

The Inaugural Anne Berry Bonnyman Symposium
We Still Have a Dream: END RACISM



Waiting in Copley Square

The Rev. Anne B. Bonnyman

January 18, 2015
Trinity Church in the City of Boston

Symposium Mission Statement

The mission of the Anne Berry Bonnyman Symposium is to give Trinity Church a living platform for addressing systemic racism in our church and community. We pray that the Symposium will sustain us with courage and strength to take concrete actions towards the creation of an antiracist environment by presenting public events that promote deep introspection regarding racism and related social justice matters. These events will include various activities to strengthen the resolve and the dedication required to create a community anchored in our deepest Christian beliefs. The Symposium honors the Reverend Anne Berry Bonnyman (ret.) for her active commitment to social justice and the eradication of racism.

“Jesus was very out there in terms of critiquing a society that didn’t recognize the dignity of human beings.... Because I’m a follower of Jesus, that’s my responsibility as well.”

Bishop Thomas Shaw

A Note about the Reverend Anne B. Bonnyman

Anne Berry Bonnyman served as Rector of Trinity Church from 2006 to 2011. She is now retired and living in Asheville, North Carolina, pursuing a lifelong interest in painting. Anne continues her social justice work by advocating for marginalized Appalachian children and youth in the NC court system as a Guardian ad Litem. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. Founded in the 1850s by abolitionists as an inter-racial and co-ed college for the underserved, Berea College continues today as a tuition-free, liberal arts college for low-income students from Appalachia.

The painting of Copley Square on the cover of today’s program is by Anne Bonnyman.

**Welcome to the Inaugural Anne Berry Bonnyman Symposium:
We Still Have a Dream: END RACISM**

Dear friends,

Thank you for joining us today for what we hope will be an opportunity for people from Trinity Church and across our city to come together to learn, be inspired, and be moved to take effective actions towards facing, healing and ending racism.

When planning today's Symposium by members of the Trinity Anti-Racism Team began, we knew the subject of our conversation would be especially relevant as we honor the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for his commitment to a better America. With the recent events in Ferguson, Cleveland, New York, and in our own backyard, this discussion sadly is more urgent than we had imagined.

We pray that the day's conversations will speak powerfully to participants coming from many different perspectives, and that it will inform and inspire effective new initiatives in the long journey we walk on together towards truth and reconciliation.

Faithfully,



The Reverend Samuel T. Lloyd III
Rector, Trinity Church in the City of Boston

“Do your little bit of good wherever you are;
it's these little pieces of good put together that
overwhelm the world.”

Bishop Desmond Tutu

“You can never run away. Not ever.
The only way out is in.”

*‘The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao’
by Junot Diaz*

Inaugural Anne Berry Bonnyman Symposium, January 18, 2015

- 1:30 pm** **Opening Prayer and Welcome**
The Reverend Samuel Lloyd
Rector, Trinity Church in the City of Boston
- 1:45 pm** **Keynote Address**
Marian Wright Edelman
Founder and President of the Children's Defense Fund
- 2:20 pm** **Musical Interlude**
Trinity Hallelu Singers*
Nedelka Prescod
- 2:30 pm** **Panel Discussion**
Moderator: The Honorable Barbara Dortch-Okara
Panelists: Marian Wright Edelman
 The Right Reverend Michael Curry
 Debby Irving
 Tim Wise
 The Reverend Liz Walker
- 3:40 pm** **Audience Q & A**
- 4:10 pm** **Musical Interlude**
Trinity Hallelu Singers
Nedelka Prescod
Reflections by attendees
- 4:20 pm** **Call to Action**
The Reverend Samuel Lloyd
- 4:25 pm** **Concluding Prayer**

LET ME NOT LOOK AWAY, O GOD by the Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston**

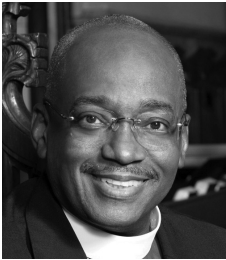
Let me not look away, O God, from any truth I should see. Even if it is difficult, let me face the reality in which I live. I do not want to live inside a cosseted dream, imagining I am the one who is always right, or believing only what I want to hear. Help me to see the world through other eyes, to listen to voices distant and different, and to educate myself to the feelings of those with whom I think I have nothing in common. Break the shell of my indifference. Draw me out of my prejudices and show me your wide variety.

