

# Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee Report



ALL  
SAINTS'  
EPISCOPAL • ATLANTA



# Rector's Message

Dear saints,

For the past several years, All Saints' has committed itself to the work of racial equity and healing. Through teaching, preaching, acts of worship, the arts, advocacy efforts and most crucially through deepening trust and relationship we have grown more fully into that commitment. Grassroots ministries such as the MICA project have emerged, inviting the parish to enter into the work of racial healing through classes, performances, and discussions across a wide range of themes and topics. Multi-racial leadership has emerged from among the parish. Our horizons have expanded, we are learning to listen more attentively to one another, and we are helping to be more the church the Spirit beckons us to become.

In all of this, there has been much to stimulate the mind. Our 'Faith in the City' series has seen us welcome some of the country's leading thinkers with regards to the law, health equity, education, and enterprise. With this, we have also tended to the heart, through the multi-session 'Sacred Ground' dialogue circles, poignant liturgy and soulful music performances. We have also invested in our leaders, with Vestry and staff undergoing a year's leadership development training as we seek to reflect in our governance and ministries the values of beloved community in this time and place. As we continue to grow through these ministries, we also wish to join God's transformative work out in the city. This report and its recommendation is our vision for how we believe God calls us to do that very thing.

For the past year, a steering committee met to discern how God calls us to join the work of racial equity and healing in Atlanta, grounding ourselves in our baptismal covenant to strive for justice and peace for all people. We spent the year listening and learning, recognizing that we could not bring our own pre-conceived notions or solutions to the complexities of

racial injustice and division. Black and white leaders from across the city and beyond helped us deepen our appreciation for the nuances and deep challenges we face in our community, yet they also gave us great hope bearing witness to the myriad of ways people around us are committing themselves to building community and working for change.

What we heard most clearly throughout the past year was that lasting change could only happen through long-term relationship. As essential as our ongoing efforts will be to advocate for change and to grow in our own awareness of racial injustice and division, as a church community we learned that we would be most impactful in the city by committing to sustained ministry with others.

The outcome of this discernment is that we heard an invitation to join in partnership with Emmaus House, and through time other partner agencies and groups in the community of Peoplestown. We see the core of our work in Peoplestown as a ministry of friendship with and solidarity alongside our neighbors there. The recommendation of this report, approved and supported by the Vestry, is that we enter into a long-term commitment to the work of justice and peace in Peoplestown, and through that work open ourselves to be transformed by the God who is already at work in that place.

The essence of this new season of ministry for All Saints' is that we might first bring ourselves to this work - as the Prayer Book says, 'our souls and bodies' - leading not with our skills, or expertise, or resources, but with friendship. I pray that as you read through the heart-felt work of this committee contained in this report, you will hear the Spirit call you to offer yourself as a companion along the way with others. We have much to learn and many ways to grow and we do so, trusting in all things that the One who calls is faithful.

Peace,



*Will you strive for justice and peace among all people?*

**We will, with God's help.**

## Introduction

The Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee (Appendix 1) was established in October, 2020 as one part of an All Saints' commitment to individual and shared learning in hope of growing our faith, achieving spiritual transformation, developing a better understanding of systemic racism, and changing our private, public, and church lives in fulfillment of our Baptismal Covenant. The Steering Committee was asked to discern where and how an All Saints' future ministry might further racial equity and healing in Atlanta. Having witnessed that the most effective work occurs

through sustained partnership and proximity, the Committee sought to identify a partner in the city with whom we might co-create a ministry that would be transformative for all involved.

The Steering Committee now invites the vestry and parish to a bold new ministry of partnership arising from the cultural crisis of today: racial inequity and the need for healing<sup>1</sup>. ♦

1 In considering race, we acknowledge the disproportionate impact of inequity on all communities of color, but we recognize that in Atlanta such impact falls particularly on African American and other Black communities. The existence of racial inequities separates us from one another, causing communal injury and impeding the building of God's Beloved Community.





*Will you...respect the dignity of every human being?*

**We will, with God's help.**

#### Guiding Definition of Ministry

For this report's recommendation, we define ministry as a sustained partnership with others resulting in an equal relationship in which all parties experience God's transforming love. We differentiate ministry from social justice, which can be primarily tactical and not

necessarily spiritual, and from giving financial or other aid where the parties are not in an equal or sustained relationship. Each of those has its place and positive impact, but neither was a primary goal of the Steering Committee. ♦





*Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?*

**We will, with God's help.**

### All Saints' Historical and Current Ministries and Experiences

Faithful response to the challenges of the city lies deep in the roots of All Saints'. Our history demonstrates our commitment to equity in every decade from our founding to the present. While our ministries have not identified race as a focus, they have responded to existing disparities in civil rights, education, health, and economies. Preaching and Adult Formation classes have expanded our understanding of the theological and practical dimensions of racial and other inequities. Over time we have been called to action by those within and beyond our walls, our clergy, the national church, the city, individual parishioners, and moments of cultural crisis. With God's help, we have initiated programs, financial support, new ministries, and varying degrees of direct parishioner involvement. Ministry and education are part of the story we tell about how we manifest our faith.

As we launch a new initiative, a brief review of our historical and current ministries provides context for the Committee's recommendations. In Appendix 2, we highlight those ministries that have operated (and continue to operate) both on and beyond our campus. We have included starting dates for each ministry and marked with an asterisk those working with predominantly Black populations.

