

# 2021 TRUST RECONCILIATION REPARATIONS



## Historical and Present Practices and Policies



The West African word *Sankofa* can be translated to mean . . .  
*go back to the past and bring forward that which is useful.*

The Sankofa Bird has been adopted as a symbol of what the study  
of history strives to do.

The Sankofa Bird is rendered as twisting its beak behind itself  
to bring forth an egg from its back.

*History is not merely something to be read.*

*And it does not refer merely or even principally to the past.*

*On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us,  
are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways,  
and history is literally present in all we do.*

*It could scarcely be otherwise since it is to history that we owe our frames of reference,  
our identities, and our aspirations,*

*And it is with great pain and terror that one begins to realize this.*

James Baldwin, *White Man's Guilt*, August, 1965



DALYN HUNTLEY

## The Peculiar Institution of Enslavement



August 2021

Friends

It is no small feat that St. Margaret's Church (SMC) in 2021 still exists well into its 4<sup>th</sup> Century. This parish, this church, was established, formed, and persevered as our country developed into something beyond the wildest dreams of the colonizers that were its founders.

Previous generations of SMC were openly committed to the process of seeking life with Christ at its center. Their perspective regarding the "peculiar institution" of enslavement in the new world shaped how we see the world.

Prior to the 2014 Trail of Souls Pilgrimage at SMC and in the Diocese of Maryland, that communal version of our history seemed uplifting and inspiring. That perspective narrowed how we viewed ourselves and our community. Hundreds of years of Vestry records, financial reports, and parish ledgers led to revelations that at times have made us weep.

One could ask, where was God?

The past has revealed more deep disappointments and lingering hurts than most of us ever realized. These behaviors, actions, and thoughts represent the imperfect process of becoming.

Our twenty-first century mindset and seemingly broadened view have been built on foundational structures of our past. Healing is in the commitment to the journey, our own personal psalm, wishing for an end to our lament. The discomfort and the lingering hurt must lead us to trust that in our making room for prayer and practice we will be closer, not to an end, but a new beginning.

When we embody Christ, we are commanded to actively love, listen, lament, and learn. The Rev. Kelly Brown-Douglass in the article [The Challenge to the Church during COVID](#) reminds us to remember this non-passive sacrifice. "For at the center of Holy Communion itself is Jesus' call for anamnesis, that is memorial sacrifice - 'Do this in memory of me'." (Luke 22:19). To act intentionally in concert with others to change lives.



Beginning with SMC, the first steps are not only outward but inward. Let us seek to listen to the stories that time has made invisible within our community. Listening as part of the process of healing will bring about new ministry and creative worship. This offers us the opportunity to continuously expand and deepen. Those imperfect steps will open doors for more conversation and critical action that change and expand our perspective of the communities we create.

The question is not "how can we help?". Rather, the question is how can past atrocities and present-day events shape how we help ourselves to understand the issues facing our community. Because of this "peculiar institution" and its similitude to present day structures, well-meaning people will continue to repeat those behaviors, actions, and thoughts.

In our own becoming, will SMC simply be satisfied with whom we claim to be? Will we simply be satisfied with just a welcome sign and a reportedly open door?

With love,

Dalyn



**T**RUST  
They trusted my voice!  
Harriett Tubman



## **R**ECONCILIATION

Dressed in a black T-shirt marked with the words “So Sorry”, London, England citizen David Pott dropped to his knees and apologized for his ancestors’ role in transporting slaves to America. “I confess the greed of my city and that I was made rich at the expense of Africans,” said the tall white man near a bronze statue of author Alex Haley that marks the landing point of Kunta Kinte, Haley’s slave ancestor made famous through the book and movie Roots. “I ask forgiveness of African-Americans here today for the horrors endured by your ancestors on London slave ships.”

On Wednesday 29 September, 2004, Pott and a dozen other people led Annapolis residents on a reconciliation walk on the 237th anniversary of the landing of the Lord Ligonier ship that brought Kunta Kinte to Annapolis. The Lifeline Expedition, Pott’s London-based Christian organization, has visited European countries with links to the slave trade and continues its reconciliation effort with a tour of the eastern United States that began in Annapolis. The tour marks the latest attempt to foster improved relations between blacks and whites by recalling slave times of yesterday and racism of today.