Let me not look away.

*Hallelu Singers is a group of Trinity parishioners who offer a cappella music at hospitals, hospices, nursing homes, and other settings, with core repertoire from the African-American hymn, spiritual, and gospel traditions.

** Included in the Trinity Anti-Racism Prayer Book

THE RIGHT REVEREND MICHAEL BRUCE CURRY



Michael Bruce Curry was elected 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina on February 11, 2000; he was consecrated on June 17, 2000 in the Duke University Chapel in Durham, North Carolina.

Born in Chicago, Illinois on March 13, 1953, Bishop Curry attended public schools in Buffalo, New York and graduated from Hobart College in Geneva, New York, in 1975. He received a Masters of Divinity degree from the Yale University Divinity School in 1978.

Bishop Curry was ordained to the diaconate in June 1978 at St. Paul's Cathedral in Buffalo, NY by the Rt. Reverend Harold B. Robinson and to the priesthood in December 1978 at St. Stephen's Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina by the Rt. Reverend John M. Burgess. He was rector at St Stephen's from 1979-1982. He subsequently accepted a call to serve as the rector of St. Simon of Cyrene in Lincoln Heights, Ohio, where he served from 1982-1988. In 1988, he was called as rector of St. James Church, Baltimore, Maryland where he served until his election as a bishop in 2000.

Bishop Curry's book of sermons, *Crazy Christians*, was published in August 2013.

THE HONORABLE BARBARA A. DORTCH-OKARA (RET)



Judge Barbara Dortch-Okara has been a professor of law at the New England School of Law since January 2013. In December 2013, she was appointed by Governor Deval Patrick to the position of Chair of the State Ethics Commission.

Judge Dortch-Okara was a justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court from 1989 until her retirement from the bench in 2012. Prior to her elevation to the Superior Court, she served as a justice of the Boston Municipal Court. From 1998 to 2003, she served a five-year term as Chief Justice for Administration and Management of the Trial Court.

In 1992, Barbara Dortch-Okara joined her husband, Dr. Ebi Okara, as a member of Trinity Church Boston. She was elected to Trinity's Vestry in 2005 and served a four-year term; as a Vestry member, she was appointed by the Rector to the Trinity Church Anti-Racism Planning and Design Task Force. The work of this task force resulted in the formation of Trinity's Anti-Racism Team in 2007; Barbara was a member of the Anti-Racism Team for three years. She has been a volunteer and rider for the Team Trinity Ride for Kids outreach ministry for many years.

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN



Marian Wright Edelman, Founder and President of the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF), has been an advocate for disadvantaged Americans throughout her professional life. Under her leadership CDF has become the nation’s strongest voice for children and families. The mission of the Children’s Defense Fund’s Leave No Child Behind® is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life as well as a successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

A graduate of Spelman College and Yale Law School, Mrs. Edelman was the first black woman admitted to the Mississippi Bar. In 1968, she moved to Washington, D.C., as counsel for the Poor People’s Campaign organized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She subsequently founded the Washington Research Project, a public interest law firm and the parent body of the Children’s Defense Fund. Mrs. Edelman has received numerous honorary degrees and awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom (the nation’s highest civilian award) and the Robert F. Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award. Her writings include: *Families in Peril: An Agenda for Social Change*; *The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours*; *I’m Your Child, God: Prayers for Our Children*; *I Can Make a Difference: A Treasury to Inspire Our Children*; and *The Sea Is So Wide and My Boat Is So Small: Charting a Course for the Next Generation*.