Some years ago, All Saints' identified four of these as our Core Ministries. We asked their leaders whether and how their work intersects with or advances racial equity and healing, and learned that each of All Saints' current Core Ministries predominantly serves Blacks and people of color who face racial challenges in justice, economies, education, housing, food security, and health. Each thus intersects with racial equity and healing, even if such is not the primary goal. *For more detail on the Core Ministries, please see Appendix 3.*

In recent years, All Saints' has committed to growing our awareness and understanding of systemic racism and other complexities of our local and national context as a predominantly white, affluent parish in Atlanta. We have enacted this commitment through vestry, clergy, and staff diversity, equity, and inclusion training; The MICAH Project's 27 Sunday Adult Formation classes and 9 Sacred Ground Dialogue Circles for 63 individuals; 8 Faith in the City Forums, and more. *Additional details on these efforts are in Appendix 4. ♦*



*Open our hearts to your grace and truth.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

#### Committee Process

The Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee began meeting in October of 2020 with a brief introductory session, followed by a four-hour mini retreat/workshop with Visions Inc., to examine our inherent biases. Thereafter, the Committee met monthly for 1.5 hour sessions of learning and discussion. Sessions One through Five featured consultants in targeted areas of interest. Each meeting was divided into two segments with the first dedicated to hearing from our presenters/consultants and the second to discussing what we learned and where we hoped to go further. *Additional details on topics and consultants may be found at Appendix 5.*

The Committee recognized from those sessions and from one another the topics most congruent with All Saints' skills, interests, and experiences, namely: education, the arts, and justice. The Committee then formed four subcommittees

to research those areas and identify our internal assets that we might bring to a new ministry. One subcommittee conducted a (sample) parishioner survey of meaningful engagement at All Saints' and ideas for racial equity and healing work; the other three researched groups or organizations in Atlanta already addressing racial equity and healing in education, the arts, and justice, in order to provide feedback and recommendations to the Committee. *See Appendix 6 for the subcommittees' research and reports.*

Each subcommittee presented its report to the full committee in Session Six. In Session Seven we unanimously agreed that All Saints' will have the greatest impact by pursuing all three areas where we have skills and experience (education, the arts, and justice), and by partnering with an established entity in a neighborhood beyond our block. ♦





*Emmaus House seeks justice, equity, and social well-being,  
working with faith and respect for the dignity of every human being*

## **This is our Baptismal call.**

### Recommendation

The Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee unanimously recommends entering a ministry partnership with Emmaus House in the Peoplestown neighborhood. This idea arose in the research of three Steering Committee subcommittees, each of which independently found congruence between Emmaus House's mission and what All Saints' might offer. *See Appendix 7 for information about Emmaus House.* The Steering Committee believes an organic relationship with an established and familiar program rooted in faith is the best way to advance our goals of furthering racial equity and healing and deepening our relationship with God.

A partnership with Emmaus House will be organic because Emmaus House

- ♦ is a part of the Diocese of Atlanta, and was founded in Christian ministry;
- ♦ is a vital part of Peoplestown, an historically strong Black neighborhood;
- ♦ is already connected with All Saints' CORE ministries (Threads and MAC);
- ♦ has been part of previous short-term All Saints' initiatives;
- ♦ includes in its assets a yet-unused All Saints' grant of \$60,000.00;
- ♦ serves or may further serve its community in areas in which All Saints' has demonstrated interest and energy;
- ♦ has an organizational structure (board, executive director, staff) and neighborhood credibility and continuity that will facilitate discernment and development of a partnership;
- ♦ Executive Director, Greg Cole, is an All Saints' parishioner and member of the vestry.

Several members of the Committee visited Emmaus House in Session Eight to meet with

Executive Director Greg Cole, staff members Tanisha Corporal (Director of Community Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives) and Adam Seeley (Director of Social Services), and two members of the Board of Directors, Chair Wilma Beaty Esq. (General Counsel Americas at Allnex) and Vice Chair Rhonda Patrick (Associate Director, James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference at Emory University).

The purpose of our meeting was to learn more about the current activities, assets, and needs of Emmaus House as our potential partner and Peoplestown as our neighbor.

*Meeting summarized in Appendix 8.*

The intent of an All Saints' partnership with Emmaus House is to create a co-equal ministry for racial equity and healing that could become a model for our church, city, and nation. In creating a different kind of ministry, we acknowledge the damage inherent in providing help without building long-term relationships, which robs recipients of agency and prevents authentic healing for givers as well as receivers. We seek proximity to neighbors we do not yet know and to build relationships of mutual respect and learning as we journey together toward creating God's Kingdom. *See Appendix 9 for information about the Peoplestown neighborhood.*





Upon vestry approval, the Steering Committee recommends the formation of a group consisting of representatives from All Saints' and Emmaus House to begin a discernment process for a possible partnership. We recommend two guiding principles for All Saints':

- ◆ We are creating a ministry that arises from a recognition of the needs and assets of each partner. Our joint discernment will consider how our ministry might touch more deeply the lives of All Saints' parishioners, Emmaus House staff and clients, and Peoplestown residents.
- ◆ We are committing to this ministry as long-term work. While building a partner relationship from which longer-term goals will arise, we support engaging in short-term or single-occasion projects that Emmaus House might welcome. *Examples of Emmaus House initiatives congruent with All Saints' interests and skills appear in Appendix 10.*

To prepare the parish for this partnership ministry, the Steering Committee recommends:

- ◆ The initiation among parishioners of small-group conversations that invite their memories of formative All Saints' experiences and hopes for our racial healing. By sharing memories and hopes, parishioners become part of the creation process;
- ◆ A parish-wide study of scripture and scholarship that highlights the meaning of ministry and the paths toward authentic engagement with an unfamiliar community;
- ◆ A recurring volunteer summit for participants in any of All Saints' Core Ministries. Summits will provide guidance, reflection, and spiritual support;
- ◆ Development of a training plan for participation in this new partnership.

