The Anglican Church *of* Bermuda

A CHARTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

RACISM is the belief, reinforced by power and privilege, that one race, ethnic group, or ethnicity is innately superior to others. Systemic racism occurs when the power and privilege of one racial or ethnic group results in the exclusion, oppression or exploitation of other groups of a different race or ethnic origin.

The Anglican Church of Bermuda has been complicit of both racism and systemic racism since the 1600s. Four centuries on, some progress may be acknowledged, but progress has been slow (reflected these present days by Black Lives Matter and other issues of social injustice which marginalize specific groups). In addition to celebrating its ability to integrate more with intention and time, the Anglican Church of Bermuda must admit its failings, ask forgiveness, and demonstrate that it has in place, a plan to root out, expose and eliminate all forms of racism, discrimination and prejudice.

Because we believe:

1. That God is the Creator of all people and all are in one human family;
2. That racism is a rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ;
3. That racism denies the redemption and reconciliation of Jesus Christ;
4. That racism robs all human beings of their wholeness and is used as a justification for social, economic, environmental and political exploitation;
5. That we must declare before God and before one another that we have sinned against our sisters and brothers of other races in thought, in word and in deed;
6. That in our common humanity in creation, all people are made in God's image and all persons are equally valuable in the sight of God;
7. That our strength lies in our racial, ethnic and cultural diversity and that we must work toward a world in which each person's value is respected and nurtured;
8. That our struggle for justice must be based on new attitudes, new understandings and new relationships and must be reflected in the laws, policies, structures and practices of both Church and State;

Therefore,

as Anglicans in every parish across the Islands of Bermuda, we will unite our efforts within the church to take the following actions:

1. Confess our sins of racism, discrimination and prejudice and ask forgiveness of those who have suffered as a result of the Church's failings.
2. Eliminate all forms of institutional racism in the total ministry of the church, giving special attention to those institutions that we support, beginning with their employment policies, purchasing practices, environmental policies and availability of services and facilities.
3. Create opportunities in local churches to deal honestly with the existing racist attitudes and unconscious bias between members, deepening our Christian commitment to be a reconciling Church where all racial groups, economic classes and persons of other distinguishing identities come together.
4. Increase efforts to evangelize and recruit all people, as aforementioned, into the membership of The Anglican Church and provide leadership development opportunities without discrimination.
5. Establish workshops and seminars in local churches to study, understand and appreciate the historical and cultural contributions of each race, ethnic group or ethnicity to the Church and community.
6. Raise local churches' awareness of the continuing needs for equal education, housing, employment, medical care and environmental justice for all members of the community and to create opportunities to work for these things across racial or ethnic lines.

7. Work for the development and implementation of national policies to protect the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all people such as through appropriate support of the United Nations covenants on human rights.
8. Facilitate nomination and election processes which include all racial/ethnic groups and ethnicities to use measures that align our vision for racial/ethnic justice with actions accelerating racial and ethnic equality.

Therefore, we pledge ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ in word and in deed and to struggle for the rights and the self-determination of every person and group of persons.