

News of Our Becoming November 2022

In lieu of report for Convention

As this year draws to a close and we prepare for Annual Convention, it felt timely to share news of diocesan Becoming Beloved Community efforts. This ministry has grown beyond a task force or commission and now is rooted at the very heart of our diocesan mission. For more background on this evolution, see the [2018-2021 Impact Report](#) and the most recent [communication, shared in June 2022](#).

At last year's Convention (2021), the budget (\$114,000) of Becoming Beloved Community passed and, for the first time since the inception of this effort in 2018, came fully under the auspices of the diocese. This change in funding structure, as well as [Bishop Curry's newly articulated vision](#), created a new synergistic opportunity to discern direction, approach, and programmatic priorities for the coming year and beyond with the guiding question, "How might we become a diocese that looks and acts like Jesus?"

As a result, roles of missionaries were developed in Columbus, River Cities, Southeast region to support regional organizing. Contractors were hired to design and facilitate formation offerings centered on racial reconciliation, creation care, and evangelism. Becoming Beloved Community and Faith in Life budgets for 2023 represented strategic integration, with Faith in Life monies used to resource related ministries. New staff positions and hires provided additional opportunity to reenvision diocesan leadership infrastructure. Canon Rev. Jason Oden assumed the new role of Canon of Formation and New Episcopal Communities; Adam Hayden was hired as the new Youth Minister. Julie Murray's new role as Canon for Communications and Community Engagement. These new roles along with the developing roles of missionaries expanded the DSO Formation Team to be more inclusive and expansive, with opportunities to collaborate and partner across areas. Examples of this included the reimagination of the Dismantling Racism trainings; development of Lenten and Ordinary time zines; the Forming Podcast with guest speakers sharing stories of Becoming Beloved Community; and a Firekeepers Leadership Retreat including both diocesan and community partners beyond our diocese.

From the draft Convention Report...in case we want to provide more details around accomplishments, etc.

Leadership Development:

- **Align:** From May to September, Miriam McKenney, Amy Howton, Catherine Duffy, and The Rev. Canon Jason Oden organized a core team to align on strategy, set priorities, and plan for the ministry of Becoming Beloved Community.
- **Structure:** After a month of reaching out to listen and connect with individual leaders from across the diocese, the core team decided to build on the model of *communities of practice*, centering relationships and community and moving away from an established, separate committee.
- **Integration:** Building on the three years of this ministry and the commitment to incorporate Becoming Beloved Community as the core of diocesan life, the core team disbanded and reformed. Miriam McKenney and Amy Howton joined the DSO Formation team; Catherine Duffy and Miriam McKenney were appointed to the Bishop Nominating Committee. Under the leadership of Canon Rev. Jason Oden, partnerships were formed to resource the development of New Episcopal Communities through the lens of Becoming Beloved Community. Dismantling Racism training was reimaged and incorporated into diocesan formation as the core.
- **Formation:** After several years of continuously meeting, our ongoing weekly circles were suspended in May to be more inclusive and far-reaching. Series and one-time experiences were facilitated; support was provided to leaders facilitating Becoming Beloved Community circles in their congregations (ie Sacred Ground; Church Cracked Open book clubs; Miriam McKenney contributed to the Lenten Zine, and Amy Howton contributed to the Ordinary Time Zine, infusing Becoming Beloved Community into these platforms. Racial healing training was designed and planned to include one in the fall of 2022 and at least four for 2023; these reflect a change from a one-day training to a more intensive formation (either a three-session or six-week), framing racial healing as core to the Way of Love and following Jesus. A first annual Firekeepers Leadership Retreat formed twenty leaders from within and beyond the diocese, a collaborative project of New Episcopal Communities and Becoming Beloved Community. Find the activity report for the past four years [here](#).

Share the goals of your commission for 2023:

- Continue to integrate the essence of Becoming Beloved Community—racial healing, creation care, evangelism—into the operations and nature of diocesan life.
- Create new Episcopal communities through the lens of Becoming Beloved Community

- Partner with diocesan leadership bodies, including the Reparations Task Force, Creation Care + Environmental Justice Commission, Bishop's Nominating Committee, Commission on Ministry, Commission on Congregational Life, Union of Black Episcopalians, Latino ministries, and Sesquicentennial Planning Committee in the Practice of the Four-Fold Path (Telling the Truth; Practicing the Way of Love; Repairing the Breach, and Proclaiming the Dream) in the commitment to become a diocese that looks and acts like Jesus.
- Connect, develop, and sustain leaders in the practice of discipleship