In our visit to Emmaus House and further conversations with Greg Cole, the Steering Committee saw many possible paths for a ministry in partnership. We recognize that a true partnership relies on consensus among equals and an exchange of ideas that aligns with the interests and needs of all participants. We imagine in faith, believing that God will guide us to fruition of a partnership that works for Emmaus House as well as All Saints'. ◆



# Send them into the world in witness to your love.

## Conclusion

The mission of All Saints' is "welcoming all to transformation in Jesus Christ through prayer, learning, service, and connection in the Episcopal tradition." Such a welcome rightfully pulls us inward, but the work of the Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee and the suffering of Atlanta point us outward, urging us to fulfill our proclamation that we are in the city, for the city. The persistence of inequities and

pain around us calls us into new kinds of relationships and growth. We pray for a partnership with Emmaus House that joins us to one another in the transformation of inequity and injury into justice and healing. We seek to see Christ in all persons, respect the dignity of every human being, and together build God's Kingdom. Lord, hear our prayer. ♦



## Appendix 1

### Members of the Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee 2020-2021

#### Clergy

Simon Mainwaring, *Rector and Convener*

Natosha Reid Rice, *Minister for Public Life*

#### Parishioners

Sydney Cleland, *Vestry Sr. Warden, Chief of Staff,  
Office of State Representative Mary Margaret Oliver*

Deaja Dunbar, *Freshman, Loyola University Chicago,  
Chicago, Illinois*

Nadia Fountain, *VP and Fiduciary Specialist,  
Bank of America; President, Almond Green, LLC*

Jud Graves, *Ret. Partner, Alston & Bird, former Dean,  
Emory Law School*

Sheffield Hale, *Chief Executive, Atlanta History Center*

Sarah Hill, *Public Historian, Founder, The MICA Project*

Arturo Lindsay, *Artist, Emeritus Prof. and former Chair,  
Dept. of Art and Art History, Spelman College*

Jason Payne, *Physician,  
Asst. Prof. Morehouse School of Medicine*

Virginia Schenck, *Vocal Artist, Jazz Performer*

Comer Yates, *Exec. Dir. Atlanta Speech School*

## Appendix 2

### All Saints' Ministries

Holy Innocents Mission early 1900s

\*+Civil rights activities 1950s–1960s, 2020s

+Canterbury Court 1960

St. Jude's House 1965

Counseling Center 1967

Atlanta Hospitality House 1979

\*Boy Scout Troop 42 1977

\*Night Shelter 1980

AIDS Ministries 1980s

\*North Avenue Academy 1987

\*Rise and Shine Program 1989

\*+(cm) Covenant Community 1990

\*+(cm) MAC 1986

Meals-on-Wheels 1990s

+(cm) Refugee Ministries 1990

\*+Thanksgiving Dinners 1991

\*Herndon Homes Sisters with Pride 1993

\*+(cm) Sterne House 1997

\*CW Hill Tutors 2000s

\*+(cm) Threads 2004

+Respite Care Atlanta 2018

+Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing 2018

\*+Recovery Resources of Atlanta Midtown 2019

*\*indicates those serving predominantly Black population*

*+indicates ongoing with All Saints' (cm)*

*indicates a Core Ministry*



### Core Ministries' Intersections with Racial Equity and Healing

#### Refugee Ministries

Refugee Ministries creates meaningful supportive relationships between members of our community and former refugee families who have come to the United States fleeing war and danger. We work with families from the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Bhutan, Nepal, Burma, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan, Pakistan and Syria. These families are among the 1% of 20 million worldwide refugees who are lucky enough to be resettled to a third country (the U.S) where they stop being refugees and become permanent residents when they step off the plane.

- ◆ Client challenges: justice; education; economies, safety, health, housing, food security, and physical and mental health. Comparable to Blacks.
- ◆ Board diversity: One advisory board member is a person of color.
- ◆ All Saints' participation: parishioner Lisa Venable's YMCA soccer program, new arrivals support and supplies, long-term tutors, summer swim parties, All Saints' Halloween parties, annual backpack supplies.
- ◆ Partners: Christian Council of Metro Atlanta, New American Pathways, Inspire EDU.

#### Insights

- ✦ Helping or rescuing without creating a relationship is an act of racism that robs the recipient of agency.
- ✦ We need to understand what has been done, what the needs are, and determine together what we can offer. Focus on a partnership of "doing" and a relationship of "being."
- ✦ Avoid quantifying the work in ways that showcase All Saints' and distance the recipient partner.
- ✦ Need time for reflection, spiritual support, and self-care.

#### Opportunities

- ✦ Address structural problems that adversely affect refugees and all people of color.
- ✦ Leverage what our volunteers have learned in training for all ministries.
- ✦ Partner to help a community stay intact in face of gentrification.

#### Midtown Assistance Center (MAC)

Midtown Assistance Center (MAC) is a non-profit whose mission is to provide emergency assistance to low-income working Atlantans to help prevent homelessness and hunger during periods of crisis. This is racial equity work.

- ◆ Services: food pantry, rent and utilities assistance, eviction intervention, transit cards.
- ◆ Clients: 95% Black, most still housed but threatened with losing housing or utilities.
- ◆ Volunteers: 300 total, 50 regular, majority White.
- ◆ Board: five of twenty board members are Black.
- ◆ Seven staff members.
- ◆ All Saints' participation: Covenant Community and Threads assist MAC clients; two parishioners are Board members.

#### Insights

- ✦ Client stories are the center. Volunteers listen to client stories and make them feel heard.
- ✦ Clients struggle with poverty, being Black intensifies the struggle.

#### Opportunities

- ✦ Offer a choice-based food pantry shopping experience like Emmaus House.
- ✦ Connect people in ways that change hearts and minds.
- ✦ Relocation: First Methodist is replacing MAC space with affordable housing.

