

Form Name: Inventory of Episcopal Racial Reconciliation and Justice Ministries, including Truth and Reconciliation Processes
Submission Time: July 25, 2021 9:15 pm
Browser: unknown / unknown
IP Address: 174.56.12.31
Unique ID: 839450545
Location: 36.4714012146, -108.25099945068

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

Introductory Info

Name	Michael Sells
Title	Priest
Organization	All Saints Church
Diocese	Navajoland Area Mission
Email	mgsells2012@gmail.com

Contact Phone Number (include country code if outside U.S.) 6023293297

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

If Church or Institution, please identify which kind of Episcopal entity you represent: Congregation

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: Not Yet Engaged

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

I have not seen a "study" or "intentional effort" in this area mission. There is always talk but nothing is ever written down or minutes taken. There is curiosity outside but few employed people want to rock the boat. During the riots, I spoke up for the protestors, even when a female non-person of color started to cry for her mixed-blood son in the BIA police force. I told them there are a few bad apples spoil the barrel and said my mother worked for one of the only Native American-run police forces for over 30 years. I mean, my God, I'm a Native American being pulled over just about every month in town, and the leadership is going to defend the crying non-Native female and tell me he's a fervent advocate of social justice. I'm tired. I'm not the only one, and their silence is an injustice.

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)

Linking historic injustice in your organization with ongoing patterns of racial injustice

Please describe these Truth and Reconciliation process efforts:

When Sarah Eagleheart worked with ethnic ministries, she worked to bring White Bison to Navajoland. That was the first time I heard of generational trauma. What happened to all that work? The poverty on the reservations with Episcopal missions is horrendous. Alcoholism is devastating from my Native American point of view.

Has your diocese, congregation or institution organized a commission, working group or other regular meetings to work on a Truth and Reconciliation process?

No

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?

No

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Truth and Reconciliation?

Start sharing your story. We want to fit in and be accepted, but if you're working for racial reconciliation, TELL US YOUR STORY.

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)

Participate in efforts to generate a local or regional vision for racial healing

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

The Area Mission has not engaged in any proclamation. No one has spoken about the discovery of the children's gravesites. Either leadership is scared to act and shake the boat, or they lived with it for so long. For example, I can only imagine it would take a great amount of courage and confidence for an abused child to speak about her abuse. But I am stubborn and strong-willed, I have joined protests and attended vigils and have written and posted publicly about how I have been treated here. I thought the world had changed but a few people still hold on to power and I'll always be an annoyance to them.

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

Explain simply what "Proclaiming the Dream" is about. Be like an evangelist, proclaim it. Tell us what it is all about. If this is a true passion rather than a job, tell us about it--Proclaiming the Dream.

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)

Incorporation of non-dominant cultural expressions in liturgy

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

Learn the language. Incorporate the surrounding cultural expression into the liturgy. Get rid of dominant and non-dominant. Include. Inclusion. Caring for one another. Seeing the good in the surrounding culture--not classifying dominant and non-dominant. That is such sterile language, again where is the passion? I'm thinking about Jesus story of the Good Samaritan or as Barbara Brown Taylor would put it, the Good Hamas.

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

Make phone calls. You have to be like an eager salesperson. It has to be a passion. I have voiced public and reached out about my encounters with racism but I have never been approached by "truth and reconciliation" experts. Allies have reached out to me. They got me in contact with diocesan truth and reconciliation advocates. There is so much work to be done and I don't see the church doing a darn thing. Not even our own bishop or canon spoke up about the children's gravesites. The experts have never reached out to us, and say hey we can move toward healing in your town.

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: None of the above

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? Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with **“Refugee Ministries”**? Not yet engaged

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with **“Immigration Reform”**? Not yet engaged

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? Not yet engaged

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

At what levels is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with **“Reparations for Racial Justice”**? Not yet engaged

Please describe the efforts related to the boxes checked above:

The protest I attended involved stronger methane emission regulations. The vigil I attended was in solidarity with the murdered victims at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburg. I cannot stand racial injustice or killings. Interfaith and racial diversity is very important for me.

In what other ways is your diocese, congregation or institution engaging with racial justice and Repairing the Breach?

Church partners have reached out to me about what the churches can do about boarding school abuse, especially the work of Episcopal boarding schools. As you know, our secular society does really have an affection for the church, so if there can be some Christian compassion in this work with Public Policy and churches and Deb Haaland, it may be justice work.

What assistance or resources would help you to take the next steps around Repairing the Breach?

Honestly, I do think your office can help. Most people in my community of color don't even have a computer or internet. Yet, they see the same thing over and over. That's why I love listening to the wisdom of the elders. They encourage me to voice my opinion against injustice. You need to go out into the communities and listen to the stories about racial injustice. This impersonal survey is again speaking to privilege rather than the communities of color.

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?

Navajoland Area Mission has been here for over 100 years. Things have drastically improved. Since our only last Native bishop died, we seemed to have been forgotten. Through the work of our current bishop and canon, we have been recognized again. It's amazing how few people know about this "area mission." ERD and other diocese work with distant countries, yet our Native Missions grow older. As I said, there are so many opportunities, but it might take work to go into the neighborhoods of color and listen to the stories.
