

## **Racial Reconciliation and Healing Initiative – November 2016**

### **The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina**

#### **Dialogue Definitions** to think about as part of reconciliation work

*Adapted from a collection of resources from sociologists, scholars, and theologians and provided to the diocese by the Reverend Ollie V. Rencher based on many years of academic and religious studies, workshops, spiritual retreats, and group facilitations concerning race and reconciliation*

**Race** is “a group of people who perceive themselves and are perceived by others as possessing distinctive hereditary traits.” Whereas, ethnicity would be “having cultural traits such as language, religion, family customs, and food preferences.” The two can be confused with one another but they can also be intertwined. - Anthropology.net Concept of Race

**Prejudice** is when a person negatively pre-judges another person or group without getting to know the beliefs, thoughts, and feelings behind their words and actions. A person of any racial group can be prejudiced towards a person of any other racial group. There is no power dynamic involved.

**Bigotry** is stronger than prejudice, in that it is a severe mindset and often accompanied by discriminatory behavior. It is arrogant and mean-spirited, but requires neither systems nor power and privilege to engage in. Different from a racist, a bigot discriminates on the basis of her/his personal opinion, which can include race, gender, religion or beliefs. Whereas, a racist is born into a racial group that already holds power and privilege in a certain country or setting.

**Racism** is the system that allows the majority racial group that is already in power to retain power and privilege with convenient access to survival resources (housing, education, jobs, food, health, legal protection, etc.). Different from a bigot, a racist cannot help the racial group into which she/he was born and that holds power and privilege in a certain country or setting. Though "reverse racism" is a term often used, such cannot exist when a particular racial group clearly is the most established and retains power and privilege.

**Stereotyping** is attributing characteristics to a group simplistically and uncritically. Often there is the assumption that those characteristics are rooted in significant biological differences.

**Discrimination** is the act or practice of according negative differential treatment of individuals or groups on the basis of the group, class or affiliation such as race, religion and gender.

**Scapegoating** is the act or practice of assigning blame or failure to person or groups instead of placing it on the person(s) or group(s) to whom blame or failure actually belongs.

**Forgiveness** is an interior discipline; reconciliation is an outward process. It is a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness. One person can forgive; it takes two to reconcile.

**Reconciliation** is for persons to make right or to harmonize around a particular difference or situation that has caused hurt, conflict or separation. Reconciliation involves different parties coming to the same position, and it always involves change. Christian reconciliation is the idea of being made right with God. One person can forgive; it takes two to reconcile.