

**This document contains TWO reports
from Lee Cheek, each with slightly differing details**

Inventory of Episcopal Racial Reconciliation and Justice Ministries, including Truth and Reconciliation

Introductory Info

Name	Lee Cheek
Title	Co-chair of the Beloved Community Commission (Volunteer)
Organization	Episcopal Church
Diocese	Western Massachusetts
Email	lee.cheek@yahoo.com
Contact Phone Number (include country code if outside U.S.)	413-737-4786
Please identify whether you are answering this survey as a representative of an entire diocese or as a church or institution:	Entire Diocese

Section One: Telling the Truth About Our Churches and Race, including Truth and Reconciliation Processes (TRUTH)

Check all the Truth-telling ministries with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged over the last 12 months:

Racial Justice Audit of Episcopal Leadership (produced by Mission Institute, published January 2021) or other survey of experiences of diocesan leadership around race and racism
Intentional efforts to increase proportion of people of color in membership

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

We also had over 25 Sacred Ground groups.
We increased our Latino faith communities from one to three.

Has your diocese, congregation or institution or entity in recent years engaged in a Truth and Reconciliation process, understood to be: (please check all that apply)

Investigating the organization's historic role in racial injustice;

Please describe these Truth and Reconciliation process efforts:

This has been the work of our Beloved Community Commission.

Is there a staff person and/or volunteer who serves as point person for diocesan racial reconciliation and justice ministries?

Yes

Name Lee Cheek

Email lee.cheek@yahoo.com

Are they a staff member or volunteer? Volunteer

Would you like to identify another leader? Yes

Name Harvey Hill

Email revharveyhill@gmail.com

Are they a staff member or volunteer? Volunteer

Has your diocese, congregation or institution organized a commission, working group or other regular meetings to work on a Truth and Reconciliation process? No

Please indicate the types of entities in your diocese that have engaged or are now engaging in a Truth and Reconciliation process. Not yet engaged

Have Episcopal entities pursuing Truth and Reconciliation hosted events and webinars or produced any documents, testimonials, reports or other content? Yes

If your diocese, congregation or institution has not begun to pursue a Truth and Reconciliation process, have leaders expressed interest in starting such work? Yes

Section Two: Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community (PROCLAMATION)

Check all the Proclaiming the Dream ministries with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged during the last 12 months: (check all that apply)

Host a Listening and Learning Session around race in partnership with neighbors, faith partners, civic groups, schools, etc

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Proclaiming the Dream?

Honestly, we just need more time. The last year has been about surviving the pandemic and reaching out to all who could not be in church. There is a lot of energy for Proclaiming the Dream and I'm sure we will tap into that energy.

Section Three: Practicing Jesus's Healing Way (FORMATION)

Check all the Practicing the Way ministries with which your diocese or entity has engaged during the last 12 months: (check all that apply)

Sacred Ground dialogue circles
Anti-racism or dismantling racism training
Preaching on race and racism
Diocesan or organization-wide reading of book(s) on race

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

25 Sacred Ground groups.
Numerous book groups around Stephanie Spellers book.

Section Four: Repairing the Breach in Institutions and Society (JUSTICE)

Check all the church-wide Repairing the Breach efforts with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged during the last 12 months:

Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN) or the Office of Government Relations
Poor People's Campaign

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Reimagining Policing and Criminal Justice Reform"?

Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Prison Ministries or Re-entry Ministries," that is, supporting persons re-entering community following incarceration?

Local engagement

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Refugee Ministries"?

Local engagement

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Immigration Reform"?

Federal engagement

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Education Equity," including support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and partnering with under-resourced schools primarily serving students of color?

Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Housing Equity” for/with communities and People of Color?

Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Economic Opportunity” for/with communities and People of Color?

Learning

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Environmental Racism and Eco-justice”?

Federal engagement

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Reparations for Racial Justice”?

Learning
Local engagement
State engagement
Federal engagement

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

Staff member Margaret Bullitt Jonas is a state and National leader in Creation Care. That work includes environmental racism and eco-justice.