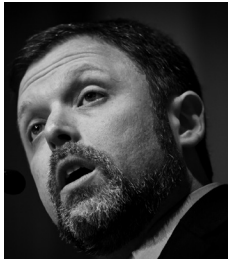
DEBBY IRVING



Debby Irving was raised in Winchester, Massachusetts during the racially turbulent years of the 1960s and ‘70s. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Kenyon College and a Master in Business Administration from Simmons College. As general manager of Boston’s Dance Umbrella and First Night, and later as a teacher for 25 years in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Ms. Irving struggled to make sense of tensions she could feel but not explain in racially-mixed settings. She recognized the need to understand racism as a systemic issue, and she also recognized that her own whiteness presented an obstacle to grappling with racism. In 2009, a graduate school course that

she took at Wheelock College, “Racial and Cultural Identities,” provided the beginnings of answers to her questions and launched her on a journey of discovery. Ms. Irving now devotes herself to exploring with others the impact that white skin can have on perception, problem solving, and engagement in racial justice work. Her book, *Waking Up White*, tells the story of her “awakening.”

TIM WISE



Tim Wise is among the nation's most prominent anti-racist essayists and educators. He has spent the past 20 years speaking to audiences in all 50 states, on over 1000 college and high school campuses, at hundreds of professional and academic conferences, and to community groups across the nation. He has also lectured internationally, and he has trained corporate, government, law enforcement and medical industry professionals on methods for dismantling racism in their institutions.

Wise's antiracism work traces back to his days as a college activist in the 1980s, fighting for divestment from (and economic sanctions against) apartheid South Africa. Following his graduation from Tulane University, he moved into social justice efforts full-time, as a Youth Coordinator and Associate Director of the Louisiana Coalition Against Racism and Nazism: this was the largest of the many groups organized in the early 1990s to defeat the political candidacies of white supremacist and former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke. From there, he became a community organizer in New Orleans' public housing, and a policy analyst for a children's advocacy group focused on combatting poverty and economic inequity. He has served as an adjunct professor at the Smith College School of Social Work in Northampton, MA; from 1999-2003 he was an advisor to the Fisk University Race Relations Institute in Nashville TN.

Wise is the author of six books, including his highly-acclaimed memoir, *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son*, as well as *Dear White America: Letter to a New Minority*. His next book, *Culture of Cruelty: How America's Elite Demonize the Poor, Valorize the Rich and Jeopardize the Future*, will be released in early 2015.

REVEREND LIZ WALKER



A graduate of Harvard Divinity School, the **Reverend Liz Walker** was installed as pastor of the historic Roxbury Presbyterian Church, Boston in March of 2014. Reverend Walker was called to this ministry after 21 years as Boston’s first African-American television news anchor on WBZ-TV, and after 12 years of humanitarian work in war-torn Sudan where she helped build a school for girls, one of the first of its kind in that region.

In the summer of 2001, Reverend Walker traveled to Sudan on a fact-finding mission to explore the controversial slave trade in that country. Reverend Walker was outraged by human rights atrocities in Sudan, and co-founded the humanitarian organization “My Sister’s Keeper,” which focuses on economic and educational initiatives for Sudanese women and girls. She produced an award-winning documentary titled “A Glory from the God” that profiles the work of “My Sister’s Keeper.”

Reverend Walker is the chair of the Roxbury Presbyterian Church Social Impact Center, a member of the Core Strategy Team of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO), and is on the Board for the New England Chapter of the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund.

Background

The **Anti-Racism Team (ART)** of Trinity Church was created in 2007 to raise awareness about the sin of racism. We hope to become, individually and collectively, living examples of our Baptismal Covenant which calls us to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.”

Our first task is to learn how we are affected by systemic racism. Training workshops with the Crossroads AntiRacism Organization (based in Chicago) are held periodically to enhance our understanding of systemic racism and to develop long-term strategies to support the transformation of our community. Dismantling and changing behaviors and attitudes that have existed for hundreds of years is slow work; some of us see this as a life-long mission.

ART provides opportunities throughout the year to engage parishioners and the public in conversation, to stimulate a more comprehensive understanding of individual, institutional, and cultural racism, and to promote deep healing and true transformation. We see this as part of God’s work.

