

# EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

## Commission for Intercultural Ministries



Episcopal Church  
Becoming Beloved Community

September 2021

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

- Micah 6:8

[2021-03-21 What does the Lord Require of You? \(Micah 6:8\) - YouTube](#)

Stay safe, stay committed...and always know that you are beloved.

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### **SEEDS OF JUSTICE SERIES BEGINS SEPTEMBER 12, 2021, AT ST. MARTIN'S, DAVIS** By Juliette Beck, Nick Buxton, and The Rev. Dr. Pamela Dolan Care for God's Creation Committee



What is our responsibility as people who live, work, or worship in Yolo County to the original inhabitants of this land? What is the legacy of environmental racism? How can we heal and repair the harm?

These and other critical questions guide a new educational opportunity being offered this fall by The Episcopal Church of St. Martin in Davis.

*Seeds of Justice* will highlight the work of scholars and cultural practitioners in the region around Davis and Yolo County—the ancestral homeland of the Patwin-Wintun people. Through storytelling, discussions, and hands-on workshops, participants will

study the resistance and resilience of Native Americans to the ongoing social and environmental impacts of settlers in this region, which is known as an epicenter of gold, greed, and genocide.

St. Martin's received a generous grant from Episcopal Community Services of the Diocese of Northern California to help develop a new initiative called *Land-Based Ministry: Growing a More Equitable, Participatory, and Inclusive Community*. Land-based ministry considers land as central to the church's mission of reconciliation and justice, focusing on the need to learn about the land itself and its history, uses, original inhabitants, ecosystem health, and harm from environmental threats.

The Rev. Dr. Pamela Dolan, Rector of St. Martin's, notes that, "For me, the impetus for developing this ministry grew out of my participation in two Sacred Ground circles last summer. The more I learned about how deeply embedded white supremacy is in our history and culture, the more I wanted to understand how these dynamics continue to play out locally, right here and now. And it was clear to me that this would intersect in meaningful ways with the environmental work St. Martin's has been doing for years. These are not separate issues."

The grant application states that "it is important to understand the racialized history of our land, develop empathy for those who have experienced injustices by providing them opportunities to tell their stories, and allow for open discussion of ideas." The grant will allow St. Martin's to work on other large goals in addition to the education series; these include soil restoration, gathering and giving gardens, and asset-based community development and revitalization.

On Sunday, September 12, 2021, 12:30 pm, Diana Almendariz will present the first talk in this series, *Wintun Homeland Stewardship: Stories of Native Ancestors*, via videoconference. Almendariz is a cultural practitioner of Maidu/Wintun and Hupa/Yurok descent and traditions. Her lifelong commitment to teaching environmental stewardship with a Native Californian cultural emphasis has been inspired by the memories, thoughts, and stories of her ancestors.

Other presentations in the series include *Introduction to California Indian Homeland History* by Melissa Moreno, Ph.D., Professor of Ethnic Studies (September 26, 2021, 12:30 pm, via videoconference) and *Just Say "No" to Manifest Destiny* by Alan Taylor, Ph.D., Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation Professor of History at the University of Virginia (November 1, 5 pm, at St. Martin's and via videoconference). Presentations will be offered on Zoom, and some will have the option to view it in real time at St. Martin's.

St. Martin's will bring more *Seeds of Justice* events to the Davis region in winter and spring 2022. They will be free and open to the public; registration is required. The Episcopal Church of St. Martin is located at 640 Hawthorn Lane, Davis CA. For more information about *Seeds of Justice* or to register, please see <https://churchofstmartin.org/2021/08/12/land-based-ministries-hub-seeds-of-justice/>.



### THREE SACRED GROUND CIRCLES ARE FORMING

Sacred Ground is a film- and readings- based 10-session dialogue series on race, grounded in faith. Small groups (6-14 persons) are invited to come together weekly or bi-weekly (via Zoom) and walk through chapters of America's history of race and racism while weaving in threads of family stories, economic class, and political and regional identity.