Conclusion

Is there anything else you wish to share about your diocese, congregation or institution and its engagement with racial reconciliation and justice ministries, overall?

We are engaging work with the Diocese of Massachusetts regarding reparations.

Form Name: Inventory of Episcopal Racial Reconciliation and Justice Ministries, including Truth and Reconciliation Processes
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Inventory of Episcopal Racial Reconciliation and Justice Ministries, including Truth and Reconciliation

Introductory Info

Name Lee Cheek

Title Co-Chair

Organization Beloved Community Commission DWMA

Diocese Western Massachusetts

Email lee.cheek@yahoo.com

Contact Phone Number (include country code if outside U.S.) 413-854-1095

Please identify whether you are answering this survey as a representative of an entire diocese or as a church or institution: Entire Diocese

Section One: Telling the Truth About Our Churches and Race, including Truth and Reconciliation Processes (TRUTH)

Check all the Truth-telling ministries with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged over the last 12 months: Racial Justice Audit of Episcopal Leadership (produced by Mission Institute, published January 2021) or other survey of experiences of diocesan leadership around race and racism

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above: During the past two years we have promoted activities (described on following pages) from the bishop and the commission to raise awareness and amplify the importance for leaders to understand the effects of the white dominant culture upon non-white peoples listed above. We used the opportunity of this very survey to invite all clergy and wardens to answer the questions. Two email notifications from the Bishop and the BCC underlined the importance of looking at the survey and there was also information about how to go about looking into parish archives.

Has your diocese, congregation or institution or entity in recent years engaged in a Truth and Reconciliation process, understood to be: (please check all that apply)	Not yet engaged
Is there a staff person and/or volunteer who serves as point person for diocesan racial reconciliation and justice ministries?	Yes
Name	The Rev. Vicki Ix
Email	ixvicki@diocesewma.org
Are they a staff member or volunteer?	Staff
Would you like to identify another leader?	Yes
Name	Lee Cheek
Email	lee.cheek@yahoo.com
Are they a staff member or volunteer?	Volunteer
Has your diocese, congregation or institution organized a commission, working group or other regular meetings to work on a Truth and Reconciliation process?	No
Please indicate the types of entities in your diocese that have engaged or are now engaging in a Truth and Reconciliation process.	Not yet engaged
Have Episcopal entities pursuing Truth and Reconciliation hosted events and webinars or produced any documents, testimonials, reports or other content?	No
If your diocese, congregation or institution has not begun to pursue a Truth and Reconciliation process, have leaders expressed interest in starting such work?	Yes
What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Truth and Reconciliation?	Finding a job description (volunteer or staff) for leading and auditing these efforts.

Section Two: Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community (PROCLAMATION)

Check all the Proclaiming the Dream ministries with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged during the last 12 months: (check all that apply)

Host a Listening and Learning Session around race in partnership with neighbors, faith partners, civic groups, schools, etc
Offer public witness (editorials, public speaking, protests and vigils)

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

Various churches held sessions with non-Episcopal churches, especially around the witness to events of the summer of 2020. BLM banners were displayed on at least one church in the diocese, which generated published letters of support from other clergy and other leaders of Episcopal churches (in Berkshire County). We have one representative from our BCC on the Province I Indigenous Peoples Justice Network.

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Proclaiming the Dream?

Help in how to connect the parishes' various activities across the diocese so we could inspire one another.

Section Three: Practicing Jesus's Healing Way (FORMATION)

Check all the Practicing the Way ministries with which your diocese or entity has engaged during the last 12 months: (check all that apply)

Sacred Ground dialogue circles
Anti-racism or dismantling racism training
Liturgies of repentance and lament
Preaching on race and racism
Diocesan or organization-wide reading of book(s) on race

