

(cont. from page 1) ***Mass incarceration** and criminal justice systems that disproportionately target people of color with lengthier sentences, “stop-and-frisk” laws, the over-policing of communities of color, the school-to-prison pipeline, etc. ***Environmental racism**-the dumping of hazardous waste, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of access to clean water that results in a range of serious health problems in communities of color. ***Voting rights’ suppression**-in which communities of color have limited access to voting sites or to meet voting requirements.

What can we do to help dismantle structural racism? Confronting deeply ingrained racist systems and structures in our communities and country takes sensitivity and stamina. Before congregations and worshipping communities can confront the harsh realities of racism, it is helpful to have a good foundation. Here at TPC, we have a good beginning foundation. We affirm one another and our community through Operation Inasmuch. We support many local and global missions that help our neighbors. We welcome our neighbors to worship and serve with us. We participate as a church in Essex Churches Together, a community-wide resource and action group that is an example of community inclusion and diversity. You are invited to read the PCUSA-recommended book, *Waking Up White*, by Debby Irving, and attend our Bible study group as we explore our own beliefs across the next 8 weeks. May God grant to each of us a deeper understanding of how to love God and neighbor!

Peace of Christ to you, Vicki

“**Brave Space,**” by Debra Avery, in *These Days*, August 6, 2020

Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water and came toward Jesus. Matthew 14:28-29

In community-organizing space, an important practice is the creation of a “brave space.” In brave space, we recognize that in order to address oppression and inequity, we have to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. In order to break down the barriers created by racism, we have to do more than just look at the ways we participate in systems and structures that oppress. We have to struggle with, confess, and try to eliminate them in ourselves, in our families, among our neighbors, and in our churches. This requires vulnerability, trust, and commitment.

Peter’s desire is to be like Jesus. He wants to take up Jesus’ work—to walk bravely at Jesus’ side. But it’s impossible for him to do what Jesus did without putting himself at risk. Peter’s move out of the boat and into brave space is the first (and necessary) step. And we know the end of the story—that brave space extended to Calvary and an unmarked grave.

When we are challenged to change in deep ways, God, be our strength. Amen.



Wee Kirk Gazette

Tappahannock Presbyterian Church

A Most Welcoming Presbyterian Church in Essex County

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Dear TPC Family, we continue to explore the **Matthew 25 initiative**, of which we are a part. The three Matthew 25 foci are Building Congregational Vitality, Dismantling Structural Racism and Eradicating Systemic Poverty. This initiative of the PCUSA’s Presbyterian Mission Agency fits perfectly with our longstanding mission of being the church by serving our community. On this month’s focus on structural racism, let us begin in prayer:

God of love, be with us as we seek to follow your will for our communities. The prophet Amos said, “Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” May we allow the waters of justice to wake us up, welcome them to cleanse us individually and corporately, and pray that these waters might re-shape our social world until all your children are truly free. In Christ’s name, Amen.

The United States is unique in its history and in its diversity. We have long faced difficulties about racial and ethnic identity and the justice issues that face us and our neighbors. But God’s Word calls us always to learn and grow in a spirit of love and reconciliation. There is a growing awareness among Presbyterians that racism is a crisis and must be addressed. The PC (USA) is strongly committed to the struggle for racial justice.

Why do we talk about structural racism? Racism is not primarily about individual prejudice or an individual’s beliefs and attitudes. Rather, racism in the U.S. is a socially constructed system. Some people are advantaged, and others are disadvantaged, merely because of their skin color, ethnic identity or their ancestral background. Social power and prejudice have combined to treat people differently, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Some people are privileged while others are oppressed. As a consequence, there is unequal and inequitable access to resources such as money, education, information and decision-making power.

Here are some examples of structural racism: ***Housing discrimination** that limits where people of color can live and steers them to rental markets rather than home ownership. ***Laws and policies** that deny people of color access to quality education, employment and adequate health care. ***Food apartheid**-areas deliberately devoid of quality, affordable fresh food.

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OCTOBER ANNOUNCEMENTS



- ✦ **Weekly outdoor worship will resume on Oct. 4 at 10 am. with Worldwide Communion Sunday.** Join us each week; bring mask and chair and Spirit/spirit!
- ✦ **Sat., Oct. 3 and Sun. Oct. 4—Walk with us virtually, any time, any place, and any distance to end Alzheimer’s disease.** Let’s work together to create a world without Alzheimer’s. Contact: Lori Lenz at LSLENZ5@gmail.com
- ✦ **Sat. Oct. 3- Blessing of the Animals @ 2pm;** Tappahannock-Essex County Animal Shelter, 540 Airport Road, Tappahannock, VA.
- ✦ **Concert Across America to End Gun Violence:** <https://concertacrossamerica.org/>
- ✦ Our Tuesday Bible study group will explore racial justice issues in an 8-week series beginning on **Tuesday, Oct. 6th, 1-2:30 pm through Tuesday, Nov. 24th**, using resources recommended by the PCUSA. We ask you to prayerfully consider joining us for this critical dialogue. We will read *Waking Up White* by Debby Irving as our first exploration; we’ll use our time together to share our own stories of the development of our beliefs about race, ethnicity and justice.
- ✦ The **Operation Inasmuch United 2020** Services and Gifts Coordinators are working on delivering all the churches' collections. The Haven has benefited from those who collected towels, soaps, and personal items. The Canned Goods collection was delivered to Antioch Baptist, which was the food bank most in need. Our Children's Book collection will be sorted and delivered this week, and the other collections are all being gathered and delivered. OIAM United 2020 event didn't occur back in April when we'd hoped, but the work still goes on to help those in need. Let's hope and pray that we'll be able to gather together once again to do OIAM 2021!



CHRISTMAS MOTHER 2020



The Christmas Mother Program is a supplemental program to help families with Christmas gifts. It is made up of the Salvation Army, WRAR Christmas Wishes, individuals, churches and business sponsors. All applicants must live in Essex County and the ages of children eligible include birth through 12 years. Our congregation has been participating in this program for many years. We will again participate in 2020, especially due to the hardships being experienced in our area due to the coronavirus.

We will sponsor 8 children again as we have done in the past few years. This is a big challenge to our small group but a very important one in our outreach mission to our community. We will have the listing of children and gifts requested in November and will make them available at church as soon as possible. You can assist in this great mission by purchasing gifts requested or donating money, We will enlist the help of some of you to assist in the shopping needed--let Sherry know if you want to shop!!

Please pray for people across the globe who face this global pandemic. We are reminded to turn our hearts to God, as we follow the safety recommendations of our leaders. Pray that the racial injustices still so present in our country will be recognized and addressed so that everyone is treated with fairness and compassion at all times. We pray for those affected by natural disasters, families involved in violent events, and refugee families.

Please pray for these loved ones of our church: Pat, who is learning of new health issues; Jo Love, whose eldest child died last week and who is facing the spread of her cancer; Susan, facing a procedure; John Moody, now at home; Stacey, as she faces decisions about more surgery on her spine; Dave Canby, recovering at home; Virginia, recovering at home; Stacey and Wendel; 4 year old Brady and his family (which includes Robbie and Dave); 13 year old Luke and his family and friends, including Susan and Virginia; Ellen and John; Pat, Phyllis and Laura Jo; Bob Stanford (Robbie’s dad), Roland and Betty and Tom; Joey Burrough; Jill and Hunter; Cindy and Ron and Cindy's mom; Rebecca and her family.

October

David Jones 21

Roland Geddes 22

Pat Morris 23

November

Betty Geddes 2

Grace Lam 5

Bryce Matthews 10

Kathy Hughes 17