This is a race dialogue series designed for these times. It is an attempt to be responsive to the profound challenges that swirl around issues of race and racism, as well as the difficult, but respectful and informative, dialogue we need to have with each other about them.

Participants are invited to walk through history to peel away the layers that brought us to today, and to do so in a personal way, reflecting on family histories and stories, as well as important narratives that shape the collective American story. Diverse viewpoints are welcomed and encouraged as we commit to learning from each other as we are guided by the Holy Spirit in this work.

It holds the vision of Beloved Community as a guiding star - where all people are honored, protected, and nurtured as beloved children of God, where we weep at one another's pain and seek one another's flourishing.

Here is a link to the Sacred Ground website that will provide you with more information: <https://episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground>.

Two **weekly** Sacred Ground Circles are forming via Zoom in September and are welcoming new participants:

- The Rev. Mary Claugus and Deacon Cindy Long from St. Michael's in Carmichael will co-facilitate a circle meeting from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays from Sept. 15 through Nov. 17. To register, email [deaconcindy@stmichaelscarmichael.org](mailto:deaconcindy@stmichaelscarmichael.org).
- The Rev. Kathy Hopner, Deacon Emerita Tina Campbell, and Susan Hotchkiss of Trinity Cathedral in Sacramento will co-facilitate a circle at 6:30 p.m. Thursdays from Sept. 16 to Nov. 18. To register (**by Sept. 9**), email [susan\\_hotchkiss1@hotmail.com](mailto:susan_hotchkiss1@hotmail.com).

One **bi-weekly** (every other week) Sacred Ground Circle is forming via Zoom in October and is welcoming new participants:

- St. John's, Roseville, will facilitate dialogue circles from 7-9 pm on Wednesdays beginning October 13, 2021 (with a short break for Thanksgiving and Christmas). For more information, or to register for the program, please contact Fr. Cliff Haggenjos, Rector, 916-786-6911, extension 1, or Pat Kuethe, Office Assistant, at the same number, extension 3.

### **KEEPING TRACK OF SACRED GROUND**

Are you forming a Sacred Ground Circle? Let the Commission for Intercultural Ministries know by registering it here: <https://forms.gle/hriHCPKmLwjUHEyEA>

Are you interested in joining a Sacred Ground Circle? Sign up here: <https://forms.gle/G26EPxDzEFSpnsZW7>

### **THOUGHTS ON MY SACRED GROUND EXPERIENCE**

**By Bob Pritchard, Former Senior Warden, St. John's, Roseville**



When I considered taking the Sacred Ground workshop I wondered if I should sign up for it. After all, I was a pretty aware guy, did I really want to sit and listen to blame being laid on me because I was white?

Then I thought about Bishop Curry. About his effort to inspire becoming the Beloved Community and looked again at the journey he laid out: telling the truth, repairing the breach, proclaiming the dream, and practicing the Way of Love. I decided these were good goals and I signed up for the workshop, anticipating some boredom along the way.

The boredom never happened. The first video struck me to the core. It was a brilliant, fascinating, at times painful history of racism in the United States and beyond. It reached back hundreds of years to the Middle Ages and made so much sense. It wasn't even about blaming one group or another. Real history shares the input of various factors on events and issues. The conversations within my circle were thoughtful, surprising, and at times, intimate.

Sacred Ground is a series of 10 workshop meetings, commonly held weekly or bi-weekly. Each session includes a videotape or two, some readings (not whole books but parts of certain chapters) an essay or two, and other readings. You prepare for the workshops in between sessions, and I looked forward to the information that was being provided for each session. It was easy because the material was exceptionally well selected. I ended the workshop stunned at the education I had just had. I recommend that everyone take this workshop; it is my gift to you.

