotheses based on Bowen Theory and used by therapists, organizational consultants, and Clinical Pastoral Education supervisors in evaluating and aiding groups in growth, development, and transformation.<sup>184</sup>

### Procedure

To explore the development of Eucharistic theology to address both the Episcopal Church's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade and its historic and ongoing participation in systems of white supremacy through a justice-centered community, participants will be recruited through announcements during Sunday worship, emails invitations, personal invitations, and posts to church social media pages. Everyone who expresses an interest in the project will receive the informed consent document and be asked to return the document at or before the first session. Participants will be asked to commit to attending all six project sessions but will be allowed to continue attending despite any absences.

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<sup>184</sup> I am certified to practice “Intermediate Skills” of Systems Centered Group Theory (SCT) and continue in my training under the supervision of a licensed practitioner of SCT.

Prior to the first session and following the conclusion of the last session, participants will be asked to complete an anonymous survey designed to baseline their beliefs surrounding Eucharistic theology and Episcopal participation in the systems of chattel slavery, the ability of a justice-centered community to do theology as a corrective to white supremacy, and their willingness to participate in a justice-praxis centered community doing theology beyond the end of the project.

The sessions will be structured according to the four-fold shape of the Service of Holy Eucharist in the Anglican tradition: Gather/Offertory, Bless/Prayer, Break/Fraction, Receive/Communion. This structure was chosen because of the central role this service plays in expressing Eucharistic theology in the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia and for its familiarity with the potential participants. Additionally, Eucharistic theology has taken on new significance and a much more public place in our church's discourse during the COVID-19 pandemic and our shared experience of Eucharistic famine during this time.

While exploring Eucharistic Theology through the four-fold shape of the Service of Holy Eucharist, each session will follow the overarching theory and the seven specific steps of Womanist Pedagogy: Conscientization, Emancipatory Histography, Theological Resources, Norm Clarification, Strategic Options, Annunciation & Celebration, and Reflection & Strategic Action.<sup>185</sup>

The goal for each session is to reach at least step five, Strategic Options. Every session will include a time of prayer and worship. Each session will be recorded so that participants' observations, interactions, and insights can also be qualitatively evaluated.

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<sup>185</sup> Cannon, *Wheels in the Middle of Wheels*, 131

See Training Agenda or Class Schedule for a detailed description of each session. A summary of individual sessions' structure and content follows.

*All Sessions:* open with an attention-grabbing piece of media, art, or writing that relates to the theme of the session. All sessions will include time for participants to pray extemporaneously with each other. Participants will be asked to read or review material prior to each session and be given questions to prompt reflection they may wish to record in a journal between sessions.

*Session 1 – Introduction, Definitions, Session Outlines:* participants will be introduced to each other. They will be shown the detailed plan of the entire six-session process. Participants will be introduced to key concepts of Womanist Pedagogy and the norms for the sessions, including confidentiality.

*Session 2 – Gather / Offertory:* participants will offer themselves, our traditions, history, mythology, our whiteness or other privilege, theology, and more as they listen to and experience those sources of theology that have been omitted and denied by white authority. They will work to identify and recognize community as a source of theology, both Black community and their own nascent community. They will gather with our Anglican and Episcopal Ancestors in their participation in the transatlantic slave trade, the institution of chattel slavery, and Holy Eucharist, exploring what this new community believes about Holy Eucharist. They will explore how Slave Religion, Womanist Theology, Sociology, and the Bible challenge our Eucharistic beliefs. They will share what they discover about what they did not know before the session of the Holy Eucharist and about what previously unseen impact white supremacy has had on our community. They will brainstorm about what they want to do to create Communion amongst people,

what acts of justice they want to actualize, and how they want to live as a person of communion-justice. They will engage artistically, creating a visual or written image of the work they have done, and reflect together on the takeaways from this session.

*Session 3 – Bless / Pray:* participants will identify God’s movement outside of normative white spaces, doctrine, structures, ecclesiology, and more. They will share their experiences of previous reconciliation attempts and explore repentance as a prerequisite to reconciliation; experience the power, passion, life, and energy of Black saints and traditions through their own lives, words, and music; explore critiques of white theology by Dr. King and others, White Fragility in the Potomac Episcopal Community, and Biblical resources for Eucharistic theology and practice. They will share what they discover about what they did not know before the session of repentance, reconciliation, and the Holy Eucharist and about what previously unseen impact white supremacy has had on our community. They will brainstorm about what they want to do to bring repentance-as-justice to the Diocese of Virginia, what acts of justice they want to actualize, and how they want to live as a person of communion-justice. They will engage artistically, creating a visual or written image of the work they have done, begin writing their own Eucharistic prayer, and reflect together on the takeaways from this session.

*Session 4 – Break / Fraction:* participants will identify what needs undoing first. They will undo theology, faith, and practice bound by white supremacy as they explore what is broken in themselves, our community, and our traditions. They will explore Black depictions of the Last Supper and Black Eucharistic Expression. They will experience justice and theology beyond the walls of the church by visiting a site like the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, a live show celebrating Black life, or

a protest for Black Lives. They will share what they discover about what they did not know before the session of our brokenness, what needs undoing, and what resources they have for that undoing. They will explore what previously unseen impact white supremacy has had on our community, brainstorm about what they would do with the theology, doctrine, canons, constitution, practice, and prayer of the Episcopal Church to undo white supremacy in the Holy Eucharist, what acts of justice they want to actualize, and how they want to live as a person of communion-justice. They will engage artistically, creating a visual or written image of the work they have done, writing their own Eucharistic prayer, and reflecting together on the takeaways from this session.

*Session 5 – Receive / Communion:* participants will experience Black expressions of transformation in art and writing, explore the histories and contemporary examples of the impact of Black institutions, Black life, and Black individuals on the theology of the Episcopal Church. They will share what they discover about what they did not know before the session of receiving from Christ and transformation in Christ and about what previously unseen impact white supremacy has had on our community. They will brainstorm what they would do with the theology, doctrine, canons, constitution, practice, and prayer of the Episcopal Church to undo white supremacy in the Holy Eucharist, what acts of justice they want to actualize, and how they want to live as a person of communion-justice. They will engage artistically, creating a visual or written image of the work they have done, continuing to write their own Eucharistic prayer, reflecting together on the takeaways from this session.

*Session 6 – Re-Reflection, Celebration, and Strategic Action:* participants will reflect on all the previous experiences of the study and be invited to celebrate insight,

achievement, growth, and transformation they discover. Each participant will receive a compilation of the theology and art produced in sessions 1-5 as a memento. Participants will commit to what faithful next steps they are willing to be and do as individuals and as a community. We will all participate in a service of Holy Eucharist using the Eucharistic Prayer(s) rewritten during sessions 1-5.

Each session is planned to last two hours and will be conducted via Zoom, in person, or as a hybrid of the two as public health conditions and the participants' desires allow. After each session, the results of that session will be reviewed with Dr. Parker to make any necessary adjustments to the curriculum.

All participants will be assigned a random number identifier (RNI) which will be used to record all written responses. The document matching participants to RNI will be a password-protected file on an encrypted drive accessible only to the PI and Study Coordinator. The participants will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement detailing that all information shared in the group settings is strictly confidential and not to be shared in general or specific ways with people outside of the group. All survey responses will be kept either within a password-protected account with the online survey company or, when downloaded, in an encrypted cloud-storage drive accessible only by a password-protected account. All audio and video recordings of group sessions with participants will be kept on the person of the Study Coordinator (if using an external unencrypted recording device) and stored as soon as possible in an encrypted cloud-storage drive accessible only by a password-protected account. All online surveys will use IP blocking to prevent survey responses from being tracked to a particular respondent

via IP address. Participants will be given information on use of the TOR browser, a web browser specifically designed to maximize online privacy.<sup>186</sup>

### *Analysis Plan*

In order to evaluate the development of Eucharistic Theology to address both the Episcopal Church's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade and its historic and ongoing participation in systems of white supremacy through a justice-praxis centered community, the analysis plan for this project will focus on three key areas: Eucharistic theology developed in community, the development of the community itself, and individual participant experiences, as each relates to one or more of the four hypotheses of the project. Analysis of the depth of community development during and after this project will be gauged using Systems Centered Group Theory™ methods, tools, and theories.

The hypotheses for this project are:

Participants will...

1. show an increased belief that the events of the transatlantic slave trade and our participation in chattel slavery in the United States should influence the Eucharistic theology of the Episcopal Church.
2. articulate ways that our Eucharistic theology could change based on the events of the transatlantic slave trade and our participation in chattel slavery in the United States.

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<sup>186</sup> <https://www.torproject.org/>, TOR uses a network of worldwide proxy servers and multi-layered encryption to block tracking, minimize surveillance, and resist fingerprinting.



3. show an increased belief in the ability of a justice-praxis-centered community to do theology as a corrective to white supremacy.
4. show an increased willingness to participate in a justice-praxis-centered community for undoing white supremacy beyond the end of the study.

To address hypothesis #1, the quantitative data from the pre- and post- session surveys regarding what should influence Eucharistic Theology will be compared. Additionally, observations from the recorded sessions will be assessed for indications of increased belief in the same.

To address hypothesis #2, the qualitative data from open-ended survey questions, observations of the recorded sessions, as well as researcher field notes and the Eucharistic prayer written by the participants as part of step six of the Womanist Pedagogy, (Annunciation and Celebration), will be used to determine what, if any, Eucharistic theology was developed by the group. This theology will then be compared to the normative Eucharistic theologies already present in the Diocese of Virginia to determine areas of difference and to determine what, if any, change in Eucharistic theology has occurred because of the community's engagement with and exploration of our participation in the systems of chattel slavery and the events of the transatlantic slave trade.

To address hypothesis #3, the quantitative data from the pre- and post- session surveys regarding belief in the ability of a justice-praxis-centered community to do theology as a corrective to white supremacy will be compared. Additionally, observations

from the recorded sessions will be assessed for indications of increased belief in the same.

To address hypothesis #4, the quantitative data from the pre- and post- session surveys regarding willingness to participate in a justice-praxis centered community for undoing white supremacy beyond the end of the study will be combined with observations of the recorded sessions and researcher field notes.

At the completion of the project data analysis, I anticipate participants will show a slight but measurable increase in their belief that the events of the transatlantic slave trade and our participation in chattel slavery in the United States should influence the Eucharistic theology of the Episcopal Church. I believe participants will, despite the inherent contradiction, also show that they believe that our contemporary Eucharistic theology could address these same events if implemented “properly” or understood more fully. I anticipate participants will, on average, be able to articulate at least one way that our Eucharistic theology could change based on the events of the transatlantic slave trade and our participation in chattel slavery in the United States. I anticipate participants will show an increased belief in the ability of a justice-centered community to do theology as a corrective to white supremacy and will be able to name at least one more authoritative source of theology than they were able to prior to the sessions. I anticipate participants will show a slight increase in willingness to participate in a justice-centered community for undoing white supremacy beyond the end of the study.

## CHAPTER 5: FIELD EXPERIENCE

### **Participants**

Participants for this project self-selected from the Racial Justice Ministry of Potomac Episcopal Community (PEC) in response to multiple parish-wide verbal, email, and website invitations. Thirteen people volunteered, with one dropping for personal reasons before the first meeting. Twelve people began the sessions. One additional person dropped without explanation after having attended the first session and then emailing that they would miss the second session. This participant has also since ceased participating in PEC generally. Seven participants attended all six sessions. Three participants missed one session and one participant missed two sessions. One participant left session four early and left session six early and upset. Follow-up with that participant did not yield any additional contact or discussion.

The original twelve volunteers comprised (9) white, (1) self-identified white Latina, and (2) African-American participants. Ten women and two men began the project. Participants were drawn from five different parishes from across the Potomac Episcopal Community. One participant had joined Potomac Episcopal without first belonging to a member parish.

### **Summary of Actions**

To implement my methodology, the group of (12) participants met for six sessions over eleven weeks from April 13 through June 22, 2021. Each session was conducted via Zoom online meeting due to COVID-19 concerns and restrictions. Sessions were two hours each, with the week between used for prayer, reflection, and

writing. Each week participants were asked to read and reread the same chapter written by Dr. Chaniqua Walker-Barnes, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Being," to pray and respond to a prompt. No previous study or training was required to participate.

