

Your Grace:

This report is written in response to an inquiry by the Rev. John E. Kitagawa, Chair for the Executive Council Anti-Racism Committee. The purpose of this account is to provide a summary of the implementation of anti-racism initiatives in the Diocese of East Carolina in response to General Convention Resolution A143.

The earliest documentation of training for the Anti-racism Commission in the Diocese of East Carolina took place November 2007 and January 2008 in the parish of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Greenville, N.C. Facilitators from the Peace & Justice Ministries of the Episcopal Church Center presented two-day workshops of anti-racism dialogues. The diocesan Commission subsequently requested training for facilitators who are resident in the diocese. Nine people from the initial training of trainers group are still available to serve as co-facilitators. The Commission plans to increase the number of trained facilitators within the Diocese. One outcome of our trainers' workshop was the decision to develop a modified curriculum to accommodate a one-day workshop format.

Our Diocesan Bishop continues to reinforce the resolution that participation in anti-racism training is required for the lay and ordained leadership. The work of the Anti-racism Commission was a major focus of our diocesan conventions in 2009 and 2010. Katrina Browne, producer of the film Traces of the Trade; A Tale of the Deep North, was keynote speaker and preacher for the Service of Repentance and Reconciliation at the February 2010 convention. Time was set aside during convention to view the film and follow up with table discussion. Ms. Browne also met with our Commission and shared her observations about anti-racism activities in other dioceses. Commissioners were left to consider how to maintain the integrity of the training model developed by the Peace and Justice Ministries of the Episcopal Church Center while adapting the training for more effective implementation with regard to the demographics of this diocese.

The Anti-racism Commission aspires to be more effective at the task of reinforcing awareness of how the legacy of racial injustice continues to play out in current events. Several parishes have reported using the Traces of the Trade film and (to a much lesser extent) the companion book by Thomas Norman DeWolf, Inheriting the Trade: A Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U.S. History) to extend discussion at the parish level about white privilege and racism.

A 1997 commemorative service for Absalom Jones in the Diocese of East Carolina predates the Resolution 2006-A123. This annual observance in commemoration of the first Black American to receive formal ordination in the Episcopal Church has customarily been almost exclusively restricted to African-American parishes, but the Diocese has undertaken to publicize and to support this annual observance on a broader scale. These undertakings are examples of groundwork for the multi-cultural interactive setting that a well-coordinated Diocesan training dialogue provides.

Parishes have been slow in responding to the approved training provided through the Commission for the Diocese of East Carolina. The Commission has conducted an average of three workshops per year since diocesan trainers began providing services. The Commission has elected to abandon the practice of waiting for the parishes to request the training, and made the decision to adopt the services delivery model provided by diocesan Sexual Ethics training. Beginning with the 2011-2012 diocesan calendar, the Commission plans to schedule one workshop per deanery (at least five workshops per year) to provide every parish in the Diocese with localized access to training.