## Core Ministries' Intersections with Racial Equity and Healing

### Covenant Community|Sterne House| Recovery Resources Atlanta Midtown

Covenant Community is a life stabilization program for homeless addicted men that transforms lives through building and creating relationships with community support. The mission is to provide the tools and resources to help clients achieve personal life-stabilization and employment, enabling them to return to their families and the community as productive citizens. This is equity and healing work.

- ♦ Client challenges: justice, housing, employment, economies, criminalization of addiction.
- ♦ Residents: 66% Black, 28% white, 2% Hispanic, 4% other or mixed race.
- ♦ Board: 20 % Black.
- ♦ RRAM participants: 77% Black.
- ♦ Partners: MAC
- ♦ Racial healing and justice are a critical part of addiction recovery work.
- ♦ Advocacy for clients is a way of atoning for our part in injustice.

#### Insights

- † Need for transitional housing (Sterne House).
- † Need for long-term recovery community space for peer counseling, education, and therapeutic resources like yoga, art, and career services (RRAM).

#### Opportunities

- † Entering a three year Strategic Plan cycle.
- † Selected by Leadership Atlanta for a Community Needs Assessment project.
- † Structure in place to offer resources to All Saints' as a partner.
- † Partners may offer employment or other opportunities for CC graduates.
- † Opportunities for proximate relationships: promotion and celebration of National Recovery Month, lunch and learn meetings, connections with the Men of Hope, volunteer training, Adult Formation series on addiction, etc.

### Threads

Threads is a volunteer ministry driven by a desire to provide children in need with clean, well-fitting clothes and footwear. Located in Tate Hall on the All Saints' campus, Threads serves families referred to us by social service agencies around Atlanta.

- ♦ Services: Clients shop with dignity and choice for clothing, school uniforms and supplies.
- ♦ Clients: 95% Black; around 1500 children per year.
- ♦ Volunteers: 20 regular, all White.
- ♦ Board: all White.
- ♦ Partnerships: Refugee Ministries (during pandemic); MAC; Boyce Ansley School (during pandemic).

#### Insights

- † Providing a sometimes unique opportunity for volunteers to meet a different demographic.
- † Providing children choices and dignity, a form of racial healing.

#### Opportunities

- † Assign a standing appointment to various client groups, such as Refugee Ministries.
- † Create an onsite clothes closet at a partner's location, eliminating transportation problems and allowing All Saints' volunteers to work with partner volunteers.
- † Work more closely with MAC.

### Addendum to Appendix 3:

#### Conversation with Future of Our Block Steering Committee Members

We also spoke with members of the Block committee about our work and our proposal to partner with Emmaus House. The Block committee is committed to a parish discernment that centers the mission of the church and recognizes that racial equity and healing is a key part of the mission.



### Members of the Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee 2020-2021

*What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?*

#### The MICAHA Project

Initiated and led by parishioners, The MICAHA Project encourages parish conversations about race and racism through Adult Formation classes, Sacred Ground conversation circles, pilgrimages, and bi-monthly mailings to those who are interested.

#### Adult Formation Classes Summer 2019-Spring 2021

##### Summer 2019 (3 classes)

Howard Thurman film and discussion  
Out of Hand Theater performance *Just Mercy*  
book presentation

##### Spring 2020 (3 classes)

1906 Atlanta Race Massacre presentation  
Wilmer-DuBois Dialogs presentation and discussion

##### Summer 2020 (3 classes)

Lillian Smith documentary and conversation  
The Ministers' Manifesto presentation  
Ruby Sales and the martyred Jonathan Daniels  
conversation Remembering Connie Curry presentation

##### Fall 2020 (3 classes)

Black Lives Matter presentation and discussion  
Fulton and DeKalb Counties' Truth and Reconciliation  
Initiatives presentation Redlining presentation  
and discussion

##### Winter/Spring 2021 (12 classes)

Introduction to Sacred Ground presentation  
Race and the Episcopal Church presentations and  
discussions Race and the Environment presentations  
and discussions

##### Lent 2021 (3 classes)

Race and Lament presentations and discussions

#### Sacred Ground Circles

Introduced by The MICAHA Project, Sacred Ground is the national church's initiative for racial healing based on a 10-part on-line curriculum of documentary films, readings, and small group discussions. Between January and June 2021, 63 parishioners participated in Sacred Ground. The vestry, clergy, and senior staff have begun the Sacred Ground program, and new parishioner circles will form in January.

#### Faith in the City Forums

Guided by Simon and Natosha, eight forums were held by Zoom between fall 2020 and summer 2021.

September 2020: Moral Leadership: Dr. Robert Franklin  
October 2020: Justice and American Identity: Sally Yates  
November 2020: Arts, Faith, Culture: Pearl Cleage  
January 2021: Health and Equity:  
Dr. Camara Phyllis-Jones  
February 2021: Equity and Education:  
Dr. Beverly Tatum  
March 2021: Neighborhood Development  
and Gentrification: Bob Lupton  
May 2021: Race, Equity, Economics: John Hope Bryant  
August 2021: Education for All God's Children:  
Dr. Lisa Herring, Russ Hardin, Ann Fowler

#### Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing

In 2018 All Saints' became a partner of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, a resource for the world-wide Episcopal Church, that seeks to provide tools and experiences that allow faith communities to work on dismantling racism. Simon and parishioner Ken Stewart are both on the board of the Center.

#### Faithful Advocates

Lay organized and led, Faithful Advocates offers opportunities for social justice and voting rights advocacy through education and direct interaction with state legislators during legislative sessions.