Following the methodology outlined in Chapter 4, each session followed the seven steps of Womanist pedagogy as developed by the Rev. Dr. Katie Cannon. Sessions began with a prayer from the facilitator and an invitation for participants to share or reflect on some portion of the inter-session reading (Step 1 – Conscientization). Sessions continued with the facilitator sharing some portion of the history of the Diocese of Virginia's participation in and response to the transatlantic slave trade (Step 2 – Emancipatory Histogramy). Session one included a discussion based on the Catechism and Disciplinary Rubrics from the Episcopal "Book of Common Prayer" in conversation with Matthew 5: 21-26. Sessions two through five included an experience and discussion of Matthew 5: 21-26 in conversation with various theological resources authored by African Americans. Session six included a celebration of Holy Eucharist using the Eucharistic prayer rewritten by the group in session five (Step 3 – Theological Resources). Next, at each session, participants were invited to share "what broke loose" for them in their heads, hearts, souls, and faith (Step 4 – Norm Clarification). They were then asked to explore how their experiences from the sessions had changed what they wanted to do and invited to respond to a prompt about how they would change the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia in a way related to the session's discussion, e.g., building community or reshaping theology (Step 5 – Strategic Options). Session one included time for participants to pray together for each other in small groups. Session two included a discussion of Eucharistic Prayer A from Rite II of the Holy Eucharist in the "Book of

Common Prayer." Session three included the participants writing and sharing a cinquain in response to that same Eucharistic prayer. Session four included the participants spending time in a free-write in response to Eucharistic Prayer A. Session five had the participants rewrite Eucharistic Prayer A, and session six invited participants to reflect on their experience of participating in the celebration of Holy Eucharist using their rewritten Eucharistic prayer. All sessions concluded this portion of the evening with prayer (Step 6 – Annunciation & Celebration). Each session concluded with the facilitator summarizing what was covered and inviting participants to share any "takeaways" (Step 7 – Reflection & Strategic Action). Following each session, I met with Dr. Paula Parker, an expert in Womanist pedagogy and theology, to reflect on the last session's events and adjust the curriculum for the next session.

### **Results by Hypothesis**

Participants completed a pre-session survey, a mid-session survey (after the third session), and a post-session survey. All questions from the pre-session survey appeared on the mid- and post-session survey, with a few additional questions added to the post-session survey (see Appendix B: Pre, Mid, and Post-Test Instruments). Additionally, data was collected through observation of participants during the sessions and during a later review of the session recordings, using Systems Centered Group Theory, to analyze the phase of development of the group.

*Hypotheses 1: participants will show an increased belief that the events of the transatlantic slave trade and the Diocese of Virginia's participation in chattel slavery in the United States should influence the Eucharistic theology of the Episcopal Church.*

This hypothesis was confirmed. When asked to characterize Eucharistic theology within the Episcopal Church, participants showed a 40% increase in the number of people choosing, “[Eucharistic Theology] must change in order for the Episcopal Church to move forward with racial reconciliation,” moving from 10% on the pre-session survey to 50% on the post-session survey. When asked to characterize the “Efforts by the Diocese of Virginia to address our historic participation in the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of chattel slavery in the United States,” participants showed a 50% increase in the number of people choosing “[Efforts by the Diocese...] need to include more theological revision.” When asked to describe the effects of white supremacy, seen as an underlying cause of slavery in the United States, on both their personal beliefs surrounding Holy Eucharist, participants showed an approximately 30% increase in the number of people who agreed or strongly agreed that “White supremacy has influenced what I believe about Holy Eucharist.”

This hypothesis was also confirmed through observations of individual participant’s interactions and comments. While their willingness to rewrite a Eucharistic prayer does not per se show an increase in their beliefs regarding the events of the transatlantic slave trade influencing Eucharistic theology, two participants reported during the final session that while they initially felt the rewriting was “pointless” and “like putting linoleum over hardwood” they ultimately found the result “meaningful” and “powerful.” Additionally, multiple participants shared similar feelings of the beauty and power of the exercise in their post-session survey responses regarding what aspects of the sessions contributed to any change in their or their group's Eucharistic theology.

*Hypotheses 2: participants will articulate ways that Episcopal Eucharistic theology could change based on the events of the transatlantic slave trade and the Diocese of Virginia's participation in chattel slavery in the United States.*

This hypothesis was confirmed in limited ways. Participants articulated numerous suggestions and desires for increased action in the community in response to what they encountered in these sessions. However, they did not or could not express how such changed actions connected to Holy Eucharist or/their Eucharistic theology. Similarly, participants suggested liturgical changes in response to what they encountered in these sessions, but these changes were ambiguous as to whether they represented a changed Eucharistic theology for the individual or the Diocese of Virginia.

More explicit confirmation of this hypothesis came in the short-answer post-session survey data. In response to questions fourteen through seventeen, how their own beliefs had changed and how the Eucharistic theology of the Potomac Episcopal Community or the Diocese of Virginia could change based on the events of the transatlantic slave trade, participants were able to begin to articulate some specific changes. For example, one participant shared, "I am starting to question why we are allowed to take communion... we don't take it seriously." Another participant wrote, "I really like the idea of holding out on the Holy Eucharist/communion until the church itself takes steps toward reconciliation."

Other supporting data came from comments participants made during the sessions. One participant stated, "We're not an authentic church if this [racial justice] isn't our priority." Another participant questioned, "What are the ramifications if everyone

involved with systems of racial oppression didn't take or decided not to take Holy Eucharist?"

Finally, some expression of possible theological change can be seen in the results of the group's rewriting the Eucharistic prayer (see Appendix G: Rewritten Eucharistic Prayer for the complete text). The participants added a more profound articulation of relationship and interdependence, changing "Bless us that we may... serve you in unity, constancy, and peace," to read, "Bless us that we may... serve you through each other in unity, constancy, and peace." Elsewhere, the participants expanded the explicit anamnesis from, "Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts," to read, "Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension; His life of love, model of acceptance, and invitation to interdependence, we offer you our selves, our love, our time, our lives and these gifts." Lastly, the participants added their own petition for the sustaining purpose of Holy Eucharist and their own definition of what that purpose might be, saying, "Nourish us to go forth and do the work of Christ, seeking true relationship with all of our siblings, bringing justice and safety in our community, and building peace in every corner of your created world."

*Hypotheses 3: participants will show an increased belief in the ability of a justice-centered community to do theology as a corrective to white supremacy.*

This hypothesis was confirmed in a limited way by the survey data. Question six of the surveys asked participants to agree or disagree with the statement, "Being part of a justice-centered community is an effective way to help me understand and undo the influence of white supremacy on the church." Throughout the sessions, the percentage of



overall participant agreement remained at 90% when combining “agree” and “strongly agree” responses. However, following the sessions, the participants showed a 20% increase in those who strongly agreed with the statement, moving from 50% to 70%.

*Hypotheses 4: participants will show an increased willingness to participate in a justice-praxis centered community for undoing white supremacy beyond the end of the study.*

This hypothesis was confirmed by both survey data and qualitative observations of the group. Question seven of the surveys asked participants to agree or disagree with the statement, “I am interested in being part of a justice-centered community working to undo white supremacy.” Throughout the sessions, the percentage of overall participant agreement remained at 100% when combining “agree” and “strongly agree” responses. This is not surprising given that all the participants were active members of the racial justice ministry of Potomac Episcopal Community. However, following the sessions, the participants showed an approximately 20% increase in those who strongly agreed with the statement, moving from 70% to 89%.

Additionally, in a question asked only on the post-session survey (Question 12), the participants were asked to agree or disagree with the statement, “I would like to continue gathering with this or a similar group as a justice-practice-centered community.” Seventy percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed, while thirty percent of respondents were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. No participant expressed any level of disagreement with the statement. In another post-session-only question, participants were asked about their willingness to invite others to join the group.

Participants answered similarly to Question 12, with 40% strongly agreeing, 40% agreeing, 20% neutral, and none disagreeing.

Other confirming data for this hypothesis comes from direct observation of participant behavior. One participant offered to host an in-person meeting of the group when COVID-related health restrictions permitted. While the group responded approvingly to the offer, months later, no member initiated such a meeting when restrictions had lifted for a brief period.

### **Challenges and Unexpected Events with Model Implementation**

Numerous challenges arose throughout this project. Enforcing boundaries on group discussion, the limitations of videoconferencing, COVID restrictions, and survey wording detracted from the participants' experience of the project.

One participant left the group meeting in the middle of the sixth and final session. During a discussion of group members' personal experiences with and theological reflections on celebrating Holy Eucharist with the group's rewritten Eucharistic prayer, this person asked an African-American member to share more deeply about their experience from a context outside of the group and its current work. I interpreted this question as "flight" behavior, designed to take the group away from the work at hand and back to safer emotional footing. When I intervened and refocused the conversation on exploring the group's experiences in the here-and-now and invited members to share from their insights rather than ask others to share, the participant said quickly, "I'm leaving," and logged off the Zoom meeting. While I noted the departure and reiterated that participation in every aspect of the project was strictly voluntary, their abrupt exit temporarily shifted the group's energy away from a productive and powerful exploration.

Public health restrictions related to preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus impacted the group in two critical ways. First, the precautions required the project sessions to be held via Zoom videoconferencing. While using Zoom might have enabled the participation of people who otherwise would not have driven at night and made scheduling simpler, I believe that the lack of in-person interaction among the members limited the group from building a stronger sense of community and inhibited deeper personal connections. Second, concerns about COVID transmission kept the group from participating in justice practices with the broader community. The group could not experience direct actions, rallies, protests, community education, or other events outside of the Church that, I believe, would have provided an even more powerful context for the project.

### **Self-Discovery**

Based on the research and experience of this project, I have voluntarily refrained from either receiving Holy Communion or celebrating any service of Holy Eucharist since the celebration the project group and I made using their rewritten Eucharistic prayer on June 22, 2021. Leading the project sessions and engaging further with parishioners and with our diocesan history, I believe that voluntary excommunication is an appropriate next step in the movement for repentance of our participation in the events of the transatlantic slave trade and in the ongoing systems of white supremacy that are our legacy in the white Church. A voluntary fast will draw us closer to the source and reality of the love, justice, and grace we need to make the changes required for right relationship in ourselves, our church, and our world. I believe this is Good News. God has not abandoned us but offers us a path of redemption for that which seems broken beyond

repair. We must continue being, worshiping, and ministering together while we work out with fear and trembling the path ahead. So that compelled by our desire to participate in the sacramental life of Christ in Holy Eucharist, we will be able to transform our theology from an affirmation of white superiority into a ritual of submission and humility that leads us to repentance, reconciliation, and remade communion with our neighbors and with God.

## CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, REFLECTIONS, AND CONCLUSION

### Goals

The goals of this project were to explore how the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia's participation in the events of the transatlantic slave trade should influence our Eucharistic theology and to explore the feasibility of developing a justice-centered community capable of undoing white supremacy theology. These six sessions provided an encounter with Black experience, authority, and theology rarely, if ever, offered to white Episcopalians. Participants engaged numerous intersections of Episcopal slavery-history and Eucharistic theology, which continue to influence their faith today. They were confronted with the realities of how the practice of our Episcopal faith is actively harming both us and our neighbors and examined inconsistencies in what they and we say we believe about Holy Eucharist, how they and we practice what we believe, and the words and teaching of Jesus. The participants voluntarily and intentionally built a justice-focused community. Through engagement with non-traditional Episcopal theological resources, the group experimented with making Black experience, theology, and scholarship authoritative in the life of the white Church. Ultimately, participants took up their individual and collective authority to question, consider, and challenge the theology of the Diocese of Virginia and rewrote a central expression of that theology, a Eucharistic prayer. I was also able to begin addressing one of the driving forces behind my interest in this project – visiting the site of the first Anglican worship in Ghana at Cape Coast Castle in a chapel built directly on top of the male slave dungeon and asking, “Where was Jesus in the Eucharistic moment?”

For the second project goal, exploring the development of a community capable of undoing white supremacy theology, we can demonstrate the success of the group by using the tools of Systems Centered Group Theory. With these tools, we can quantify and describe the changes within the group from the "Flight" phase to the transition phase between "Fight" and "Flight" of group development. In session one, participants consistently spoke to issues, asked questions, and shared stories about topics outside the scope of the work the group, attempting to “flee” to the past (sharing stories outside of the group) or to other more comfortable subjects of conversation (raising tangential points and asking questions apart from the goal of the session). Session two saw similar behavior with participants sharing stories of friends and relatives not present in the group and making jokes out of context. However, session two also contained early indications of energy for growth through expressions of anger or “fight” energy late in the session. By session three, the group began transitioning from “flight” to “fight.” Participants targeted the leader with challenging statements and questions, “I don't know why we're having this discussion!” They also began openly disagreeing with each other for the first time, “I want to pushback on that.” This session, the group expressed more anger, targeting the Church and their parishes, “How is it that we as Christians aren't in the streets?” However, when “fight” energy did arise, it was often followed immediately by “flight” behavior, taking the focus away from potential conflict and keeping the group in transition between the phases. For example, participants would share stories from outside the group and reference extraneous Bible passages right after a member said they wanted to “pushback on that.”