## **WELCOME THE REFUGEE: EPISCOPAL MINISTRIES IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RESPOND TO THE AFGHAN CRISIS**

**By Jim Schaal, Executive Director, Center at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church  
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As the United States withdrew its forces from Afghanistan, tens of thousands of Afghans waited at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul in hopes of evacuation. Among them were thousands of Afghans who served as interpreters, translators, and guides for U.S. and NATO forces during the 20-year war. Under threat of reprisals from the resurgent Taliban, these Afghan allies and their families seek resettlement in the U.S. under the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program. Other Afghans seek refugee or asylee status on humanitarian grounds, fleeing a country that has been unable to provide for their basic needs despite decades of international aid.

Many will be resettled in Northern California where some will rejoin family members who have already arrived here. The Sacramento region is home to the largest Afghan community in the United States with approximately 9,700 Afghans living in Sacramento County and about 2,000 more living in neighboring Yolo, Sutter, Placer, and El Dorado counties. About 11% of all Afghan natives in the United States reside in the Golden State's capital region.

According to census data, the highest concentrations of Afghans in the nation live in two zip codes in the Arden Arcade area of Sacramento County. One of these is 95825, where the Office of the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California (EDNC) is located. The other is 95821, where the diocesan Center at St. Matthew's has been serving Afghan refugees for several years.

The Center at St. Matthew's partners with Highlands Community Charter School to offer English language and literacy classes for adults. "Most of the students here are refugees and SIV holders from Afghanistan," says Jim Schaal, Executive Director of the Center at St. Matthew's. "They come as 'strangers in a strange land,' utterly dislocated and deeply traumatized. I love to hear them speak Pashto and Dari in our courtyard, but they know that learning English is their passport to citizenship, vocational training, and a new life in a new land." Some were educated professionals in Afghan cities who now find themselves driving for Uber or Lyft to make a living for their families. Other were villagers from remote tribal areas who never learned to read in their own languages. "It's inspiring to see the Highlands classrooms full of Afghan women in hijab, and heartbreaking to realize that those who don't make it here may again be denied an education under the Taliban."

The Center at St. Matthew's has been working closely with the Highlands adult school to open new classrooms for the Afghan refugees. Closed to in-person instruction for 15 months under COVID-19 public health orders, Highlands shifted to distance learning supplemented by outdoor outreach events at St. Matthew's and other sites. In mid-May

of 2021, Highlands re-opened at limited capacity with a hybrid model of in-person and online instruction. By mid-August, attendance at St. Matthew's had risen to more than 150 students per weekday. The Center is also working with Highlands to re-open an onsite preschool for younger children of the adult students. Older children attend Dyer-Kelly Elementary School across the street, where more than a third of students are English language learners whose first languages are Pashto or Dari. Because more than 50% of the Afghan families live below the poverty line and face hunger on a daily basis, the Center at St. Matthew's also partners with River City Food Bank, which doubled its capacity during the pandemic to serve more than 700 households per week at St. Matthew's.

The Center at St. Matthew's is just one of several ministries in the diocese that will welcome Afghan refugees. Five miles east, St. George's Episcopal Church in Carmichael (<http://www.stgeorgeca.org/>) has opened its large community garden to refugees and immigrants through a new partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Sacramento (based in Arden Arcade) (<https://www.rescue.org/united-states/sacramento-ca>). IRC's New Roots program seeks to help newcomers re-establish their connection to a new land, cultivate greater food self-sufficiency through community gardens and nutrition education, and provide technical and business training to those seeking to adapt their experience in traditional agriculture to the climate and markets of the Central Valley. St. George's initiative is a team effort led by Vestry member Vicki Karsten, Vocational Deacon The Rev. Bob Olsen, and Priest in Charge The Rev. Ray Hess in partnership with IRC Sacramento New Roots Program Manager Eric Spring.

Seven miles north, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Antelope (<https://standrewsantelopeca.wordpress.com/>) has partnered with World Relief Sacramento (based in nearby North Highlands) (<https://worldrelief.org/sacramento/>) to open its community garden. St. Andrew's project is led by Vicar, The Rev. Peter Rodgers, and parishioner Richard Farrick in partnership with World Relief Sacramento Mobilization Manager Heather Ladine. Both Antelope and Carmichael have seen large numbers of new arrivals from countries of the former Soviet Union but are also beginning to see increasing numbers of Afghans as well.