## Appendix 5

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### Presenters to the Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee

**November 9, 2020: Trinity Episcopal Church, Wall Street**

Rev. James Clark, *Managing Director, Mission Real Estate Development*

Tasha Tucker, *Program Director, Racial Justice*

**December 17, 2020:**

**Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing**

Dr. Catherine Meeks, *Executive Director*

**January 11, 2020: Education**

Greg Giornelli, *CEO Purpose Built Schools*

Tonya Kemp, *Principal of Slater Elementary*

**February 8, 2021: Housing**

Alison Johnson, *Executive Director, Housing Justice League, Atlanta*

Greg Cole, *Executive Director, Emmaus House*

Natosha Reid Rice, *Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, Habitat for Humanity International*

**March 8, 2021: The Arts**

Ariel Fristo, *Founder and Artistic Director, Out of Hand Theater*

Adria Kitchens, *Director of Equity and Activism*

## Appendix 6

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### Research and Reports of the Subcommittees of

#### Congregational Self Study Subcommittee

Nadia Fountain, Sarah Hill, Jason Payne, and Sheffield Hale

**Method of study:** Appreciative Inquiry surveys, distributed in advance.

**Objective of study:** to identify sources of parish energy and elicit ideas for racial healing. Surveyors: Six of 14 suggested parishioners agreed to assist with surveys.

**Methods:** Interviews by Zoom, telephone, and email. Numbers surveyed: 133 total:

**Sampled:** Racial Equity and Healing Steering Committee, vestry, The MICAH Project Steering Committee, St. Luke Women's Chapter, and others.

**Responses:** While memories of meaningful All Saints' experiences varied, the common denominators were active participation in ministry and opportunities for community. Specific examples included the multi-racial, multi-generational Covenant Community Thanksgiving dinners, tutoring, communal worship, ushering, and choir.

Few were able to suggest specific racial equity work but there were suggestions for financial intelligence workshops for young Black men and boys and additional education initiatives.

Some felt we talk too much about race and that our rhetoric is too harsh. Others expressed frustration that we talk rather than act and that we are too timid.

**Recommendation:** The in-person interviews demonstrated that parishioners are eager to talk candidly with one another about difficult topics. We recommend expanding the surveys to the whole parish using the Appreciative Inquiry approach in facilitated small-group in-person conversations (4 Conversation Sundays?). Such conversations will identify skills and interests, build community, and bring attention to new work. It is essential to report survey results so that parishioners feel they have been heard.



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## the Racial Justice and Healing Steering Committee

### Subcommittee on Education

Deaja Dunbar and Comer Yates

**Method of Study:** Interviews with students, personal professional experience.

The opportunity exists to partner in this effort with Georgia State University's College of Education and Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, other community organizations and experts, and area schools. As a result, there would be the ability (1) to implement a program to meet the needs of the children of Peoplestown and surrounding communities and (2) also establish a standard of practice and create live and virtual professional and volunteer development experiences for other programs that would effect change across the city and well beyond.

**Money:** Seed funding already exists, and it is money (a high five-figure amount) from All Saints' that the church contributed years ago to an Emmaus House capital campaign for the purpose of building a preschool. The preschool was never built and, while Geoffrey was Rector, the vestry authorized Emmaus House to apply it for another educational purpose.

**Conclusion:** Such a program could not be more timely. Two years of COVID-disrupted learning combined with the previous 400 years of racial and educational inequities have put access to literacy and the liberty it promises in even more jeopardy for our city's most disenfranchised children. The science is unequivocal about what must happen to end this peril. Emmaus House, All Saints', and other partner organizations could bring singular combined expertise, resources, resolve, and leverage to cause Atlanta to meet this inflection point for our children's futures and our city's moral compass.

**Recommendation:** Partner in the efforts of Greg Cole, the Executive Director of Emmaus House, to implement a science-driven after-school coaching and remediation program through their Freedom School.

### Subcommittee on the Arts

Virginia Schenck and Arturo Lindsay

**Method of Study:** Interviews

**Objective:** Examine how arts communities are intersecting with racial healing and equity and how All Saints' might join that effort.

**Persons/Organizations Interviewed:**

Greg Cole, *Executive Director, Emmaus House*

Henry Bryant, *Bryant Art Direction*

Lisa Morris, *musician*

Metropolitan Arts Foundation

ArtsATL

Theatrical Outfit

Synchronicity Theater

Atlanta Symphony Chorus

**Recommendations:** We are story and need artists to bring new stories to life. First, we recommend being and building the community we envision by having more arts opportunities on our own campus, using our space (much as churches in NYC do) for poetry, dance, art galleries, and music. Second, the overwhelming feedback from arts sources recommends going slowly and building an organic relationship. Emmaus House presents numerous options for an arts relationship, outlined on the following page.

Research and Reports of the Subcommittees of the Racial Justice and Healing Steering Committee

Scope of the Arts Generally Performance Arts

Performance - voyeuristic/passive  
Master Classes/Education- performance-oriented;  
primarily youth-focused Community Arts  
could be leading to High Arts  
socially driven  
often lacking from communities Arts Education  
for performance  
for arts education/raising teachers  
for cultural education  
for special needs  
non-art development focused, but vehicle-  
cross-curriculum based (i.e. history, math, science,  
problem-solving, context)  
skill-building  
socializing/teamwork  
often missing from public schools Arts Therapies  
arts as the entry point for mental health, healing,  
and recovery

Potential Opportunities with Emmaus House

Saturday arts program (existing)  
Woodturning shop (existing, but not in use)  
Ceramic kiln (existing, but not in use—need teacher)  
Equitable Dinners with Out of Hand at All Saints’  
and Emmaus House  
Classes for Emmaus House children and adults  
to craft their own stories/plays  
Wall that needs painting could become mural telling  
Emmaus House story  
Historian/Storyteller/Songwriter/Poet  
Puppetry Arts collaboration  
Gardening (Greg: “beauty belongs here”)  
Jazz and Poetry Center/Stage/Performance nights—  
by and for Emmaus House clients/neighbors

Subcommittee on Justice

Sydney Cleland and Jud Graves

**Method of study:** Phone and Zoom interviews to canvass organizations working in racial justice and consider potential for partnership.