Similarly, when “fight” energy resulted in a member expressing a tangible next step (or “work”) for the group, in this case creating an alternative community for the work of racial justice, another member immediately shared a story from their past, pulling the group away from the present moment and the proposed work, another clear example of “flight” behavior. Session four saw a similar pattern of alternating “flight” behaviors (for example, sharing opinions of people outside the group or about their past) and “fight” behaviors (for example, describing what the Church should be doing, calling-out racist behavior in the group, “It's not our responsibility to forgive you, to educate you,” or attempting to go one-up on another member, “I have four lifelong Black friends,”). By session five, the group was firmly transitioning from the “Flight” phase to the “Fight” phase of group development, containing more extended periods of each energy and allowing the group to explore “fight” for longer stretches before returning to “flight.” Session six repeated the patterns of session five, though with “fight” energy holding more of the time. Group members continued to share stories and to introduce tangential topics but even more, they challenged one another (“enlighten me”), the leader (“I don’t understand how white supremacy relates to Holy Eucharist!”), and the Church (“I don't even like to call myself a Christian,”). One member embodied the transition, using their “fight” energy in service of “flight” when, in response to an intervention by the leader to vector the group’s energy to the question in the moment, the member stated, “I’m leaving,” and immediately logged out of the Zoom meeting.

The movement of the group from the “Flight” phase of group development toward the “Fight” phase demonstrates that the participants were, in fact, able to form a group

capable of growth. The group developed enough to authorize itself to begin undoing and redoing Eucharistic theology as expressed in the rewritten Eucharistic prayer.

The group's successes cannot be attributed entirely to the controllable decisions and structures of the project. Several contextual factors also contributed to the success of this project. While the global pandemic of COVID-19 brought incalculable loss and grief, health concerns over the spread of the virus had already upended the Church's practice of Holy Eucharist and challenged prevailing theologies. By the time of this project, the pandemic also disrupted individuals' habits and, I believe, made them both more aware of and more willing to question their actions and beliefs regarding Holy Eucharist. The pandemic was also the final impetus that brought together four of the parishes into a regular worshipping community. From this new community, Potomac Episcopal Community, the PEC Racial Justice Ministry grew, providing an initial connection for the project participants, each other, and me. The racial uprisings of 2020 also provided contextual contributions to the success of this project. Following protests over events like the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others, the Episcopal Church was more willing to participate in projects like this, whose central claims might have previously been dismissed with little or no consideration.

### **Project Improvements & Next Steps**

The success of this project as a discussion and reading-based exploration is encouraging. Justice experienced through historical examples and modern writing can impact individuals' beliefs and a community's practice. However, such success invites future iterations of the project to expand the experiential component of the sessions to provide more fulsome opportunities for impact and exploration and to deepen



participant's transformation further. If hearing Dr. King's words read aloud over Zoom had an impact, imagine the force of a pilgrimage to the Loraine Motel or of hearing such words quoted in-person at a Black Lives Matter protest on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial?

Lived experiences could also provide opportunities to engage theological resources and authority outside of traditional white Western modes of knowing. In this form of the project, all historical and theological resources conformed to white Western-European frameworks. Future iterations of this work could employ, for example, oral wisdom traditions, experts outside of academia, local community leaders, artists, music, and more.

Considering the participants themselves, I would like to experiment with how different preparation by participants could impact the work. This iteration of the project included no assignments prior to the first session. Requiring engagement with particular people, resources, or self-reflection ahead of the project, I hypothesize, could greatly deepen the impacts but could also be experienced as a barrier to entry for future participants. How might this trade-off between smaller, more impactful groups and larger, easier-to-access communities affect change?

Similarly, the timing, spacing, and number of sessions could be varied in future attempts. Incorporating additional research in community building to guide initial changes, this project could be attempted as part of a weekend intensive retreat or, conversely, extended to cover six or more months. Adding additional personal or small group work between large-group sessions could drive increased impact. Given the number of participants who referenced the power of rewriting the Eucharistic prayer,

extending the project to allow more space for both the engagement with the prayer as well as for reflection following the exercise could prove fruitful.

I believe, however, that the potential for the greatest impact within the group and the Church would be to use this work as the beginning of a long-term, intentional worshipping community centered on justice practice as the foundation for working together to undo and redo theology. Connected with and grounded in Anglican worship and keeping Eucharistic longing at the center of its life, such a community could free itself from the tyranny of Sunday mornings where justice is a second or third order effect of the Gospel (rather than the heart of the Gospel) and where there is little time, energy, or money left after all of the “required” tasks of buildings and ceremony are completed to engage the deep theological work necessary. Such a community could also begin to free itself from the ingrained behaviors that are harmful to Black people especially and to all participants, i.e., centering white patterns of speech and behavior, white-supremacist imagery in art and architecture, and more. How could the Eucharistic theology of the Diocese of Virginia and the Episcopal Church be changed when the experiences of Black trans women are treated as authoritative sources for that theology? How might our Eucharistic theology change when we invest a similar amount of time and energy as we spent theologically promoting, defending, and justifying slavery in undoing that same theology? What liturgy could a community develop to capture and even redeem the realities of church buildings and altars, like the ones at which I serve, built atop plantation land with plantation money? What would happen to our Eucharistic theology if we encountered Christ in the non-violent exercise of community power as part of our liturgy, putting white bodies on the line as a part of our worship or perhaps even just

training to do so? Systems Centered Group Theory hypothesizes that the most effective way to introduce change into a community is through a small group within that community. Such a long-term intentional community could be an effective conduit to introduce change to the diocese. The diocese could become an effective conduit to introduce change to the national Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church could become an effective conduit to introduce change to white Western Christianity.

## **Conclusion**

We, the white Church, have tried to do better as we know better. We have tried to make corrections in our liturgy and our leadership, our vestments and our investments, our processes and our polity, yet we remain beholden to our beliefs, practices, and, most dangerously, our theologies mired in white supremacy – most obviously and violently present in our unrepentant, unrestored, unreconciled participation in and support for the systems of chattel slavery. My church continues to cling to theology that affirms and suggests rather than challenges and convicts. We must no longer call the church-sanctioned mutation of chattel slavery into peonage into Jim Crow into a prison-industrial system “justice” and believe that Jesus is pleased with our “progress.” It is past time to try another way.

Jesus shows us a way of humility and submission that actively acknowledges in our life together the authority of Christ and the authority of our siblings, sisters, and brothers in defining right relationship with God. Christ challenges us to tear down our idols of white supremacy, White Jesus, white theology and to submit to Christ who is incarnate love-as-justice, rejoicing for the grace bestowed on us through this process.

Such submission in humility will lead us to recognize our need to leave our gifts at the altar and first go and be reconciled.

Publicly recognizing the broken state of our communion and voluntarily refraining from Holy Eucharist will not only require focus and energy but also will fundamentally challenge our definition of ourselves. I was asked recently by another Episcopal clergy person how my decision for voluntary excommunication fits with the vows I took at my ordination, particularly how it fits with the description of priesthood in the BCP “to preach, to declare God’s forgiveness to penitent sinners, to pronounce God’s blessing, to share in the administration of Holy Baptism and in the celebration of the mysteries of Christ’s Body and Blood, and to perform the other ministrations entrusted to you.”<sup>187</sup> I now believe it was living into those very vows that brought me to the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University and to the work “my soul must have.”<sup>188</sup> Standing in the chapel at Cape Coast Castle, Ghana, as an Episcopal priest, I carried with me the joy, exhilaration, profound gratitude, and deep love I had experienced in celebrating Holy Eucharist. Yet standing as a priest where my fellow priests once stood atop the male slave dungeon, I was confronted by Christ who knows the lash and the chains, who wept in the bowels of that castle with his beloved children, and I had to admit that I did not know, I could not answer, “where was Jesus in that Eucharistic moment?”

I was ordained into a part of God's church built on the wealth, power, and privilege gained from the enslavement and ongoing oppression and exploitation of Black

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<sup>187</sup> Episcopal Church, 531

<sup>188</sup> A phrase often mentioned at STVU and attributed by many to The Rev. Dr. Katie Cannon in describing the work that is God's calling not just for a DMin but for the rest of one's life.

people. At ordination, I promised before God, my bishop, my parish, and the Church to “endeavor so to minister the Word of God and the sacraments of the New Covenant, that the reconciling love of Christ may be known and received.” How then can I administer the sacraments at the whites-only lunch-counter-altar built on top of the bodies and blood of people our theology enslaved?

I promised at ordination to, “undertake to be a faithful pastor to all whom [I am] called to serve, laboring together with them and with [my] fellow ministers to build up the family of God.” How then can I as a faithful pastor to all continue to perpetuate a theology and liturgy that is actively harming the people I am called to serve?

I promised at my ordination to, “do [my] best to pattern [my] life and that of [my] family... in accordance with the teachings of Christ, so that [I] may be a wholesome example to [my] people?”<sup>189</sup> How then can I stand idle while White Jesus diminishes the imago Dei and authorizes the complacency and reassurance that forestalls the “fierce urgency of now” that Christ’s justice demands and threatens the very salvation of us all?

Rather than contradict my vows, this project has finally shown me a way to fulfill them. Having encountered the Holy Spirit, having been convicted of and by the truth of Black joy, suffering, pain, experience, and love, having stood in the dungeons of Cape Coast Castle on top of 18 inches of compacted trash, excrement, and human remains, looking up to the where the altar of the Lord stood with a priest celebrating, having journeyed with a justice-centered community to redo theology, having experienced the gifts and grace that brought me this far by the faith of so many others when my faith, and the faith of my church failed, I must now pattern my life, in submission and humility,

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<sup>189</sup> Episcopal Church, 532

with the teachings of Christ. I must, and we must leave our gift at the altar and first go and be reconciled.

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## APPENDIX B: PRE, MID, AND POST-TEST INSTRUMENTS



### Holy Eucharist - Transatlantic Slavery - Justice: Pre-Session Survey

1. Please enter your three-digit RNI (random number identifier)

*Please choose the (1) response that most closely represents your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.*

2. It is possible that white supremacy has influenced what the Diocese of Virginia teaches about Holy Eucharist.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. White supremacy has influenced what I believe about Holy Eucharist.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. The history of the Diocese of Virginia's involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. The history of the Potomac Episcopal Community's parishes and their involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Being part of a justice-centered community is an effective way to help me understand and undo the influence of white supremacy on the church.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 2: Pre-Session Survey Page (1)

7. I am interested in being part of a justice-centered community working to undo white supremacy.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Please choose (1) statement that most closely aligns with your beliefs.**

8. The most effective way for the Potomac Episcopal Community to understand and undo the effects of white supremacy on our church is:

- white supremacy does not influence or affect our church
- hearing preaching about justice
- teaching and learning about systemic racism, inclusive history, and white supremacy culture
- engaging in justice ministry or actions
- Choose not to answer

9. Current Eucharistic Theology:

- is a necessary part of addressing racism within the Episcopal Church
- must change in order for the Episcopal Church to move forward with racial reconciliation
- contains within it everything the church needs to aid with racial justice
- if we just understood our current Eucharistic theology more deeply, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.
- if we just implemented our current Eucharistic theology more fully, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.
- is a force for unity within our church
- Choose not to answer

10. Efforts by the Diocese of Virginia to address our historic participation in the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of chattel slavery in the United States:

- are sufficient
- need to include more theological revision
- need to keep doing what we are doing, just with more energy and resources
- Choose not to answer

**Short answer.**

11. Describe what things in your life (people, writings, experiences, etc.) have taught you about Holy Eucharist or affected what you believe or how you practice Holy Eucharist.

