

7/16/2020

Dear Friends,

I miss you! I hope and pray you are well and finding safe ways to nurture yourself – body, soul, and spirit. Please know I hold you in my prayers.

I write to extend a *special, important invitation*. In response to the tragic death of George Floyd and the ensuing racial crisis in our nation, we are planning a “Listening to Seek and Serve” program at Saint Barnabas. It will build on the Listening Initiative launched three years ago.

From the beginning, I have urged us to see this racial crisis as a human and spiritual need long before it is a political need. For sure, real and lasting societal change must finally express itself in how we are governed, but for us in the church, who call ourselves disciples of Jesus, we begin with seeing one another as Jesus sees us. We begin with following Jesus’ profoundest model and teaching: The Incarnation. Solidarity with the whole human family.

Our Episcopal Baptismal Covenant expresses it this way: “Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?”

And at Saint Barnabas, we have practiced an ever deepening welcome – “All Are Welcome” – that includes listening to every voice. And by “listening” we mean making it safe and welcome for every voice to be heard.

So, on July 19 “Listening to Seek and Serve” will be our beginning in listening to those in our nation asking to be heard and in listening to one another’s responses. This will be our Saint Barnabas community coming together to listen and to learn so that we can seek and serve Christ in all persons.

Our Baptismal Covenant and a video series from our Presiding Bishop, The Most Reverend Michael Curry, titled *Spirituality and Racial Justice*, will be our guides. There will also be a little reading material to enhance our reflections.

This will be a Zoom program beginning Sunday, July 19 at 11:30 am. I will be the host and in the opening session orient all of us to the program. This initial session is essential for participation in the program. If you cannot attend at that time, it will be recorded and posted on our website the following morning.

Following will be four additional Zoom sessions on Sundays at 11:30 am **OR** Thursdays at 7:00 pm. I will host all of these sessions. In each one we’ll begin altogether and then break out into Zoom discussion groups that will be guided by trained and experienced facilitators.

Then there will be a final Sunday morning and Thursday evening altogether session in which we'll have the chance to report our experience of the program and hear one another.

Here are the details, succinctly, along with what you need to do to join in:

First, Sunday July 19, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Then, Sundays July 26 through August 16, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

With a final altogether session on Sunday, August 23 at 11:30 am

OR

Thursdays July 23 through August 13, 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm

With a final altogether session on Thursday, August 20 at 7:00 pm

Links to join the Zoom gathering will be in our weekly email, in our Sunday bulletin, and in the Sunday announcements in our worship video.

To learn more about how to join Zoom meetings, contact the office at 480-948-5560!

I'm urging every member of our parish to join us as they are able. I hope to see you there.

Grace and Peace,

Jim Clark, Rector/Senior Pastor