**Objective/Method:** To determine what organizations or groups in the city are active in the racial justice space and assess whether All Saints’ might partner to work in that space. The term “racial justice” could encompass a range of disparate areas. Because we are both lawyers by training, our inquiry coalesced around systemic, recurring legal issues in racial justice.

**Recommendation:** The numerous organizations working well in this space are heavily dependent on attorneys, which constricts the appeal of racial justice as a ministry that engages the entire parish. We see volunteer and affiliation opportunities in this area for individual parishioners, and we support racial justice as a component of any new ministry.

People/Organizations Interviewed:

Maggie Kinnear, *Attorney,*  
*Atlanta Legal Aid Society, All Saints’ parishioner*  
David Langford, *Attorney,*  
*Atlanta Housing Authority, All Saints’ parishioner*  
Nelson Tyrone, *Former criminal defense attorney,*  
*parishioner, Covenant Community board member*  
Sheldon Taylor, *Parishioner, All Saints’ treasurer,*  
*Covenant Community board chair*  
Louisa Merchant, *Parishioner,*  
*Director All Saints’ Refugee Ministries*  
Natosha Reid Rice, *Minister for Public Life, All Saints’*  
Wingo Smith, *Attorney, Southern Poverty Law Center*  
Polly McKinney,  
*Advocacy Director, Voices for Georgia’s Children*  
Doug Ammar, *Executive Director, Georgia Justice Project*  
Melissa Carter, *Director,*  
*Barton Child Law and Policy Center, Emory University*  
Darlene Lynch, *Head of External Relations,*  
*Center for Victims of Torture (Atlanta office)*



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The Reverend Senator Kim Jackson,  
*State Senator, Vicar of the Church of the Common Ground*

The Reverend David Roth,  
*Executive Director, Memorial Drive Ministries*

Steve Gottlieb,  
*Executive Director, Atlanta Legal Aid Society*

### Emerging Themes

Access to justice

Trans youth underserved; especially black  
trans women

### Criminal justice advocacy

Over/under policing in communities of color

Decarceration – how will Atlanta City Jail  
be repurposed?

Criminal justice legal reform - sentencing laws;  
cash bail

### Criminal justice support

Re-entry – work and housing

Mental health- not enough agencies to deal with this

Help for families with incarcerated parent

Direct prison ministry

### Juvenile justice advocacy and support

Advocate raising the age at which juveniles are tried  
as adults for certain offenses

Prevention--support and work with orgs trying  
to break school to prison pipeline

### Economic justice advocacy and support

Evictions

Job instability for low cognition and low education  
persons

Immigration - legal support for asylum seekers

### Opportunities (not partnerships)

**Expungements:** If Georgia passes the Restorative Justice Act introduced in the Senate last Session, this area could grow exponentially. Cook County, Chicago, has an expungement desk in its jail staffed by volunteer lawyers. Other Atlanta faith communities are working in expungement, a possibility for interfaith work.

**Evictions:** Expected to balloon this year. All Saints' lawyers may find opportunities to volunteer with Atlanta Legal Aid, Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers, Housing Justice League, corporate law departments, or perhaps even a legal clinic at Emmaus House or another location in Peoplestown.

**Indigent neighbors:** Parishioner, lawyer, and Covenant Community board member Nelson Tyron suggested an All Saints' legal clinic staffed by All Saints' volunteer lawyers to act as a clearinghouse for the legal needs of the indigent in our area.

**Immigration Assistance:** Immigrant minors in particular are in need of legal representation. All Saints' Refugee Ministries volunteer lawyers have attended asylum Ohearings at Stewart Detention. This area could grow.

**Legislative/Policy Work:** Non-lawyers and lawyers alike can continue to be part of the Faithful Advocates and work for racial justice through the legislative system. The Justice Reform Partnership is a collective of 50 agencies, non-profits, and faith organizations doing this work.

### Emmaus House, Past and Present

**Origins:** In 1967 Episcopal priest Austin Ford moved into a vacant house in Peoplestown to begin the Atlanta diocesan mission called Emmaus House dedicated to advancing civil rights and reducing poverty. The Diocese purchased the house and surrounding property that came to include a chapel, Atlanta's first welfare rights organization, food services, after school tutoring, summer programs for children and adolescents, and a free monthly bus trip to the Georgia State Prison in Reidsville. Under Father Ford's care, Emmaus House helped build a foundation for local residents to challenge local and national policies that persistently engendered economic injustices. Father Ford remained at Emmaus House for 36 years.

**Mission Statement (2019):** To improve the economic and social wellbeing of the residents of Peoplestown and our surrounding neighborhoods.

**Clients:** 95% Black.

**All Saints' Financial Investment:** As part of a Diocesan Generation to Generation campaign some years ago, All Saints' donated \$100,000 payable over four years for a child care center. Subsequently, Sheltering Arms built such a center in Peoplestown. By request, Rector Geoffrey Hoare and his vestry lifted the restrictions on the use of the funds so long as the money was not put into operations. At present, \$60,000 remains unused.

#### **Programs:**

Project Catapult: new program to propel youth into economic paths to help sustain their families and develop their own talents.

Freedom School: Children's Defense Fund 6-week summer program of academic and emotional help to 120 students.