*Figure 3: Pre-Session Survey Page (2)*



Holy Eucharist - Transatlantic Slavery - Justice: Mid-Session Survey

1. Please enter your three-digit RNI (random number identifier)

Please choose the (1) response that most closely represents your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

2. It is possible that white supremacy has influenced what the Diocese of Virginia teaches about Holy Eucharist.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. White supremacy has influenced what I believe about Holy Eucharist.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. The history of the Diocese of Virginia's involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. The history of the Potomac Episcopal Community's parishes and their involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Being part of a justice-centered community is an effective way to help me understand and undo the influence of white supremacy on the church.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 4: Mid-Session Survey Page (1)

7. I am interested in being part of a justice-centered community working to undo white supremacy.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Please choose (1) statement that most closely aligns with your beliefs.**

8. The most effective way for the Potomac Episcopal Community to understand and undo the effects of white supremacy on our church is to:

- white supremacy does not influence or affect our church
- hearing preaching about justice
- teaching and learning about systemic racism, inclusive history, and white supremacy culture
- engaging in justice ministry or actions
- Choose not to answer

9. Current Eucharistic Theology:

- is a necessary part of addressing racism within the Episcopal Church
- must change in order for the Episcopal Church to move forward with racial reconciliation
- contains within it everything the church needs to aid with racial justice
- if we just understood our current Eucharistic theology more deeply, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.
- if we just implemented our current Eucharistic theology more fully, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.
- is a force for unity within our church
- Choose not to answer

10. Efforts by the Diocese of Virginia to address our historic participation in the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of chattel slavery in the United States:

- are sufficient
- need to include more theological revision
- need to keep doing what we are doing, just with more energy and resources
- Choose not to answer

**Short answer.**

11. Describe what things in your life (people, writings, experiences, etc.) have taught you about Holy Eucharist or affected what you believe or how you practice Holy Eucharist.

Figure 5: Mid-Session Survey Page (2)



Holy Eucharist - Transatlantic Slavery - Justice: Post-Session Survey

1. Please enter your three-digit RNI (random number identifier)

Please choose the (1) response that most closely represents your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

2. It is possible that white supremacy has influenced what the Diocese of Virginia teaches about Holy Eucharist.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. White supremacy has influenced what I believe about Holy Eucharist.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. The history of the Diocese of Virginia's involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. The history of the Potomac Episcopal Community's parishes and their involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Being part of a justice-centered community is an effective way to help me understand and undo the influence of white supremacy on the church.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 6: Post-Session Survey Page (1)

7. I am interested in being part of a justice-centered community working to undo white supremacy.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Please choose (1) statement that most closely aligns with your beliefs.**

8. The most effective way for the Potomac Episcopal Community to understand and undo the effects of white supremacy on our church is to:

- white supremacy does not influence or affect our church
- hearing preaching about justice
- teaching and learning about systemic racism, inclusive history, and white supremacy culture
- engaging in justice ministry or actions
- Choose not to answer

9. Current Eucharistic Theology:

- is a necessary part of addressing racism within the Episcopal Church
- must change in order for the Episcopal Church to move forward with racial reconciliation
- contains within it everything the church needs to aid with racial justice
- if we just understood our current Eucharistic theology more deeply, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.
- if we just implemented our current Eucharistic theology more fully, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.
- is a force for unity within our church
- Choose not to answer

10. Efforts by the Diocese of Virginia to address our historic participation in the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of chattel slavery in the United States:

- are sufficient
- need to include more theological revision
- need to keep doing what we are doing, just with more energy and resources
- Choose not to answer

**Short answer.**

11. Describe what things in your life (people, writings, experiences, etc.) have taught you about Holy Eucharist or affected what you believe or how you practice Holy Eucharist.

Figure 7: Post-Session Survey Page (2)



**Please choose the (1) response that most closely represents your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

12. I would like to continue gathering with this or a similar group as a justice-practice-centered community.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. I would be willing to invite others to become part of this or a similar justice-practice-centered community.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Short answer.**

14. In what way(s), if any, did your own beliefs about Holy Eucharistic change based on your participation in these sessions?

15. In what ways could the Eucharistic theology of the Potomac Episcopal Community change based on the events of the transatlantic slave trade and our own participation in chattel slavery in the United States?

16. In what ways could the Eucharistic theology of the Diocese of Virginia change based on the events of the transatlantic slave trade and our own participation in chattel slavery in the United States?

17. What parts of the sessions contributed most to any change in knowledge or belief you experienced over the course of this project with regards to Eucharistic Theology?

*Figure 8: Post-Session Survey Page (3)*

18. What part(s) of the sessions contributed most to the development of the group?

19. What part(s) of the sessions contributed most to the development of the group's Eucharistic Theology as expressed in the Eucharistic prayer?

20. What parts of the sessions most hindered any change in knowledge or belief you experienced over the course of this project with regards to Eucharistic Theology?

21. What part(s) of the sessions most hindered the development of the group?

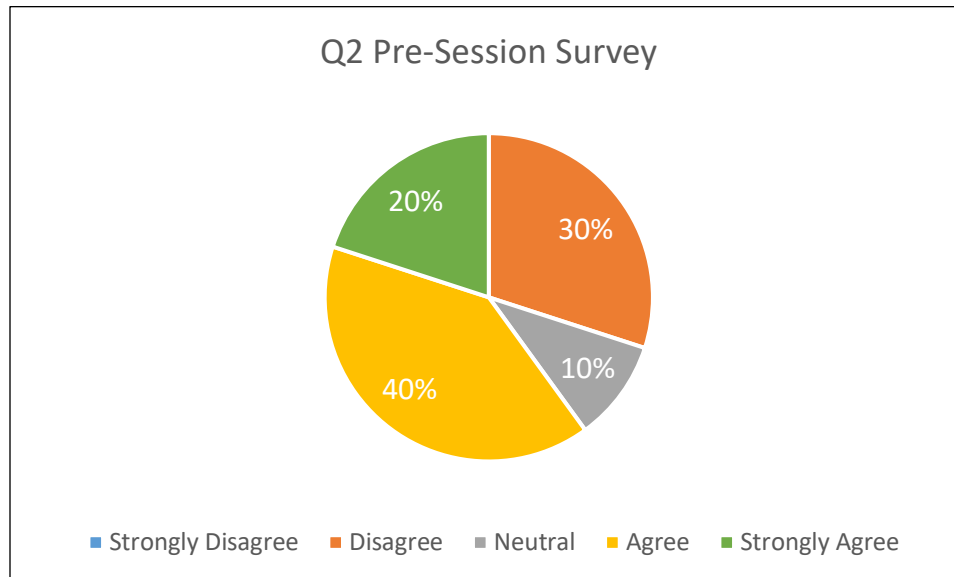
22. What part(s) of the sessions most hindered the development of the group's Eucharistic Theology as expressed in the Eucharistic prayer?

*Thank you very much for your participation.*

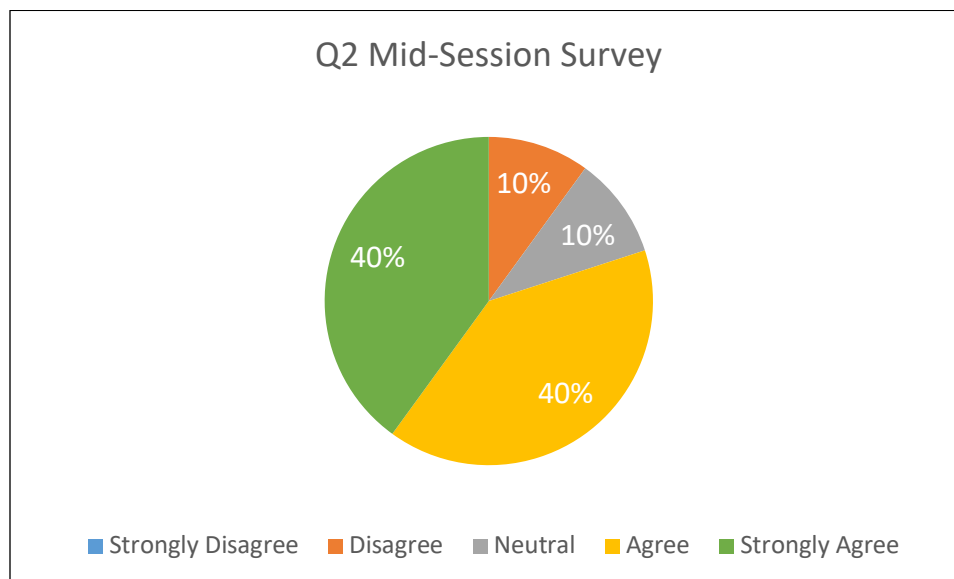
*Figure 9: Post-Session Survey Page (4)*

## APPENDIX C: QUANTITATIVE SURVEY RESULTS

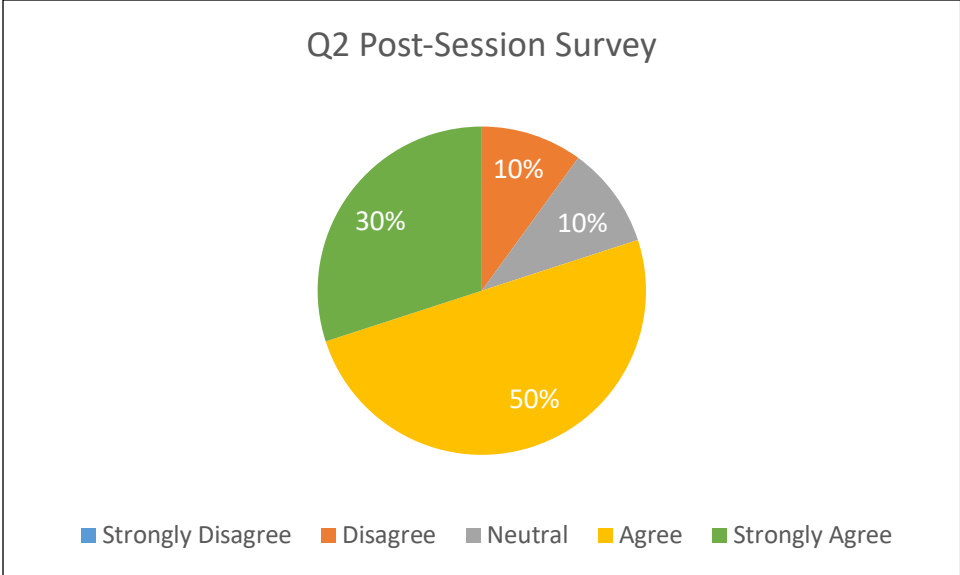
**Question 2: It is possible that white supremacy has influenced what the Diocese of Virginia teaches about Holy Eucharist.**



