



Preparing to Become the  
**BELOVED  
COMMUNITY**

the *Episcopal* church 

## Welcome

*And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."  
And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.*

—Mark 1

This Lent, the Diocesan Community is invited into a journey to commit in new ways to becoming Beloved Community and growing loving, liberating, life-giving relationships across the human family of God. We make the journey not only as individual Christians and congregations, but as a whole church. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and President of the House of Deputies Gay Clark Jennings and their supporting officers share "Becoming Beloved Community," a new vision document that lays out the Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice. A second resource — "Becoming Beloved Community Where You Are" — details many ways for individuals and congregations to take concrete steps toward change and healing. The Program Group for Ecumenical and Interreligious Life has adapted this resource from its original Advent setting to a Lenten one.

### **The journey is framed around the labyrinth. Why?**

In the ministry of racial healing and justice, none of us walks a straight line. We enter the labyrinth wherever God has provided an opening – telling the truth about our church's story around race; discerning and proclaiming God's dream of Beloved Community where we are; learning and practicing Jesus' way of healing and love; and bravely working to transform systemic racial injustice. We keep moving from one quadrant to another and back. No one is ever really finished. That is the way of ongoing spiritual formation. As you "walk" sections of this labyrinth, gather a group, and together engage the scriptures, reflections, and activities.

### **Beginning the Journey...**

Designate a facilitator who will carefully preview the session. Set aside at least 45 minutes for each session, and consider these

#### ***Conversation Tips:***

- Speak from your own experience.
- Be genuinely curious about what others share.
- Imagine you can disagree without someone being wrong.
- Avoid debate and stay with the story.
- Seek Christ in others and seek to embody his loving, liberating, life-giving way.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry regularly welcomes us to live not just as the church but as the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement: the ongoing community that follows Jesus into loving, liberating, life-giving relationship with God, each other, and creation.

May God bless and grow us into vibrant embodiments of the Christ we welcome and follow, this Lent and always.

Prayerfully offered,

The Program Group on Ecumenical and Interreligious Life in the Diocese of Los Angeles

The Episcopal Church's Racial Reconciliation Team

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