



*Becoming Beloved Community Ministry Team:  
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## **Letter from Birmingham Jail—reading and conversation**

On February 25 at Church of the Incarnation, the Becoming Beloved Community Ministry Team hosted a reading and conversation about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Letter from Birmingham Jail.

The letter was written in April 1963 while Dr. King was in prison for participating in non violent demonstrations to protest the injustice of segregation in Birmingham, Alabama. The letter was written in response to a public statement from eight white religious leaders stating their concerns that the protests were "unwise and untimely."

During the event, portions of the letter were read and discussed to answer some questions.

- What was the historical context for the letter?
- How is the letter relevant to us today?
- What is effective action to bring about change in our society?
- What are the implications of the letter for us in our effort to build the Beloved Community?

Thirty members of the congregation attended the presentation and discussion. There was thoughtful sharing from many in the group which reflected their heart-felt concern about the presence of racism in our society. Several individuals shared their stories about being involved with efforts for integration and the impact on their lives. There was discussion about the current situation and ideas about what we can do. Feedback from

participants was that the presentation and conversation was helpful to process the message of the Letter.

Referencing the pillars of Becoming Beloved Community, there was discussion about the importance of telling the truth about racism in our communities, identifying what our communities would be like if the unjust conditions were not present, working with ourselves to grow our capacity to be more loving, and engaging in the community to be healers of unjust systems.

Several follow-up activities were discussed–

- Learning more about racism in our country and communities.
- Identifying a local issue and becoming engaged with it as a healer.
- Advocating for public policies that build justice.
- Voting for issues and candidates that are in alignment with our values.

For more information about the Becoming Beloved Community Ministry at Church of the Incarnation and how you can be involved with this effort, contact Fernando Dizon ([fdizon@gmail.com](mailto:fdizon@gmail.com)) or Miriam Casey ([miriamlwcasey@gmail.com](mailto:miriamlwcasey@gmail.com)).