*Figure 10: Question 2 Pre-Session Survey Results*

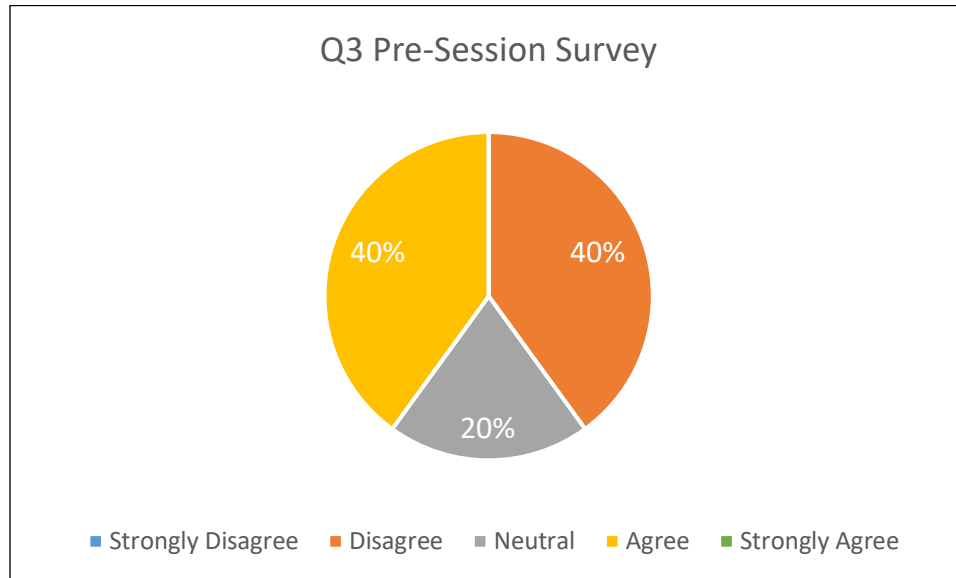


*Figure 11: Question 2 Mid-Session Survey Results*

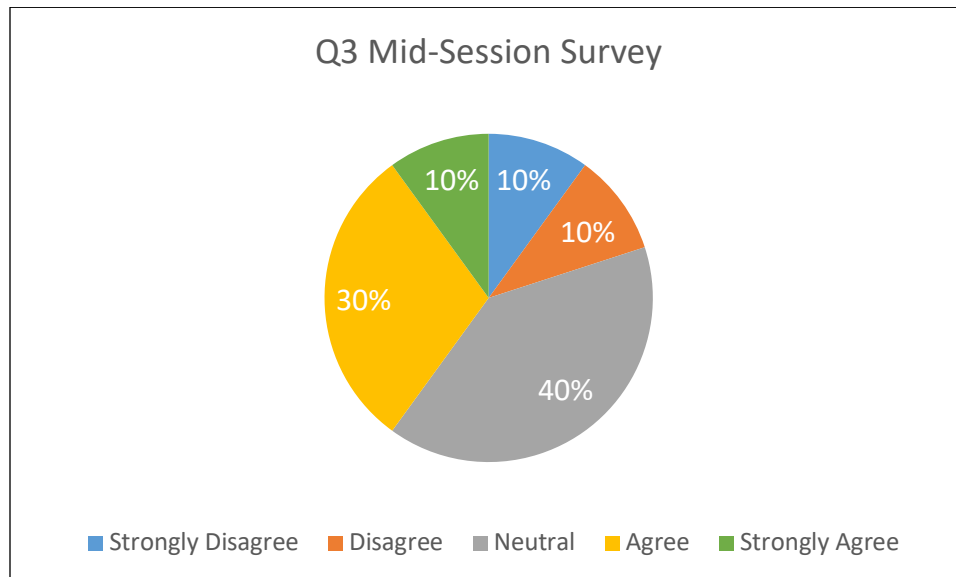


*Figure 12: Question 2 Post-Session Survey Results*

**Question 3. White supremacy has influenced what I believe about Holy Eucharist.**



*Figure 13: Question 3 Pre-Session Survey Results*



*Figure 14: Question 3 Mid-Session Survey Results*

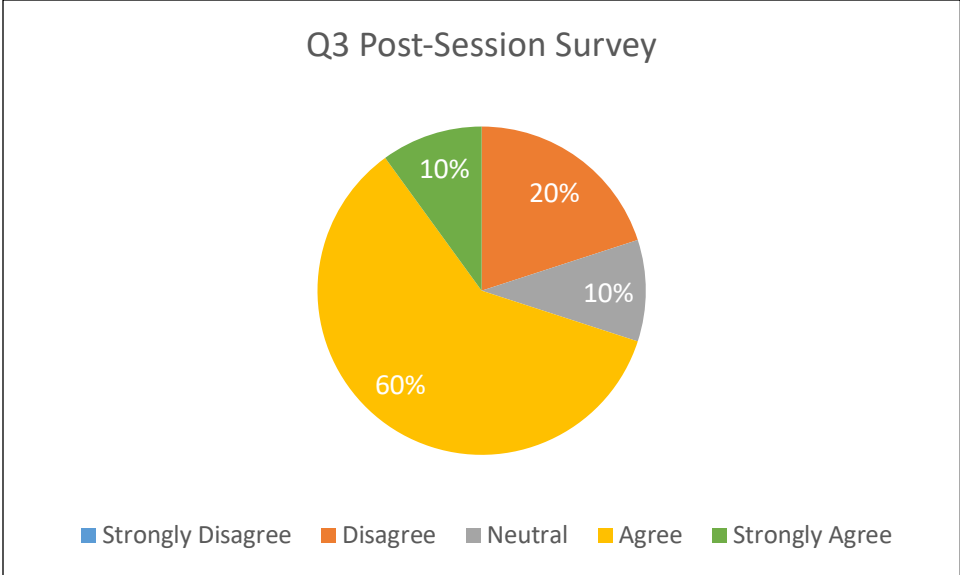
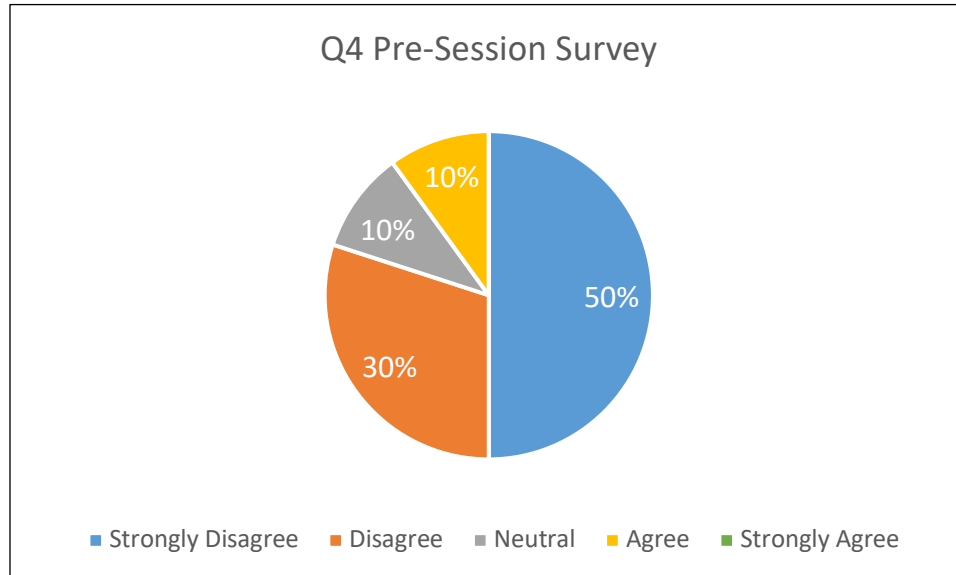
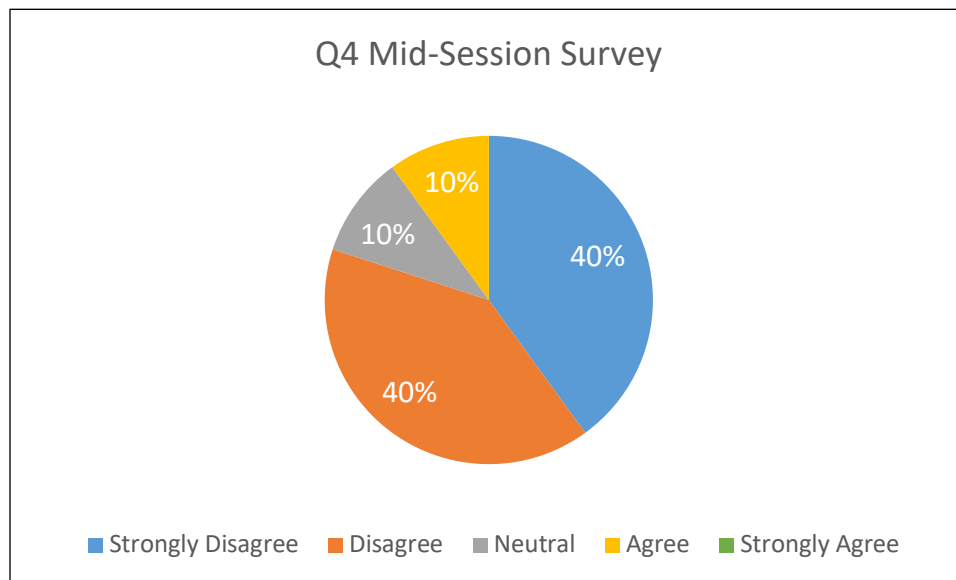


Figure 15: Question 3 Post-Session Survey Results

**Question 4. The history of the Diocese of Virginia’s involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.**



*Figure 16: Question 4 Pre-Session Survey Results*



*Figure 17: Question 4 Mid-Session Survey Results*

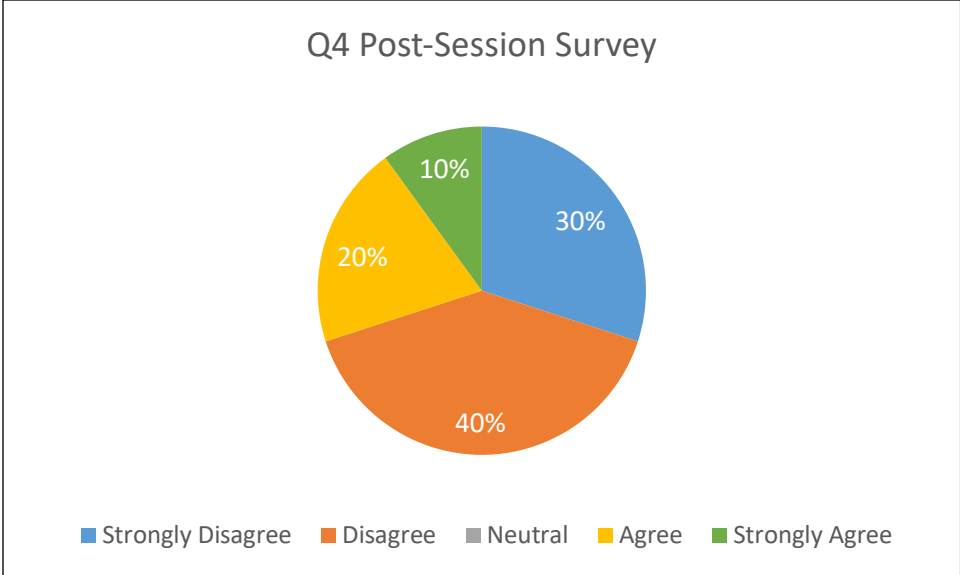
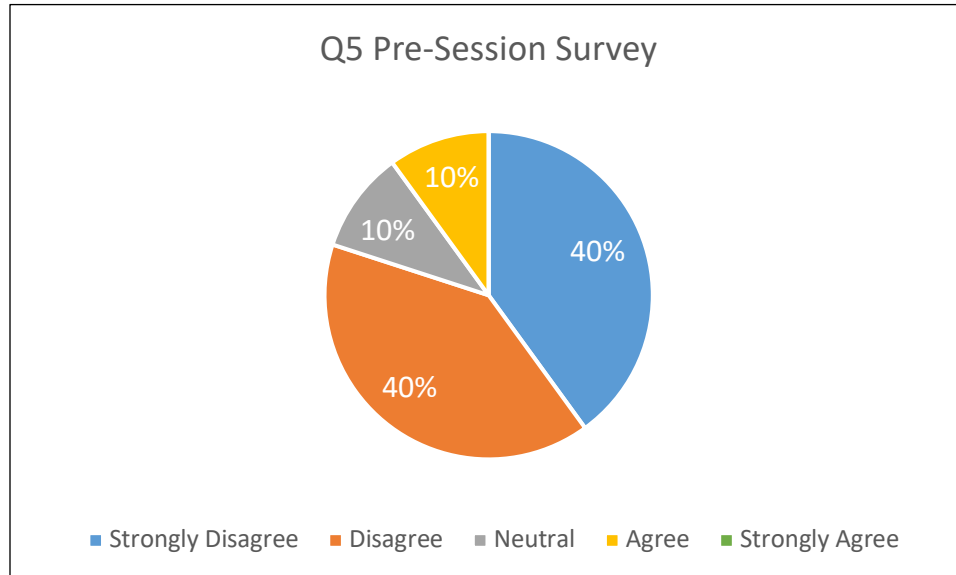


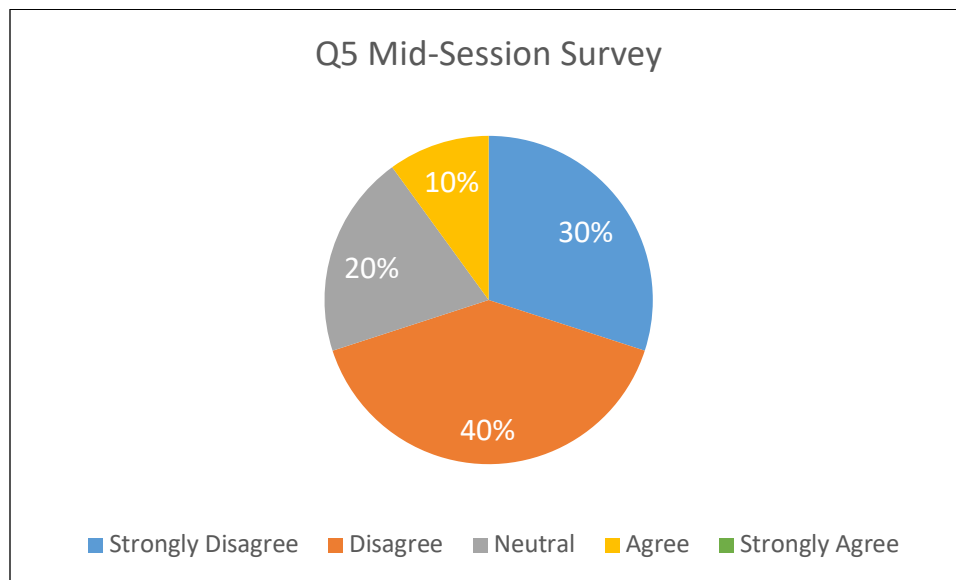
Figure 18: Question 4 Post-Session Survey Results