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

(1)Diocesan book read 2019-2020 Howard Thurman's Jesus and the Disinherited. (2)Two Diocesan-wide zoom conversations on The Black Church PBS series. (3)During Diocesan convention 2020 which was entirely on Zoom, co-chairs Lee Cheek and Harvey Hill led the Bible study on the first evening with an emphasis on the complicity of Christianity in white supremacy, information about our commission and a call for clergy to bravely lead and preach anti-racism and help their parishes to become Beloved Community. (4) At the annual diocesan "Bending Toward Justice Day" in January, we invited Stephanie Spellers to be the keynote speaker and BCC convened a breakout group where we asked several Sacred Ground leaders to share their experiences as well as providing other examples of parish level work and viewing this as life-long spiritual formation.(5) Diocesan Confirmation Class on Zoom: BCC co-chairs led an evening on the social justice structures of TEC, including EPPN, stressing that social justice is life-long spiritual formation and discipleship. (6) Anti-racism trainings took the form in 2020-21 of individual zoom sessions with 4 ordinands, using the framework to help them discern where they needed more education. One candidate attended Diocese of Atlanta training on line. (7) Liturgies: A morning prayer zoom service commemorating the life of Barbara Harris and a Juneteenth morning prayer zoom service. Both of these involved many musicians, clergy, and lay leaders across the diocese.

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Practicing the Way?

More time and volunteers.

Section Four: Repairing the Breach in Institutions and Society (JUSTICE)

Check all the church-wide Repairing the Breach efforts with which your diocese, congregation or institution has engaged during the last 12 months:

Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN) or the Office of Government Relations
Poor People's Campaign

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Reimagining Policing and Criminal Justice Reform"?

Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Prison Ministries or Re-entry Ministries," that is, supporting persons re-entering community following incarceration?

Local engagement

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with "Refugee Ministries"?

Not yet engaged

<p>At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Immigration Reform”?</p>	<p>Local engagement</p>
<p>At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Education Equity,” including support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and partnering with under-resourced schools primarily serving students of color?</p>	<p>Not yet engaged</p>
<p>At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Housing Equity” for/with communities and People of Color?</p>	<p>Not yet engaged</p>
<p>At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Economic Opportunity” for/with communities and People of Color?</p>	<p>Not yet engaged</p>
<p>At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Environmental Racism and Eco-justice”?</p>	<p>Local engagement Tribal engagement State engagement Federal engagement</p>
<p>At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with “Reparations for Racial Justice”?</p>	<p>Not yet engaged</p>
<p>Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:</p>	<p>EPPN was highlighted at the Catechumin class mentioned above. The western Massachusetts co-ordinator of PPC is a member of the BCC and our Social Justice Commission. The diocese has a active chaplain at the Chicopee Women's Correctional Facility. The Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas is Creation Care Missioner and is engaged in all levels of eco-justice and visits parishes and hosts engagements and learning--but most parishes (I am guessing)have not realized their own role in this issue. Before COVID several congregations had trained volunteers doing ICE accompaniments.</p>
<p>What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Repairing the Breach?</p>	<p>Courage to look at where inequities lie and speak up. So many people, like Bishop Curry and others, are preaching their hearts out, but the message is not getting into the pews. Perhaps, as someone recently said, our neural circuits have been overloaded, especially during COVID and many are burned out. As much as we want to follow Jesus in the Beloved Community that awaits us all, most of us are in need of some Living Water so we can joyfully join in the world that is created when 2 or more of us are gathered in His Name.</p>

Conclusion

Is there anything else you wish to share about your diocese, congregation or institution and its engagement with racial reconciliation and justice ministries, overall?

We've worked hard to increase the visibility and importance of this work in the diocese especially with spotlighting the Bishop's full support of addressing this issue and its many manifestations in our society. Now that so many Sacred Ground groups have been taking place across the diocese, it is getting a little easier for clergy to preach and engage this issue more with lay support in their parish. Our current challenges are (1) connecting those who have participated in Sacred Ground circles; (2) finding a way to let all parishes know when other parishes are doing so as to inspire and motivate to look at their own context anew; (3) how to move from learning to action; (4) breaking the passivity of thinking we have nothing to do with what's wrong here.

If there is any way you could let Vicki Ix and me know (emails in this survey) which parishes in DWMA who reported this survey, it would be so helpful!
