

COMMISSION ON RACISM

The Commission on Racism of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh is called to work for the annihilation of racism in our church and communities, while fostering healing of all persons.

General Convention Resolution A062 (1982) requests that dioceses and congregations form committees on racism to study, identify, and confront the causes of racism.

Resolution B049 (2000) mandates anti-racism training for all in leadership positions, both lay and clergy. These workshops provide the opportunity for studying and attempting to identify the root causes of racism.

Resolution A127 (2012) adds that training should be continued on an on-going basis. At the request of people who were previously trained, a reunion was held during this year and several are planned for 2014.

Additional study/education with a historical perspective is provided by the annual diocesan celebration of the life and ministry of Absalom Jones. Our preacher at the 2013 observance was the Rev. Canon Angela Shepherd, Canon for Mission in the Diocese of Maryland. During the day, there were opportunities for further exploration of racism, its root cause, and its damaging effects.

The commission was represented at the regular gathering of the 13 dioceses comprising Province III. At these meetings, representatives exchange ideas and learn what has – and has not – worked for others, and they try to help each other with their challenges and concerns.

Upon the retirement of the rector of Calvary, East Liberty, the diocese lost the active service of one of two minority priests and its only African-American priest. A sub-committee of the commission has studied this problem and is asking the bishop to expand the study to involve other diocesan groups with an emphasis on the discernment process.

The commission has an annual “workday” of reviewing and planning. The emphasis for 2014 will be on:

1. An increase in the number and variety of educational experiences.
2. Further exploration of recruitment of minorities for ordained ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Travis Bolden
Chair