In support of these local initiatives, Episcopal Community Services of Northern California (ECSNC) (<http://www.norcalecs.org/>) recently gave Ministry Development Grants to St. George's in Carmichael and St. Andrew's in Antelope. ECSNC invites funding inquiries from other local congregations seeking to serve refugees from Afghanistan.

At Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Sacramento there are efforts underway to get several families known to the Cathedral family through the review process in Kabul to be evacuated out of Afghanistan. Shireen Miles, a member of the Outreach Committee, has also suggested that we focus on support for resettlement of Afghans who are arriving by offering assistance to the agencies leading the effort. They will indicate the

concrete ways we can help, such as donations for hotel rooms, employment opportunities and teacher support for adults wanting to learn English.

As the international refugee and immigration ministry (EMM) of The Episcopal Church (<https://episcopalmigrationministries.org/>), EMM is one of nine national refugee resettlement agencies that partner with the U.S. government. In 2020, EMM helped 597 refugees and 524 SIV's from 29 countries build new lives in 12 communities across the United States.

The Most Rev. Michael Bruce Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church, offered this prayer: "Eternal God, hear our prayer for the peoples of Afghanistan. There is a profound humanitarian crisis. Countless people, mostly women and children, are now fleeing and vulnerable. The lives of many are now endangered. The hopes of many are forgone. Send your Spirit, Lord, to rally the resolve of the nations of the earth to find pathways to save human lives, protect human rights, and to resolve the hardships of those seeking refuge, asylum, and safety. Hear our prayer for the peoples of Afghanistan. This we pray as followers of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen."

Local congregations seeking to connect with the Commission for Intercultural Ministries and/or Episcopal Migration Ministries are invited to contact CIM Co-Chairs Miriam Casey and Lynn Zender at [NorCalCIM@gmail.com](mailto:NorCalCIM@gmail.com), 530-574-6559.

#### **Other Diocesan and Denominational Resources:**

Welcoming the Stranger Ministries

Commission on Intercultural Ministries

Episcopal Diocese of Northern California

<https://www.norcalepiscopal.org/site/Commission-on-Intercultural-Ministries/#tab-id-6>

Lutheran Immigration and Resettlement Services

<https://www.lirs.org/help-our-afghan-allies/>

#### **Other Refugee Resettlement Agencies in Sacramento:**

Opening Doors, Inc.

<https://www.openingdoorsinc.org/>

Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services

<https://www.sacramentofoodbank.org/>

### **PRESIDING BISHOP MICHAEL CURRY HIGHLIGHTS WAYS TO HELP AFGHAN REFUGEES THROUGH EPISCOPAL MIGRATION MINISTRIES**

Watch the [video](#) as Bishop Curry addresses the crisis and ways to assist Afghan refugees through EMM. Links to resources are listed after the speech transcript [here](#).

**THE PERSISTANCE OF SYSTEMIC RACISM**  
**By Ann Liu, Chair, Care for God's Creation, and Vestry Member**  
**The Episcopal Church of St. Martin, Davis**

My parents taught me in America never to speak out. What would the *bok gwei* think of us immigrants? Amy Tan so beautifully captured in Joy Luck Club the pressure commonly felt of growing up Chinese American – that each of us was representing a billion people in China! I tried to be part of that myth of model minority. I grew up silent. But then now in my 70's, I am one of the increasingly angry “elderly Chinese women” speaking out and trying to make “good trouble.” When people express sympathy and apologies for our country's racialized past, I can't help but become very upset. It is not because I don't appreciate their recognition and growing awareness. However, people of color need true allies who can speak and respond to the truth themselves and not give us the sole responsibility of speaking out. I am tired of having to explain how the racialized past continues to affect me and other non-whites. All too often there is a failure to distinguish between a racialized historical past and the continuation of that past into the present. Becoming “awake” means to be fully aware of the privileges we have or don't have that stem from that racialized past.