Youth Entrepreneurship Program: 12-week summer/fall program for high school students interested in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics education) and entrepreneurship.

Arts Club at BaMO (Barack and Michelle Obama Academy in Peoplestown).

Youth on the Move: out-of-school program of enrichment, education, empowerment, and peer support for middle and high school students.

Peoplestown Family Initiative: intensive case management promoting economic success.

Fostering Family Leaders: peer-to-peer coaching for parents on home and community leadership.

Muriel Lokey Help Center: drop-in help center for emergency rent and utility assistance, medical crisis aid, help with applications for benefits.

Food Pantry: client-choiced with produce, dairy, meats, and baby supplies.

2020/2021 Partnership with Cathedral of St Philip to buy medical debt of Peoplestown residents.

#### **Physical Assets:**

Wood turning rooms and equipment (installed during a program begun and run by late Atlanta Bishop Frank Allan).

Kiln for pottery making.

Space for dance, music, and art.

Land for gardening, including vegetable gardening.

Chapel (a parish of the Diocese, utilizing supply clergy).

This fall's acquisition of the Study Hall building doubles the available space and provides classrooms, a kitchen, restrooms, and office space.

#### **Partners:**

##### **Social Service Partners:**

Atlanta Community Food Bank Central Outreach

and Advocacy Center Children's Defense Fund

Furniture Bank of Metro Atlanta Helping Mamas

Georgia Justice Project Literacy Action, Inc.

Per Scholas STRIVE ATLANTA

The Urban League

##### **Foundations and Other Granting Agencies:**

A Million Matters

Annie E. Casey Foundation, Atlanta Civic Site Central Presbyterian Church

Episcopal Community Foundation for Middle and North Georgia Georgia Family Connection

H. J. Russell & Company

The Scott Hudgens Family Foundation The Zeist Foundation

United Way of Greater Atlanta



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**Government Organizations:**

City of Atlanta  
Fulton County-Community Service Project  
Georgia Department of Education-21st Century  
Community Learning Centers The Stadium  
Neighborhood Community Trust Fund  
FEMA-Emergency Food and Shelter Program

**Episcopal Parishes:**

All Saints' Atlanta  
St. Elizabeth's, Dahlonaga  
The Cathedral of St. Philip  
St. Luke's  
St. Veronica's Guild, Cathedral of St. Philip  
St. Martin's in the Fields Church of the Epiphany  
St. Paul's, Newnan  
Church of the Holy Comforter  
St. Peter and St. Paul's  
Church of the Common Ground  
St. Timothy's, Calhoun  
Holy Innocents', Sandy Springs  
St. Dunstan's  
St. Anthony's, Winder  
St. Clement's, Canton  
St. Catherine's, Marietta

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### Emmaus House Site Visit

1. **Study hall building:** The Study Hall, is vacating May 2022 to move to the west side of Atlanta; discernment now about what to do with the property:
  - ✦ Imagining what it might look like to meet that need for children.
  - ✦ Another option: programming for seniors
  - ✦ Or: affordable housing.
2. **Capital:** As noted in Appendix 7, All Saints' participated in a 2012 diocesan capital campaign for a preschool. In the end the money was not used for that purpose and Sheltering Arms built a neighborhood preschool. At Emmaus House's request, All Saints' vestry approved re-purposing of the funds; EH is now discerning what to do with that money.
3. **Campus future:** The Board created an ad hoc committee to discern how to integrate the campus.
4. **Moving from crisis interventions to longer-term change:** a gradual and committed change in how EH sees its work. Two examples: moving clients from food dependency at food pantry where they received two pre-made bags of groceries to greater independence through food bank where provisions are client-choiced; and partnership with families through Bridge of Hope program that walks alongside those moving from homelessness into housing stability. Both offer support on a decreasing basis as economic circumstances improve, with the aim of self-sufficiency.
5. **Arts:** Used to have a Saturday arts program; there is wood-turning equipment and space not currently used; and a kiln and at various times pottery has been an active program; often had been a way in for volunteers to first find EH; is an opening to have a Saturday program again; had provided breakfast, built relationship with kids in neighborhood.
6. **Chapel:** Over the years the chapel worshipping community has dwindled, noting that Greg's predecessor but one was the last priest who served as ED; now pre-Covid about 15 people in attendance. It is part of the community and is a loss that it is not presently a vital congregation. EH takes care of the exterior of the building, the congregation cares for the interior. Also missing that sense of pastoral care and visible symbol and presence of clergy.
7. **Multi-generational work:** part of what allows for/drives the effort to integrate the varied programs of EH is to see the whole as multi-generational work, attempting to see the same need from multiple generational angles, e.g. a parent cafe was opened up as an outgrowth of the after-school program when we heard that parents need help too.
8. **Partnership:** What works from EH's perspective:
  - ✦ Come to local community meeting (Saturday 10 a.m.–12 p.m.) with EH staff; get a sense of some of the fears, anger, hope, possibilities of the local community; e.g. at last meeting a lot of talk about increase of gun violence; ongoing threat of displacement and gentrification and exclusion from economic growth;
  - ✦ EH can also pull together community leaders and hear first-hand what unmet needs are in the community;
  - ✦ Spend time in the community and on our internal work to understand the community and learn.
9. **Current church partners:** churches either send checks or volunteers or material goods (food and other items) but generally are more at a distance from the staff, clients, and Peoplestown community; beyond the church, grant-awarding organization partnerships have worked well when they have moved beyond the purely transactional.
  - ✦ The Annie E. Casey Foundation: looks for organizations to help them become more sustainable, investing in training, no doubt to fulfill their mission but also to have the recipient organization thrive.
  - ✦ Atlanta Community Food Bank: very clear about their mission and that clarity has helped. Big difference between a partner who we will see twice a year (e.g. Fulton County) with not much investment in the actual nature and quality of the work. By contrast, the Food Bank expansion coincided with a desire they had to work on a client-choice model which was the same desire EH had, in other words there was synergy. Tend to have the best success when we achieve synergy.