All are welcome to attend:

- The Anti-Racism Book Club, which reads a wide range of fiction and non-fiction titles (meets on the third Sunday of each month)
- Talking Circle, which provides a safe space for dialogue around contemporary issues that relate to race (meets on the first Sunday of the month)

In addition to today’s Symposium, other projects that have risen out of the ART’s mission include the ART Prayer Book and the work of the History Committee, which was presented to the parish in October 2014. The Executive Summary of the History Committee’s published report, “Trinity Church Boston: Facing the Reality of Our Past,” is shared with you below to provide a glimpse into our ongoing work.

ART History Project—Trinity Church Boston: Facing the Reality of Our Past

Background: The report that follows is a response to resolutions passed at the General Conventions of 2006, 2009, and 2012 of the Episcopal Church of the United States, and at the 2006 and 2009 Conventions of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

It also is the result of months of research by a task force representing Trinity’s Anti-Racism Team. The goal was to increase the understanding of the depths and origins of institutional racism and White privilege during Trinity’s nearly 300-year history with the full knowledge that understanding this history will always be a work in progress.

The writers chose twelve topics from various periods of the church’s history to organize their findings and stimulate reflection and conversation. The work was reviewed numerous times by the Anti-Racism Team and by the Vestry; their input is reflected in this report. On October 8, 2014, the Vestry formally accepted the report; it was presented to the congregation on October 26, 2014 followed by questions and commentary from Trinity parishioners.

It is our hope that, as Trinity’s parishioners gain an increased understanding of the role that systemic racism and White privilege have played in the parish’s history, this knowledge will help us all to create and sustain an anti-racist community now and in the future.

TRINITY CHURCH BOSTON: FACING THE REALITY OF OUR PAST

Preface and Executive Summary from the October 2014 Report By the History Committee of the Trinity Church Anti-Racism Team

We are a committee of the Trinity Church Boston Anti-Racism team that set out to research an important part of our church's history: its origin, organizational structure and relationship, or lack thereof, to People of Color throughout the church's nearly 300-year history. Our goal has been to pose the question of how Trinity's history has influenced our current church community. It is our belief that for a mostly White institution such as Trinity to move forward as an anti-racist Christian community, reflecting our commitments in the Baptismal Covenant to "seek and serve Christ in all persons" and "respect the dignity of every human being," it helps to study and analyze the role of what is called "White privilege" and institutional racism in its past.

Therefore, in the full document, we focus on times when individual racial prejudice becomes linked to systems and institutions of power in a way that gives advantages to the dominant group over others. In the American colonies and then in the United States, systems of power were and are often stacked to give advantage to White people at the expense of other racial groups. This is what is described by the term "White privilege." We seek to identify instances of White privilege in the history of Trinity Church. We will also identify instances of our [church's] and its leaders' resistance to institutional racism.

We acknowledge that the events described in this document took place in the context of their time. We must be careful in applying the 21st century lens of racism and White privilege to earlier times. However, we believe that the racism we describe resulted in great harm to People of Color over three hundred years, and that People of Color who articulated these effects were largely ignored or criticized. When we tell this story, we stand with them as witnesses. This project is at heart about witness rather than judgment; the point is not to condemn people in the past, but to acknowledge where the accumulation of their activities has left us as participants in an historical institution, one that spans several generations.

Peering back into history can make us uneasy; after all, the Spirit has moved our church community in a more loving, inclusive direction, so why would we want to dwell on the past? But the Bible shows us the importance of remembering our history, complete with all its missteps and heartache. When the Jews wrote about Moses's leadership and their eventual arrival in the Promised Land, they didn't edit out the forty years in the desert. Jonah made it to Nineveh, yet we still focus on his detour via a whale. And as Christians we celebrate the resurrection, but we also continue to commemorate the torture and death Jesus suffered on the cross. Paul returned again and again to memories of his work as an oppressor of Christians, even though he had since become the chief architect of the worldwide Church. The Bible calls on us to chronicle and study the hurts and errors of our past, in order to hold them up for healing before God and learn from them in the future.¹

Background

The Episcopal Church in the United States has undertaken similar efforts with Pastoral Letters in March 1994 and March 2006 on the Sin of Racism and with resolutions passed at its General Conventions of 2006, 2009, and 2012, calling for each diocese to gather information in its own community on:

- (1) the complicity of the Episcopal Church in the institution of slavery and in the subsequent history of segregation and discrimination;
- (2) examples of resistance to slavery and discrimination; and
- (3) the economic benefits derived by the Episcopal Church from the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of slavery.