I am so very grateful for the Episcopal Church for doing the Racial Justice Audit and developing a Sacred Ground program. But how many people have actually read and discussed the report or how many have actually taken the 10-week course? Why hasn't the discussion of systemic racism in the public media since George Floyd died not yet hit home? Are we caught up in denying if we are racists or not - thinking it's only based on individual prejudices and intentional acts? No, racism is primarily in the laws, rules, regulations, and everyday patterns of doing things that have been constructed to discriminate against people of color and other marginalized groups in this society. It's important we understand and name how this institutionalization has created, maintained, and continues to perpetuate the unequal society we have. It persists in the choices we have of whether we rent or own housing, where we can live, have the money for higher education, kind of work, travel, shop, vote, where we feel safe at nightfall, and even sometimes where we feel welcomed to pray.

That is why I chair Care for God's Creation at St. Martin's and serve on the Vestry. Creation Care extends not only to caring about soil and plants, but also to caring with and not just for people and communities too. This is what intersectionality and reciprocity demand.

Come listen and learn the stories that need to be heard. We hope this will be a safe, honest, and transformative space for our community to grapple with the legacy of injustice to this land and her people. For more information about *Seeds of Justice* or to register, please see <https://churchofstmartin.org/2021/08/12/land-based-ministries-hub-seeds-of-justice/>

**NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**  
**September 15 – October 15, 2021**

National Hispanic Heritage month traditionally honors the cultures and contributions of both Hispanic and Latino Americans as we celebrate heritage rooted in all Latin American Countries. During this month and throughout the year, the National Park Service, and their partners, share history, heritage, and accomplishments of Hispanic and Latino Americans of past and present. Explore the National Park Service site [here](#).



**REGISTRATION OPEN FOR**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BORDER & MIGRATION MINISTRY SUMMIT**



A virtual summit for those engaged or interested in migration ministries will be held Oct. 21-23, hosted by Episcopal Migration Ministries in partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas. Attendees have the option to attend workshops in three tracks: refugee resettlement; asylum & border ministries; and accompaniment. During the summit, attendees will gather to learn from experts and reflect on

migration topics through the lens of each track. Learn more about the summit program, the speakers and early-bird registration [here](#). If you register, it would be much appreciated if you would let Lynn Zender ([zenderlynn@gmail.com](mailto:zenderlynn@gmail.com)), Co-Chair for the Commission for Intercultural Ministries, know.

**CRITICAL RACE THEORY**  
**IS NOT ON ITS WAY TO YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL TODAY**

Read this informative [blog](#) about Critical Race Theory (CRT) by Dr. Catherine Meeks, Director of the Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing. She explains what CRT is and how it is different from teaching children about racism.

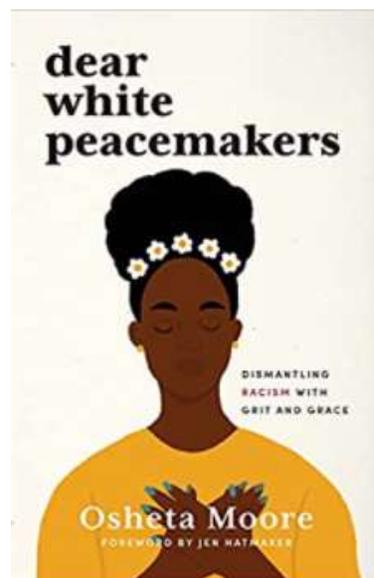
**TRANSFORMING CONVERSATION ABOUT CRT: A LEARNING LAB**

View The Dialogue Company's [recording](#) and PowerPoint [slides](#) about having a more effective discussion with others about CRT. Sacred Ground facilitators were provided the opportunity to participate in this virtual lab in August.

**DEAR WHITE PEACEMAKERS: DISMANTLING RACISM WITH GRIT AND GRACE**  
By Osheta Moore

*Dear White Peacemakers* is a breakup letter to division, a love letter to God's beloved community, and an eviction notice to the violent powers that have sustained racism for centuries.