### The Peoplestown Neighborhood

*Peoplestown is a microcosm of everything happening in Atlanta.* • Chris Lemons, Peoplestown Neighborhood Association President, 2021

Established as a neighborhood in 1887, Peoplestown lies south of the former Turner Field and adjacent to the neighborhoods of Summerhill and Mechanicsville. Its name comes from the Peoples family who owned lots in the area when it was being developed. Although once a diverse area, today some 83% of the approximately 2000 residents are Black with a median household income of \$26,000. A majority of residents rent their homes.

Atlanta civic development has repeatedly impacted the neighborhood. The 1960s construction of the downtown connector necessitated razing several houses, as did the 1980s widening of the connector. Less than a decade ago the city invoked eminent domain to condemn and raze all the homes on one block for a retention pond and park, stirring community activists to organize successful resistance. Today the construction of the nearby Atlanta Beltline is leading to rising property values that adversely affect long-time homeowners and renters.

The residents of Peoplestown energetically respond to challenges. In the 1990s, the Peoplestown Revitalization Project initiated safety programs, facilitated the building of affordable housing, and fostered economic development. The Peoplestown Revitalization Corporation maintains links with the Housing Justice League and Research/Action Cooperative to foster democratic planning processes and the incorporation of neighborhood interests in all development. Residents convene weekly neighborhood meetings to discuss current issues, and participate in monthly NPU meetings. Greg Cole regularly attends these meetings.

A decade ago, historian LeeAnn Lands (daughter-in-law of late All Saints' parishioners Barbara and Richard Hall) developed the Peoplestown Project to study and interpret community-based activities. The Peoplestown Project website (<http://thepeoplestownproject.com>>emmaushouse) includes links to oral histories of community members along with manuscripts and photos related to neighborhood history. In addition, Dr. Lands' essay "Emmaus House and Atlanta's Poverty Movements" (<https://www.atlantastudies.org>>2015/04/28) provides an illustrated and comprehensive overview of the responses of Emmaus House in its early decades to the issues confronting Peoplestown.

A partnership with Emmaus House provides an opportunity for us to "grow in relationships with communities we know less well," a goal articulated in Simon's January 11, 2020 letter to the parish.

### Emmaus House Current Initiatives Congruent with All Saints' Interests and Skills

#### Immediate Initiatives

##### 1. Bridge of Hope:

Emmaus House is forming a partnership with Bridge of Hope, a national program that trains and equips local faith communities to respond to life insecurities in practical, tangible, and neighboring ways. Tanisha Corporal, Director of Community Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives, will oversee the partnership and its Neighboring program.

The Neighboring program pairs a case manager and 6-10 volunteers with a local family facing challenges. Neighbors offer friendship, encouragement, and practical support such as help with transportation, household furnishings, and food. Using personal and professional networks, Neighbors might help a family find housing, medical providers, employment, job training, or other resources that support the family's long-term success.

Through the Neighboring program, Bridge of Hope offers the opportunity to develop a sustained relationship with others while addressing cross-generational inequity.

All Saints' Refugee Ministries follows a similar pattern of pairing volunteers with refugee families for friendship, support, and a scaffolding for independence, self-empowerment, and sustainability. Greg and Tanisha are eager to align with All Saints' for this work at Emmaus.

##### 2. Arts:

Under Director of Education Services Ann Fowler, Emmaus House wants to restart various arts programs including

- + Woodworking (in the existing Frank Allan shop)
- + Pottery (using the existing kiln)
- + Arts enrichment classes

All Saints' rich history of interest in the arts includes music, painting, drawing, dance, drama, photography, textiles, and crafts. Artists, designers, musicians, actors, dancers, vocalists, and playwrights are among our parishioners. The Arts Subcommittee report (Appendix 6) suggests many arts possibilities for Emmaus House and All Saints' that also offers paths to build relationships with children, parents, and families.

##### 3. The Food Pantry:

As Emmaus House expands its program from 15 people receiving two pre-made bags of groceries to this year's goal to exceed 100,000 pounds of food that is client-choiced, the need expands for additional volunteers in stocking and distributing supplies. The food pantry will also help to establish relationships with new clients who then can access other services. Adam Seeley (Emmaus House Director of Social Services) wants volunteers who can help with the food pantry.

All Saints' has been a part of the Midtown Assistance Center since its inception and continues to supply volunteers for working with clients on intake and the food pantry there (Appendix 3).

#### Longer Range Initiative

##### After School Program:

Emmaus House is in the process of discerning how to best use the campus space that will be vacated by The Study Hall at the end of school year 2022. Possibilities include the adoption of the Children's Defense Fund's year-round curriculum and the related development of a

science-based reading program in collaboration with experts from the Atlanta Speech School and Georgia State University. An after-school program would welcome volunteers in multiple areas including tutoring assistance, food preparation, transportation, art instruction, field trips, and other forms of enrichment.

As noted in Appendix 6, All Saints' funds that were contributed to a capital campaign for Emmaus House were designated for education. In addition, All Saints' has partnered for this kind of work in the past, especially with the 60 parish volunteers now working in our Refugee Ministries and with Ann-Marie Sparrow's previous after-school tutoring program that engaged 30 parishioners and an equal number of Georgia Tech volunteers in training at the Atlanta Speech School and subsequent tutoring at C.W. Hill Elementary School.





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