**Question 5. The history of the Potomac Episcopal Community’s parishes and their involvement with slavery should not influence our theology.**



*Figure 19: Question 5 Pre-Session Survey Results*



*Figure 20: Mid-Session Survey Results*

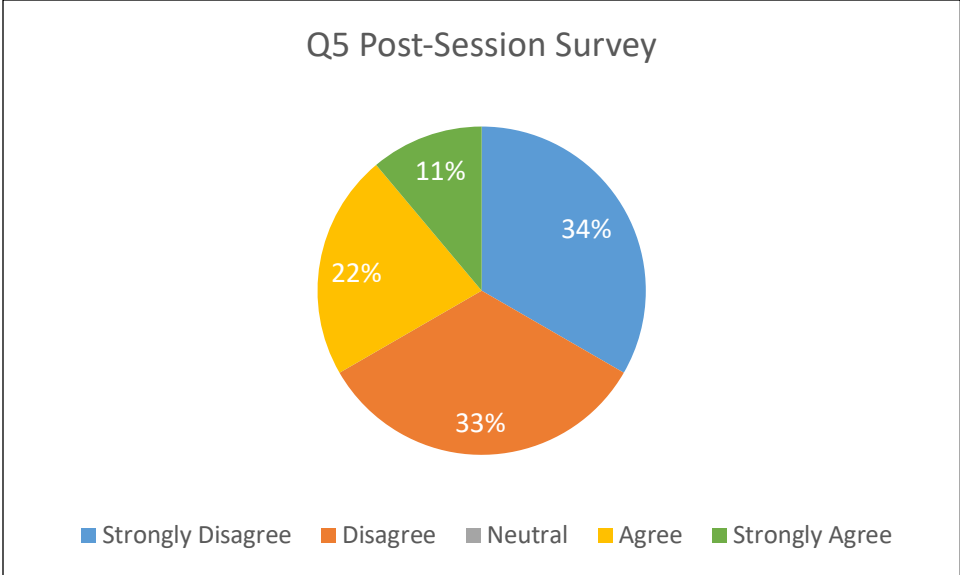


Figure 21: Question 5 Post-Session Survey Results

**Question 6. Being part of a justice-centered community is an effective way to help me understand and undo the influence of white supremacy on the church.**

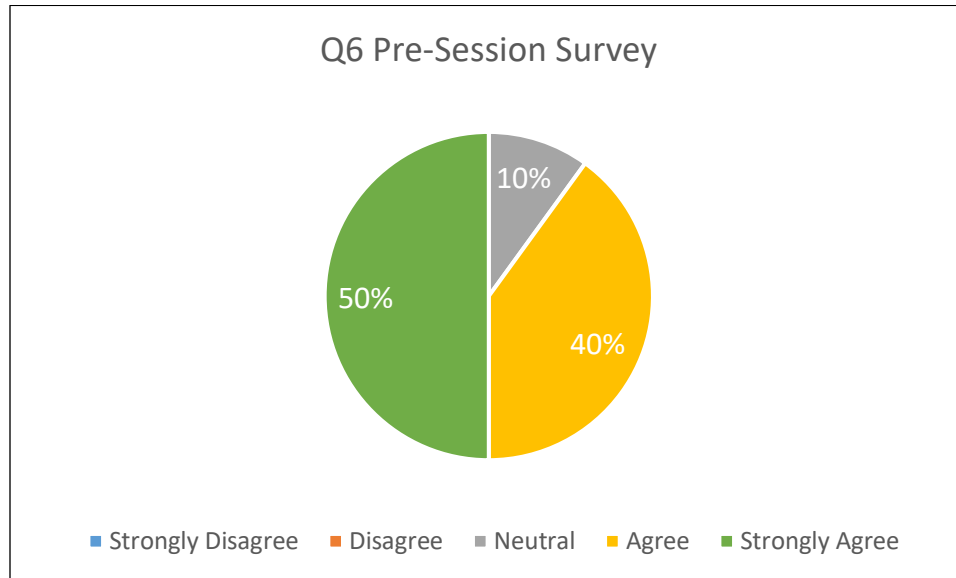


Figure 22: Question 6 Pre-Session Survey Results

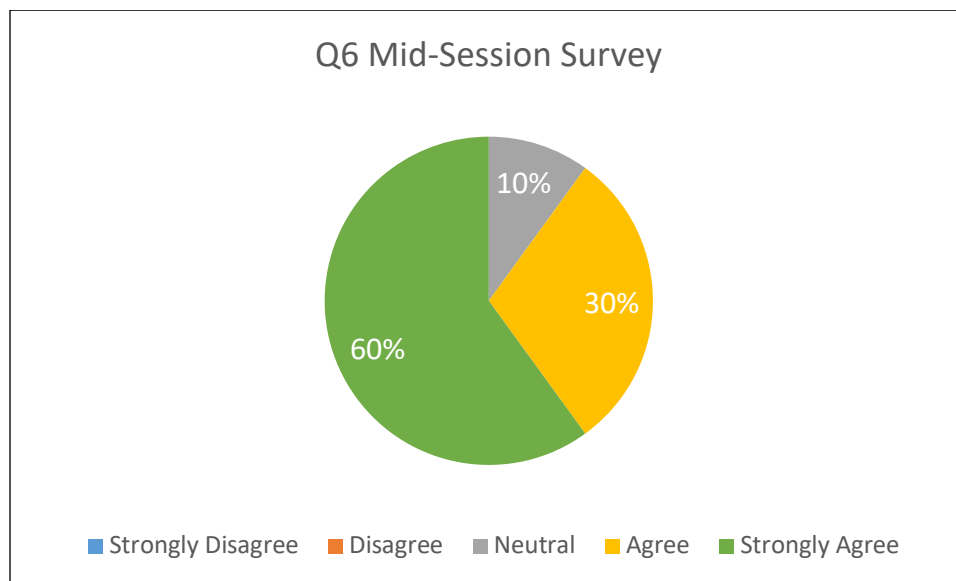


Figure 23: Question 6 Mid-Session Survey Results

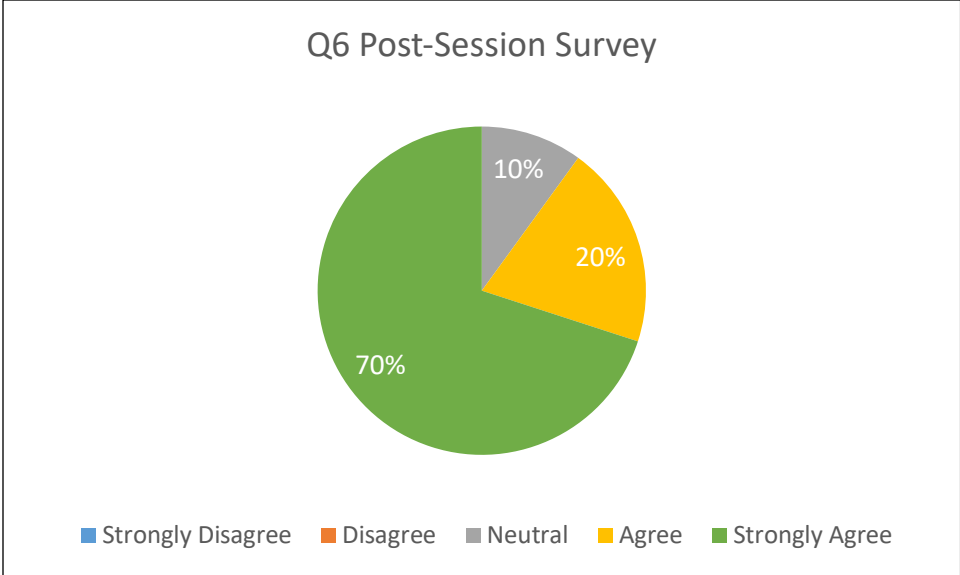
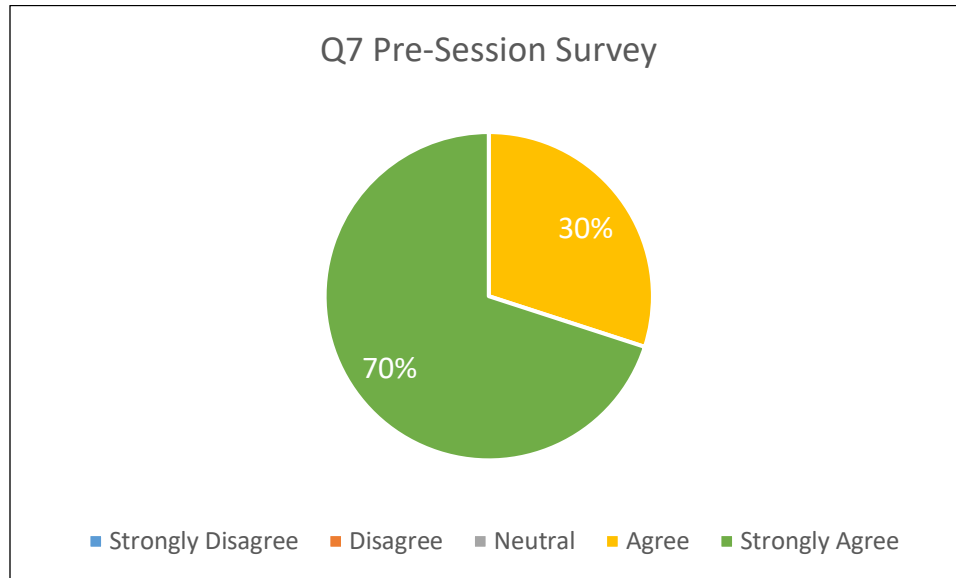
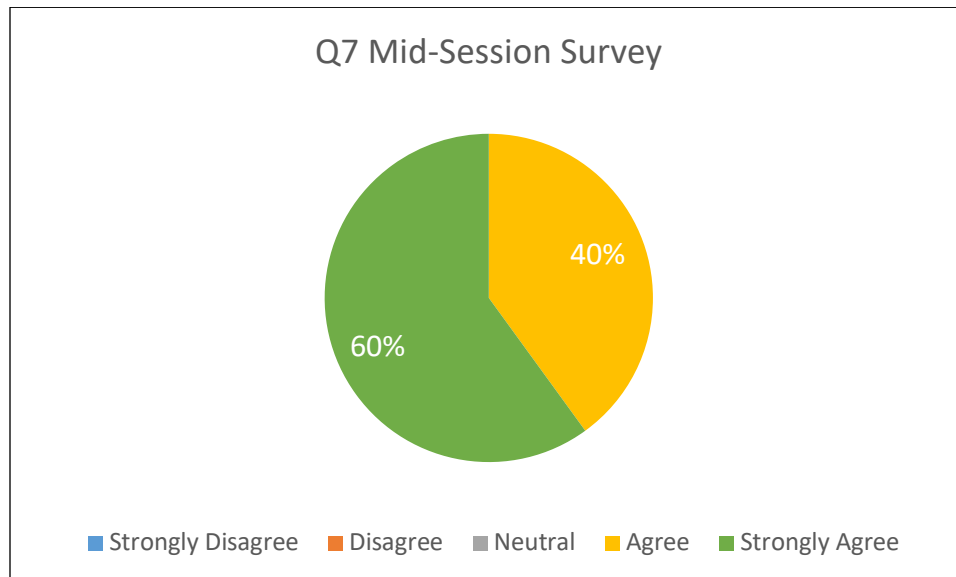