*1 Oct, 2004 Religion News Service*

## **R**EPARATIONS

A letter written 24 August, 1774 by the Rev. Joseph Messenger is the oldest artifact held in the archives of SMC. Mr. Messenger, the newly appointed rector (1774–1775) wrote to his father in England immediately upon taking up residence on glebe land appended to the Severn Heights church (second church, second location, 1731-1803). The Rev. Mr. Messenger wrote . . . *Thank God I have now obtained a comfortable subsistence with a dwelling house and perquisites which if properly managed would be worth a great deal indeed. I would like to purchase many slaves so as to work the whole of it, in order that I might return to my native country [England] sooner than I first intended . . .*

*I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.  
I am changing the things I cannot accept.  
— Angela Davis*





A. BERNADETTE PULLEY-PRUITT

## **Whitehall Walk: Path to Repentance, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation**



August 2021

Dear Friends,

As a young girl riding my bike on the access road (now Skidmore Road), I would often pass Whitehall Road. The entrance to Whitehall Road looked like a road to a special place. The road appeared unbelievably long and the few times that I attempted to ride my bike down it, I felt somewhat spooked. I now realize this feeling may have been due to the spirits of those who died long ago.

At the time, never would I have imagined that going down that road would one day lead me to learning about many of my enslaved ancestors. Today, I have traveled this road at least a dozen times, but the first time was after initially meeting Mr. Ridout [Orlando (Lanny) Ridout IV] around 1993.

Subsequently, in 1996, we had a conversation during which he extended an invitation for me to visit Whitehall. At that time, I was guided to the Ridout family cemetery, where my great-great grandfather Timothy Harris was buried. Timothy was born in 1834 and died in 1905. A slave of the Ridout family, he became their carriage driver.

When we arrived there, I read the epitaph on his tombstone "With the upright man, thou must show himself upright." I thought to myself how greatly admired and respected he must have been, despite of being enslaved. While at Whitehall, we also visited a cemetery where other enslaved people were buried.

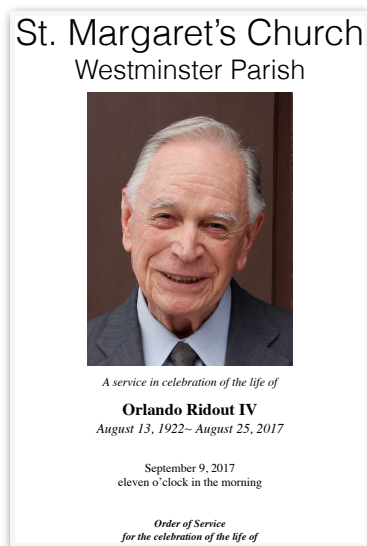
Ironically, the last tombstone there was that of my great-great aunt, Amelia Martin, with whom I share the family name, Amelia.



This introduction leads us to my words below that I was honored to share at SMC, Annapolis, September 9, 2017, for the service in celebration of the life of Orlando Ridout IV (August 13, 1922 - August 25, 2017).



This is the eulogy I shared that morning . . . It is with gratitude beyond measure that I acknowledge and remember a great family friend and beautiful, peaceful spirit.



This is the only appropriate place for me to be at this very moment to celebrate the long and well-lived life of a very special person, Mr. Orlando Ridout IV.

Most of us are aware of Mr. Ridout's major accomplishments; after all, his work has been very well documented. Much has been spoken and written about his life, both before and after his transition.

However, I would like to take a little time to acknowledge and mention why I adored and appreciated this man so much. Out of respect for my elders, I always referred to him as "Mr. Ridout."

As a child I had heard the name Ridout because my grandparents lived a road over from Whitehall and my elder cousin, Laney Colbert, had worked with them for many, many years, into his 90's.

However, I personally first spoke and then met Mr. Ridout around 1993 while working at the Maryland Historical Trust, with his son Orlando. We had a wonderful relationship for more than 20 years. Over time I learned a tremendous amount about the Harris and Calvert/Colbert families, as well as other African American families who lived on the Broadneck Peninsula, exploring their connections with the Ridout family and Whitehall.

Over the years, I felt as though we had become kindred spirits. It was if we had known one another ever since my great grand parents, Mary Calvert & Timothy Harris, had been enslaved at Whitehall. Every time I saw him, he brought my heart a unique level of delight. I always looked forward to sitting down to talk to him and learn something from him, often the history of our families.