Race is one of the hardest topics to discuss in America. Many white Christians avoid talking about it altogether. But a commitment to peacemaking requires white people to step out of their comfort and privilege and into the work of anti-racism. *Dear White Peacemakers* is an invitation to white Christians to come to the table and join this hard work and holy calling. Rooted in the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus, this book is a challenging call to transform white shame, fragility, saviorism, and privilege, in order to work together to build the Beloved Community as anti-racism peacemakers.



Written in the wake of George Floyd's death, *Dear White Peacemakers* draws on the Sermon on the Mount, Spirituals, and personal stories from author Osheta Moore's work as a pastor in St. Paul, Minnesota. Enter into this story of shalom and join in the urgent work of anti-racism peacemaking. (Book description is from Amazon website.)

You can view Pastor Osheta's touching video about a breath prayer of lament from her book to prepare for the hard work of peacemaking:  
<https://www.instagram.com/tv/CNkfbLYBxT9/?igshid=odhte3w4lmsb>

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**CENSUS: US SEES UNPRECEDENTED MULTIRACIAL GROWTH,  
DECLINE IN THE WHITE POPULATION FOR FIRST TIME IN HISTORY**

The United States experienced unprecedented multiracial population growth and a decline in the white population for the first time in the nation's history, according to U.S. Census officials, who released data Thursday revealing the most sweeping picture of America's racial and ethnic makeup in a decade.

"These changes reveal that the US population is much more multiracial, and more racially and ethnically diverse, than what we measured in the past," said Nicholas Jones, the director of race, ethnicity, research, and outreach for the Census Bureau's population division.

The release bolstered expert predictions that the United States is becoming a more diverse nation, with continued expansion of the Hispanic, Black and Asian American populations and growing numbers of multiracial residents – only a fraction in past surveys. Read more [here](#) from *USA Today*.

## ACTION ALERTS

As followers of Jesus, we are called to follow the way of love that Jesus teaches us, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We understand that the laws enacted at the federal and state levels impact the systems that operate within our communities. They either contribute to building just systems and the beloved community, or they diminish justice and equity within societal systems. As people of faith, we have an opportunity to advocate for laws that are just and help to build the beloved community.

The action alerts provided below are supported by the General Convention and/or the Executive Committee. Please review these action alerts and consider submitting a letter to elected officials encouraging them to support legislation that builds justice and the beloved community.

**ADVOCATE TO EVACUATE AND RESETTLE OUR AFGHAN ALLIES.** To address these issues, we ask you to contact your representatives to ask them to press the Biden administration to implement the new reforms to the SIV program to process these visas as quickly as possible and designate Afghans facing danger in the country as P-1 priorities for refugee resettlement. Although the scope of this challenge is large, our members can contribute to the broad voices asking Congress and the administration to do well by our allies and bring them to the United States to honor their service. [Action Alerts – The Episcopal Church](#)

**URGE CONGRESS TO PASS POLICE REFORM.** While a great deal of police reform occurs at the local level, the House of Representatives passed the [George Floyd Justice in Policing Act](#) of 2021, a bill that would set national standards and attempt to bring about lasting change to the ways that police departments operate. Now that legislation is in the Senate, and bipartisan [talks are underway](#) to come up with a bipartisan police reform bill that will become law. We ask you to contact your Senator urging them to take action on police reform, a key step in addressing systemic racism and providing long-overdue protections to communities of color. [Action Alerts – The Episcopal Church](#)

**SUPPORT EFFORTS TO END COVID-19 PANDEMIC GLOBALLY.** Our Baptismal Covenant calls us to strive for justice among all people and respect the dignity of all human beings. Since [2003](#), the General Convention has passed resolutions in support of international programs that alleviate suffering and promote wellbeing for all. It is critical that the U.S. works with the international community to bolster and expand vaccine production capacity in different parts of the world to increase availability. Please reach out to your Senator and Representative and urge them to take the following steps to help fight this pandemic: [Action Alerts – The Episcopal Church](#)