Figure 24: Question 6 Post-Session Survey Results

**Question 7. I am interested in being part of a justice-centered community working to undo white supremacy.**



*Figure 25: Pre-Session Survey Results*



*Figure 26: Mid-Session Survey Results*

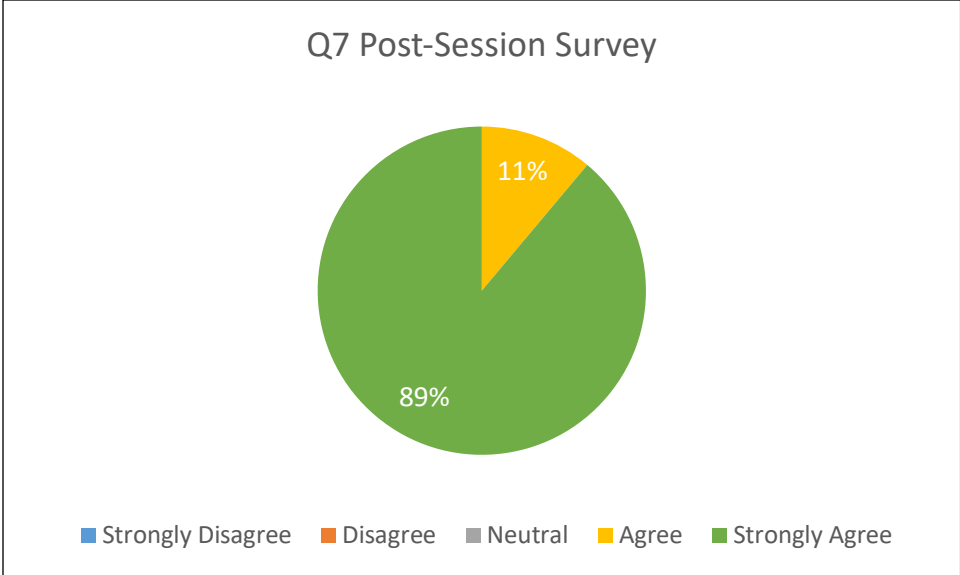


Figure 27: Question 7 Post-Session Survey Results

**Question 8. The most effective way for the Potomac Episcopal Community to understand and undo the effects of white supremacy on our church is:**

	Pre-Session	Mid-Session	Post-Session
...white supremacy does not influence or affect our church.	0%	0%	0%
...hearing preaching about justice.	0%	10%	20%
...teaching and learning about systemic racism, inclusive history, and white supremacy culture.	40%	40%	50%
...engaging in justice ministry or actions.	50%	50%	20%
Choose not to answer	10%	0%	10%

*Table 1: Question 8 Complete Survey Results*

**Question 9. Current Eucharistic Theology:**

	Pre-Session	Mid-Session	Post-Session
...is a necessary part of addressing racism within the Episcopal Church	10%	10%	0%
...must change in order for the Episcopal Church to move forward with racial reconciliation	10%	10%	50%
...is a force for unity within our church	20%	0%	10%
...if we just understood our current Eucharistic theology more deeply, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.	20%	20%	10%
...if we just implemented our current Eucharistic theology more fully, we would be able to address racial reconciliation more fully in the church.	20%	20%	20%
...contains within it everything the church needs to aid with racial justice	0%	10%	0%
Choose not to answer	20%	30%	10%

*Table 2: Question 9 Complete Survey Results*

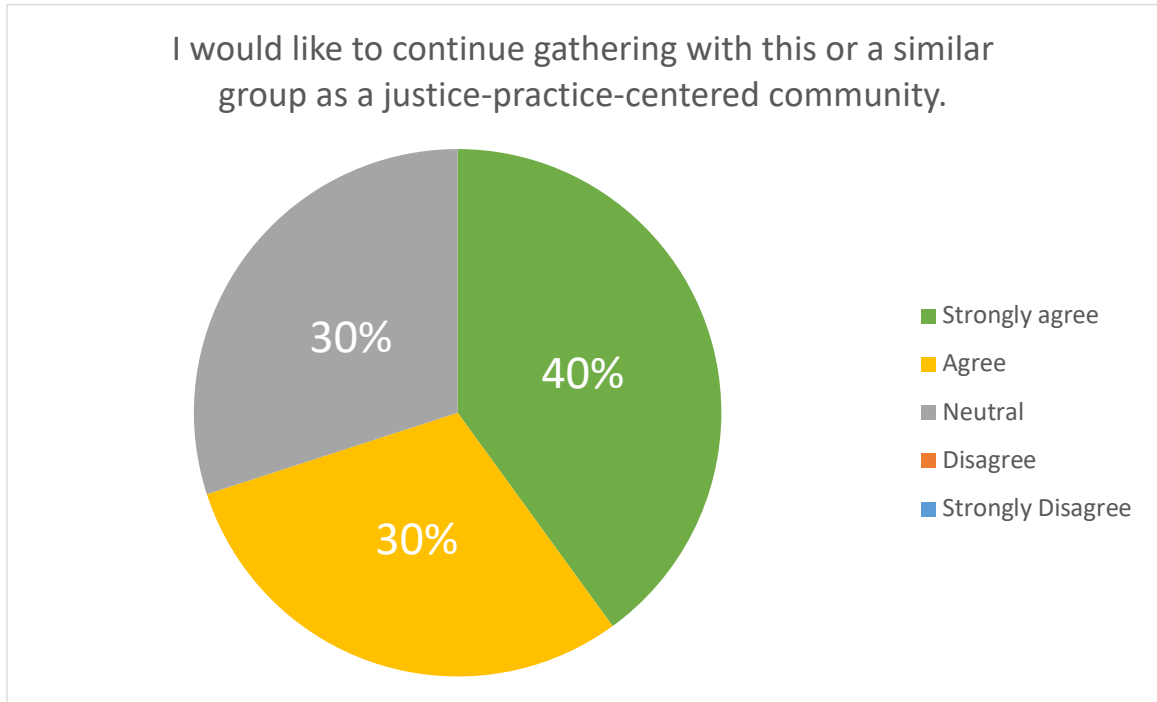


**Question 10. Efforts by the Diocese of Virginia to address our historic participation in the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of chattel slavery in the United States:**

	Pre-Session	Mid-Session	Post-Session
...need to include more theological revision	30%	60%	60%
...need to keep doing what we are doing, just with more energy and resources	20%	20%	20%
...are sufficient	0%	0%	0%
Choose not to answer	50%	20%	20%

*Table 3: Question 10 Complete Survey Results*

**Question 12. I would like to continue gathering with this or a similar group as a justice-practice-centered community.**



*Figure 28: Question 12 Post-Session Survey Results*

**Question 13. I would be willing to invite others to become part of this or a similar justice-practice-centered community.**

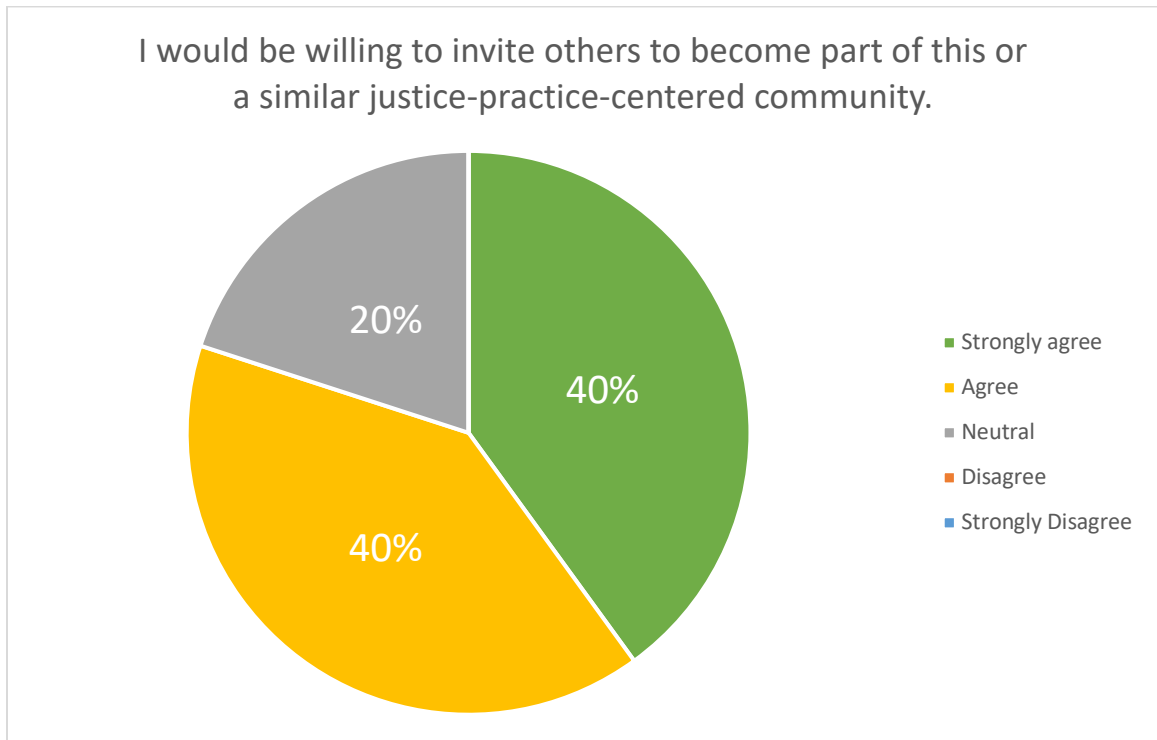


Figure 29: Question 13 Post-Session Survey Results

## APPENDIX D: SAMPLE RECRUITING MATERIAL

### Sunday Morning Announcement:

As part of my Doctor of Ministry program, I am leading a study on Holy Eucharist and justice-practicing communities. You are invited to be a part of a group journeying together through our shared history, our common present, and our Eucharistic practice to explore:

- Holy Eucharist as a lens for transformation
- our response to white supremacy in our church and our world
- how our experience of justice ministry and the experiences of BIPOC can be transformative sources of our Eucharistic theology
- building a justice-practicing community for theological reflection and development

We will meet over Zoom and, where possible, in-person for a (2) hour session every-other week for twelve weeks.

Please contact me, Cayce Ramey, for more information or to sign up.

### Written Invitation:

How can our Potomac Episcopal Community engage and change the ongoing effects of our church's participation in the transatlantic slave trade and chattel slavery in the Diocese of Virginia?

Come be a part of a group journeying together through our shared history, our common present, and our Eucharistic practice to explore:

- Holy Eucharist as a lens for transformation
- our response to white supremacy in our church and our world
- how our experience of justice ministry and the experiences of BIPOC can be transformative sources of our Eucharistic theology
- building a praxis-centered community for theological reflection and development

We will meet over Zoom and, where possible, in-person for a (2) hour session every-other week for twelve weeks.

Please contact the Rev. Cayce Ramey for more information or to sign up.

[cayce@sharonchapel.org](mailto:cayce@sharonchapel.org)

571-271-7775

### Personal Invitation Conversation Starter:

As part of my Doctor of Ministry program, I am leading a study on Holy Eucharist and practicing communities of racial justice. I've noticed your interest in racial justice and your desire to do something in a new and different way. I'd like to invite you to be part of a group that will journey together through our shared history, our common present, and our Eucharistic practice to explore:

- Holy Eucharist as a lens for transformation
- our response to white supremacy in our church and our world
- how our experience of justice ministry and the experiences of BIPOC can be transformative sources of our Eucharistic theology
- building a praxis-centered community for theological reflection and development

We will meet over Zoom and, where possible, in-person for a (2) hour session every-other week for twelve weeks.

You don't have to answer right away and your participation or not in this project will not in any way affect your place in the Potomac Episcopal Community.

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM



Institutional Review Board  
Informed Consent Form rev. 9/8/09

For IRB USE:  
Date Received:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
IRB #  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A. RESEARCH INVESTIGATOR INFORMATION**

Study Title: Leave Your Gift at the Altar: (Re)Doing Eucharistic Theology in Light of Slavery through a Justice-centered Community  
Principal Investigator: The Rev. Dr. John Kinney  
Co-Investigators: The Rev. B. Cayce Ramey  
Funding Agency: N/A

**B. INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT**

**Introduction:**

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Research studies are planned to collect new information and gain new knowledge that may potentially help people in the future.

Taking part in this research study is voluntary. You will not be penalized in any way if you choose not to participate. If you decide to participate you can stop at any time and will not be penalized in any way.

Review this form and ask the researchers all the questions you have so that you can make an informed choice as to whether you will take part in this research study.

**Details about the study:****What is the purpose of the study?**

The purpose of my project is to explore building and using a justice-centered community of church members to redo the Episcopal theology of Holy Communion by undoing the white supremacy which undergirds our current theology.