Our conversations never missed a beat, and we always seemed to pick up as if we had just spoken a few days before.



In 2004, I was present when he publicly asked for forgiveness from me and from the descendants of others who were enslaved by the Ridout family. To me, this was just another indication that this man was ahead of his time. Despite his years, he always managed to show up and be present in the here and now of each occasion.

I will always remember and be moved by the special relationship that we shared. For me it was amazingly timely, necessary, and now one that is a priceless treasure. So, with that said, "Until We Meet Again, Rest in Perfect Peace, Mr. Ridout, and please know that you will forever hold a unique place in my heart!"

Today, I still find solace in the reading of Revelation 21-4 "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the former things have passed away."

Fondly,

Bernadette

### **The Roots of Reconciliation**

400 March in Annapolis to Help Heal Slavery's Wounds

*By Christian Davenport*

Washington Post Staff Writer

Thursday, September 30, 2004; Page B01

Whites wore T-shirts that said "So Sorry" and armbands labeled "Penitent." Blacks displayed bands that said "Forgiver." They converged yesterday on what is now the Annapolis City Dock, a spot where slaves were once bought and sold.

About 400 people joined what organizers described as a "reconciliation march" through downtown Annapolis, ending at the Maryland State House, where descendants of the slave Kunta Kinte and of auctioneer John Ridout, the man who sold him into bondage in 1767, embraced.



Orlando Ridout IV, left, a descendant of a slave auctioneer, embraces Chris Haley, right, a descendant of Kunta Kinte's, and Kunta Kinte foundation official Leonard Blackshear. (Mark Gail -- The Washington Post)

Gatherers broke into applause when Chris Haley, 45, and Orlando Ridout IV, 82, embraced each other -- a moment bringing together two men whose families' connection dates to the 18th century, when slave ships were a regular sight in the seaport.

Haley, a descendant of the slave Kunta Kinte, and Ridout, a member of the family that sold Kinte into slavery, have been friends for years.

Haley, echoing his late uncle, Alex, said yesterday that people on both sides of the racial divide tend to be defensive in discussing slavery.

"We've got to get past that and root out racism," said Haley, a state archivist who wrote yesterday's narrative.

Said Leonard A. Blackshear, head of the Kinte-Haley Foundation: "By golly, if they can do it, then who can't?"

## **T**rail of Souls: A Pilgrimage Toward Truth & Reconciliation

In 2013, the Right Reverend Eugene Sutton, bishop of the Diocese of Maryland, invited SMC, Annapolis to become one site on the diocesan-wide 2014 TRAIL OF SOULS: A Pilgrimage Toward Truth & Reconciliation, marking 150 years since the end of legal chattel slavery in the state of Maryland



This diocesan request followed the resolution from the 2006 General Convention asking each diocese to gather information in its community on

- the complicity of the Episcopal Church in the institution of slavery and subsequent history of segregation and discrimination
- examples of resistance to slavery and discrimination
- economic benefits derived by the Episcopal Church from the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of slavery.”

Maryland’s Day of Repentance was 1 November 2014, and has continued each year since. SMC prepared its history, pilgrimage, and video production, digging deep into its heritage and its past. These are available at SMC’s History & Archives Project web site [www.stmargaretsarchives.org/trail-of-souls-intro/](http://www.stmargaretsarchives.org/trail-of-souls-intro/)

## **D**iocesan Resolution 2020-06: Racial Restitution and Reconciliation

In 2020, the Diocese of Maryland at its annual convention on 12 September adopted Resolution 2020-06 Racial Restitution and Reconciliation.

The resolution

- Encourages and affirms the creation of a reparations fund by the diocese with an initial seed investment of \$1,000,000 from diocesan resources to the work of reparations.
- Urged all congregations in the diocese to prayerfully consider committing a percentage of their endowments or other resources to this fund
- Urged the Diocesan Council to intentionally foster opportunities to engage in racial, reconciliation, restitution and restoration arising from the Diocese of Maryland’s complicity in supporting the practice of chattel slavery and the legacy of immense harm caused by systemic and institutional racism which continues today.

## **T**rust, Reconciliation, Reparations

SMC in 2021 accepted the challenge of Diocesan Resolution 2020-06: Racial Restitution and Reconciliation.