



The Parish of  
All Saints Church, Highertown and Baldhu

**Anti-racism Policy**  
**POLICY 2020**

# General Statement

We believe in the equality of all peoples and value the richness that comes with racial and ethnic diversity. Racism is a sin; as such we oppose racism in all its forms.

Racism is rooted in a belief of the superiority of whiteness, and it plays out systemically by way of unearned rights, rewards, and advantages being bestowed upon white people in Britain. This is evident in the Church of England as it is in wider society.

Racism in all its forms is idolatrous, it is an evil that must be confronted. It stems from the belief that one person is more superior than another due simply to their ethnicity, skin colour, religion and/or culture. As a church we recognise that this sin has been fostered over time, largely stemming from our history of empire and colonialism.

Here at All Saints we believe that the Church is only the Church when it reflects the diversity of the world that God created. As Christians of differing ethnicities, we share a common heritage, a common memory. Consider these words from the Apostle Paul: "In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.... There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus".

This does not mean that we take a colour-blind approach to community. Paul wasn't suggesting that aspects of our gender or racial identity aren't important. Paul emphasized that unity can be found in diversity. Indeed he says in 1 Corinthians 12 "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good".

At ASH Truro we now commit to becoming an anti-racist church. By embarking on this necessary life-giving work we also acknowledge our failure to address this properly in the past.

We understand that systemic racism is a clear and present danger, an affront to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We recognise that it would still exist even if we never heard a racist slur again -and therefore something must change.

In our endeavour to becoming an anti-racist church we acknowledge that silence on the matter of racism is complicity, and that by not speaking out and acting against racism we dishonour the teachings of Jesus and the sacred heritage of our faith.

We also acknowledge what the church has done well, and what we can build upon. We acknowledge that there are people within our own community that we can learn from, and that together we should listen with open hearts to the voices of those who have personally experienced the violence of racism.

# Aims

To that aim we commit to the following:

## **Firstly, we will join with others who lament over our country's history.**

Lamenting something horrific that has taken place, such as, the widespread enslavement of black African people for more than 300 years, and the millions killed under British rule in India in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, allows a deep connection to form between the person lamenting and the harm that was done, and that emotional connection is the first step, we believe, in creating a pathway for anti-racism work, and the healing and hope that can come from it. **As an anti-racist church, we will call people to Lament with others.**

## **Secondly, we will join with others who repent of our collective sin.**

To build bridges of racial reconciliation, we'll need to confront the guilt and shame of our collective past. We recognise that in western society morality has become an individualized experience. "Why should I repent of racism, when I am not racist?" You may have heard. But in the Bible, guilt and shame aren't described in an individualistic way. In the Bible, guilt and shame are often communal and point to the need for corporate repentance. **As an anti-racist church, we will call others to join us in our act of repentance.**

## **Thirdly, we will endeavour to create an environment where forgiveness is the outcome of our collective judgement.**

The first step in forgiveness is understanding how much we need forgiveness extended to us. This is true in the context of racism but also in other aspects of life too. Not only will we seek the forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ, but we will also seek to forgive others in the name of Jesus Christ. Practicing forgiveness doesn't mean ignoring the evil we've experienced or been a part of. It also doesn't mean that we deny our feelings of anger or grief, but instead recognises that change can more easily emerge from a confidence in who we are, today. **As an anti-racist church, we will seek forgiveness, and seek to extend forgiveness.**

## **Lastly, we will arise each day to discover the Kingdom.**

We believe that the Kingdom is where true reconciliation takes place. A place, a time, a vision where God and humanity are at-one-ment. It is also where we are one with each other. Christians believe that the two great commandments, to love God and to love one another, are the building blocks of a just society.

We recognise that reconciliation is hard work. Restorative justice is hard work. It is messy, it requires vulnerability, humility and courage. But we believe this is a part of our Christian faith that we cannot ignore any longer. In this matter, we believe that lament, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation will lead to justice. By accepting the task of becoming an anti-racist church we are accepting our part in 'doing the work', discovering God's kingdom and becoming a church that cries for justice. This will involve protest, lobbying for change, and working with and learning from others.

# Proposals

In our Parochial Church Council meeting in September we will be proposing a few changes to how we do things here at All Saints – this is just the first step.

- i. A new Anti-racism policy will be proposed and if accepted reviewed on an annual basis.
- ii. When recruiting new members of the team, whether employees or volunteers, we will ensure that candidate's personal details are removed (including name, address and any details disclosed as part of equalities monitoring) for the purposes of shortlisting to ensure equity and fairness.
- iii. Anti-racism training will be a standard part of our induction and training programme for all existing paid staff team members, and any new volunteer and paid team members.
- iv. Our Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding policies will be reviewed and updated to reflect the anti-racism work we are undertaking.
- v. A new page on our website will be developed to resource the wider community on matters of racism and discrimination and how to participate in anti-racism work.
- vi. As a church we will continue to take up a full part in the work of Cornwall Equality and Diversity Network meetings, and our partnership with Cornwall Refugee Resource Network, and round table discussions on Black Lives Matters and racism with Cornwall Council.

Revised and approved by the Parochial Church Council on 16<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020