**How long will I be involved in this study?**

We will meet over Zoom for a series of (6) two-hour sessions, every other week over twelve weeks.

**What will happen if I decide to take part in this research?**

All participants will complete an anonymous pre-session questionnaire and commit to attending all (6) sessions. Any participants who miss more than one session will be excluded from the research, though they may continue in the sessions.

Each of the sessions will be recorded. At each of the sessions we will explore what we believe about Holy Eucharist as well as engage some aspects of our church's history. We'll have discussions; watch speeches, movie clips, and documentaries; read passages of scripture and other books; pray together; do art; and more.

**What risks are involved in taking part in this study?**

You may become uncomfortable and experience some emotional distress during the sessions.

To manage this risk, everyone:

- will have access to other clergy from the Potomac Episcopal Community for pastoral support.
- may leave a session temporarily or completely at will without any repercussions to their membership in the church.
- may remove themselves from the research pool at will while continuing to participate in any remaining sessions.
- will be provided a list of counselors should they wish further professional support.

**What benefits are involved in the study?**

Your benefits from this study might include:

- deepening your understanding of Holy Communion as a lens for racial justice ministry.
- increased connections to a community of people similarly dedicated to racial justice ministry.

The Potomac Episcopal Community's benefits from this study might include:

- deepening the community's understanding of Holy Communion as a lens for racial justice ministry.
- increased connections to neighbors and neighboring communities dedicated to racial justice.
- building a group with the church which could be the seed for a missional community.

The Diocese of Virginia's benefits from this study might include:

- a repeatable model for beginning communities that can work to undo the effects of white supremacy in our church.

- one or more new theological insights into Holy Communion.

The surrounding communities' benefits from this study might include:

- a community of people to act as a bridge between the church and the neighborhood.
- a group of people able to provide support, energy, and effort for racial justice in our local society and governmental structures.

The larger society's benefits from this study might include:

- a model of institutional change for undoing the effects of white supremacy.
- resources for and leadership of reparations.

**Are there any other alternate treatments or procedures that may benefit me?**

No.

**How will my privacy be protected? How will my records be maintained to protect confidentiality?**

- All participants will be assigned a random number identifier (RNI) which will be used to record all written responses regardless of format.
- The document matching participants to RNI will be a password protected file on an encrypted drive accessible only to the PI and Study Coordinator.
- All participants in group sessions will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement detailing that all information shared in the group settings is strictly confidential and not to be shared in any either general or specific way with people outside of the group.
- All survey and questionnaire responses will be kept either within a password protected account with the online survey company or, when downloaded, in an encrypted cloud-storage drive accessible only by a password protected account.
- All audio and video recordings of group and individual sessions with participants will be kept on the person of the Study Coordinator (if using an external unencrypted recording device) and stored as soon as possible in an encrypted cloud-storage drive accessible only by a password protected account.
- All online surveys will use IP blocking to prevent survey responses being tracked to a particular respondent via IP address.
- Participants will be given information on use of the TOR browser (<https://www.torproject.org/>), a web browser specifically designed to maximize online privacy through the use of a network of world-wide proxy servers which:
  - Block Trackers
  - Defend Against Surveillance
  - Resists Fingerprinting
  - Employs Multi-layered encryption

**Will I receive anything for being in this study?**

No.

**Who do I contact if I have any questions about this study?**

Questions about your rights as a research volunteer can be directed to the Virginia Union University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB reviews all research involving



humans to ensure that all of your rights are protected. The office telephone number is 804-257-5770. You may contact us without giving your name, if you prefer.

If you have questions about this project, please contact:

Study Coordinator: The Rev. B. Cayce Ramey

E-mail: [bcramey@vuu.edu](mailto:bcramey@vuu.edu) Phone: 571-271-7775

**CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and have asked all the questions that I have at this time. I understand what I am being asked to do and I agree to take part in the study described above. I understand that I may refuse to take part or stop at any time and that I will not be penalized in any way for my decision.

Printed Name of Research Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Research Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of Researcher/ PI: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Researcher/ PI: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX F: PHOTOGRAPHS & IMAGES



Figure 30: The Coat of Arms of the Diocese of Virginia from - [www.thediocese.net](http://www.thediocese.net)



*Figure 31: Cape Coast Castle, Cape Coast, Ghana (photo by author)*



*Figure 32: Male Slave Dungeon, Cape Coast Castle (photo by author)*





*Figure 33: Shaft to Chapel Door from Male Slave Dungeon, Cape Coast Castle (photo by author)*





*Figure 34: Wooden Grate Covering Shaft outside Chapel Door to Male Slave Dungeon, Cape Coast Castle*

*(photo by author)*

## APPENDIX G: REWRITTEN EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

We celebrate the life and work of Jesus Christ, O Father. In humility, we thank you for loving and forgiving us. Recalling His death, resurrection, and ascension; His life of love, model of acceptance, and invitation to interdependence, we offer you our selves, our love, our time, our lives and these gifts.

Bless them by your Holy Spirit to be for all people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Bless us that we may faithfully receive this holy Gift, and serve you through each other in unity, constancy, and peace.

Nourish us to go forth and do the work of Christ, seeking true relationship with all of our siblings, bringing justice and safety in our community, and building peace in every corner of your created world; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever.  
*AMEN.*

## APPENDIX H: THE 7 STAGES OF THE DANCE OF REDEMPTION

1. Conscientization
2. Emancipatory Histography
3. Theological Resources
4. Norm Clarification
5. Strategic Options
6. Annunciation & Celebration
7. Re-reflection & Strategic Action



## APPENDIX I: THE FOUR-FOLD SHAPE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Based on the actions of Jesus from the Last Supper theologians have described the shape of the Holy Eucharist in four sections:

1. Take / Gather
2. Bless
3. Break
4. Receive / Share

## VITA

### **B. Cayce Ramey, MDiv.**

[bcramey@verizo.net](mailto:bcramey@verizo.net)

571.271.7775 (Cell)

#### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

White Supremacy in Christianity, Sacramental Theology

#### **EDUCATION**

- DMin, Global Leadership and Institutional Reform, Virginia Union University, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, June 2022
- MDiv, Virginia Theological Seminary, May 2012
- BS, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, June 1998

#### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Clergy Leadership Team, Potomac Episcopal Community, March 2020 – Present

- Leading four churches through creative merger and restructuring
- Developing a Missional Community for Racial Justice
- Designing and integrating IT and audio-visual technology for fully hybrid worship

Rector, All Saints Episcopal Church Sharon Chapel, September 2014 – Present

- Leading a 150 member intercultural parish
- Leading diocesan group for the Triangle of Hope partnership for racial justice and reconciliation with Episcopal Dioceses of Virginia, US, Kumasi, Ghana, and Liverpool, UK
- Implemented collaborative systems-centered approach to leadership, increasing vestry engagement, developing new leaders, and fostering new expressions of ministry

Associate Rector, St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Annandale, VA, June 2012 – September 2014

Communications Officer, Captain, United States Marine Corps, June 1998 – July 2004

#### **PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

- Ramey, B. Cayce. "Leaving Our Gift at the Altar: White Supremacy and the Moral Imperative of Holy Eucharist." In *Mysterion Seeking Understanding: How*

*Sacramentality Can Save the Body of Christ*, edited by Ian S. Markham and Jeremy Means-Koss. Eugene, Oregon. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2022 (expected).

- Ramey, B. Cayce. “You’re Talking About Something that Carries Overs: How the Memories of Slavery Shape Contemporary Christian Faith.” MDiv Honors Thesis, Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, VA, 2012.
- Parker, Margaret Adams, and Ramey, B. Cayce. *Creativity & the Prophetic Voice: Sculpting Mary – Sculpture by Margaret Adams Parker, Photographic Essay by B. Cayce Ramey*, 2017, sculpture and photographs, Convergence, Alexandria, VA.
- Parker, Margaret Adams, and Ramey, B. Cayce. “Creativity & the Prophetic Vision Discussion Series.” Panel discussion at Convergence, Alexandria, VA, Oct 2017 – Jan 2018
- Ramey, B. Cayce. “Prophetic Creation: Photography, Theology, and Sculpture.” *The Arts in Religious and Theological Studies* 27, no. 3 (2016): 23-31.
- Ballentine, Jabriel, and Ramey, B. Cayce. Keynote address at Virginia Theological Seminary’s Introduction to Intercultural Competency, Alexandria, VA, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.
- Ramey, B. Cayce. “Art as an Exercise in Power.” Seminar delivered at Virginia Theological Seminary’s Introduction to Intercultural Competency, Alexandria, VA, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.
- Ballentine, Jabriel, and Ramey, B. Cayce. “Racial Heresy.” Recording 2012 – present, <http://www.racialheresy.com>

### **HONORS / AWARDS**

Joint Service Commendation Medal  
Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal  
National Defense Medal  
Iraq Campaign Medal  
Sea Service Deployment Ribbon

### **MEMBERSHIPS / AFFILIATIONS**

Systems-Centered® Training & Research Institute, 2010 – present  
Canonically Resident Priest of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, 2012 – Present

# EXHIBIT C

January 6, 2022

Cayce Ramey

Prayer

When talked last year, I wondered if the Holy Spirit was up to something and said I didn't want to get in the way.

Now, am concerned that it is a different spirit at work, and not that of the Holy Spirit.

Your decision not to receive the sacrament is one thing.

Your decision not to provide the sacrament for other people is another.

That decision requires other people to make sacrifices for the sake of your conscience, while you make little sacrifice at all.

Other priests must celebrate for your people, or they are denied the sacrament.

The sacrament is not your gift – it is Jesus' gift, and it is your "bounden duty and service," to use language of Rite I.

Jesus himself instituted the sacrament in the midst of great brokenness, as a sign of reconciliation – not as a result of reconciliation, but as a means toward it.

During the years of dispute in this diocese around sexuality and the inclusion of LGBTQ persons in the life of the diocese, some clergy and laity refused to share the Eucharist with others, based on their theology that the Eucharist is a sign of reconciliation and that people must be in agreement in order to have communion together. I was dean of the former Region VII during part of that time, and the dispute and theological debate was unpleasant to say the least, and the division only grew stronger until those who held that theology and practice left TEC.

My theology around the Eucharist became more solidified in that time – that the Eucharist is a gift from God, given to us by Jesus – a gift that we share as a sign of our hope and trust in a reconciliation that is not yet complete. Jesus, after all, instituted the sacrament in the midst of great brokenness as a sign of the reconciliation yet to come, not of reconciliation already accomplished.

In light of these historical, theological and ecclesiological realities, I can support your in your choice not to receive the sacrament – that is between you and God. Your decision not to fulfill your ordination vow and provide the sacrament for others causes me concern.

How do you square the vows you made when you were ordained with this decision? What are the appropriate consequences of this decision? What sacrifices must you make to continue on this path?

+ Susan E. Goff

# EXHIBIT D

**From:** Bishop Susan Goff  
**To:** Rector  
**Subject:** Re: EXTERNAL: Discussion w/ Parish  
**Date:** Saturday, March 19, 2022 2:23:25 PM

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Dear Cayce,  
Please forgive my long delay in responding. I have been at the House of Bishops meeting in Texas where technologies have not always been cooperating. My concern in the past, and still today, is to ensure that your DMin work and your decision about the Eucharist do not make the complex work of Potomac Partnership even more complex. If you are able to share your DMin work in a way that does not compromise or complicate that other important work, I support you in doing so. Blessings to you and to the people of All Saints.  
+Susan

The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff  
Bishop Suffragan and Ecclesiastical Authority  
Episcopal Diocese of Virginia  
804-643-8451  
www.thediocese.net

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**From:** Rector <rector@sharonchapel.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 13, 2022 1:30 PM  
**To:** Bishop Susan Goff <sgoff@thediocese.net>  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL: Discussion w/ Parish

**CAUTION EXTERNAL EMAIL: Unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments, or disclose sensitive information!**

Dear Bishop Susan,

Based on your previous guidance, I have refrained from discussing with my parish my DMin project and decision to refrain from celebrating or receiving Holy Eucharist.

I would like to revisit your that and ask now your permission to share my work and my decisions with my parish.

Parishioners have noted my absence on the altar and my receiving a blessing at Communion. As well, they've wanted to celebrate my DMin (I successfully defended on Tuesday past). I believe Lent would be a good time to connect with parishioners and to reflect together about how we acknowledge our history and work toward repentance and repair.

Thank you for your consideration.

Peace,  
Cayce