The national church has recently established two major positions. The first is Missioner on Racial Justice and Reconciliation to oversee [our church's] activities on racial reconciliation, education and the development of a policy platform.² This person is located on the west coast in Seattle. The second position is Missioner for Social Justice and Advocacy Engagement.³ This position, located in Washington, D.C., is expected to “build and support locally-led coalitions for social change according to the policy position of the Episcopal Church (with a particular focus on racial justice and related issues).

The national church also has established an extensive national website and collection of materials on racism; these can be found at www.episcopalarchives.org. These extensive and rich archives are located in Austin, Texas.

The Diocese of Massachusetts did work in this arena in the years 2008-2012, and has requested that each church in the diocese look at its own particular history. That is especially important for the churches that date to the colonial period, including Trinity Church Boston.

In our research for this project, we have drawn on the archives of Trinity Church and have read widely on related subjects. Our work has also been influenced by “The Church Awakens: African Americans and the Search for Justice,” an electronic publication and online exhibit of The Archives of the Episcopal Church.

Background

In summarizing our work, we identified twelve moments in the history of Trinity Church that illustrate aspects of our history related to White privilege, slavery, segregation and also to resistance to these forces as we seek to understand more clearly the character of the church and its larger community from the early 18th century to the 21st century. To meet the requests and requirements of the national church and the Diocese of Massachusetts, we generally focused our attention on African Americans, starting with their experience as enslaved Africans and following them to the present time. We understand that racism and White privilege have affected the lives of other People of Color in the United States, in Boston, and in our church community too; while we were not able to cover their experiences in this report, we hope it may spark conversations that bring such voices to the fore. We must also acknowledge that this effort is evolving, not perfect, and that it reflects the fact that most American history has been written from the perspective of those in power at the time, primarily wealthy White men. Whether we have suggested connections some don't see or agree with or have left out connections obvious to others, we welcome your comments and suggestions on how to develop this document and expand the knowledge of our collective past. With your help, recognizing our history can be part of laying a sure foundation, one on which our beloved church can continue to build its inclusive mission in the 21st century.

¹ Correspondence from Kenzie Bok, a Trinity parishioner and current doctoral student of history at the University of Cambridge, October, 2014.

² Episcopal Church Office of Public Affairs. "Kim Named Episcopal Church Missioner for Racial Reconciliation". Retrieved September 26, 2014 from <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/notice/kim-named-episcopal-church-missioner-racial-reconciliation>

³ Episcopal Church Office of Public Affairs. "Wynder Named Missioner for Social Justice and Advocacy Engagement". Retrieved September 26, 2014 from <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/notice/wynder-named-missioner-social-justice-and-advocacy-engagement>

“And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.”
Anais Nin (attributed)

An Opportunity

Today's Symposium was supported by the Anne Berry Bonnyman Symposium Fund at Trinity Church, a fund that is intended to ensure that the dialogue and critical reflection you have experienced today will be possible in future years. We are very grateful to more than 100 generous donors for helping make the Symposium a reality; please consider joining them with a gift to the Fund.

You may send a check made out to Trinity Church (with "ABB Symposium Fund" in the memo line) to the attention of Kelsey Rice Bogdan, Trinity Church in the City of Boston, 206 Clarendon Street, Boston, MA 02116. If you wish to make a gift of securities or if you have any questions, please contact Kelsey at 617-536-0944 or by e-mail at kbogdan@trinitychurchboston.org

Thank you for joining us today!

"We combat racism ...not simply to be someone's idea of nice, but because failing to do so is failing to reverence God's creation."

The Reverend Patrick Ward



Blue Intrusion

Courtesy of Janis Pryor

Janis Pryor is a Trinity parishioner
and member of the Trinity Anti-Racism Team.



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