

St. Philip's Episcopal Church



**A Service of Acknowledgement
Sunday, August 30, 2026
3:00 p.m.**

Welcome to this service of acknowledgement. This service concludes a weekend of learning about the history of the Episcopal Church in what is now Transylvania County. Part of our learning is about the perpetuation of the institution of slavery by Episcopalians who founded St. Paul's in the Valley Episcopal Congregation.

During this service, we seek to speak aloud the truths we have learned about our history, acknowledge that slavery and racial discrimination is contrary to the call of the Gospel, and allow ourselves to feel the weight of this legacy. More than that, we hope to create room for God to fill us with a courageous spirit of hope and justice as we discern how to continue and deepen our work for racial equity and for our transformation into God's movement in the world.

SERVICE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Rev. Elizabeth Roles

OPENING HYMN *Standing*

In Christ There is No East or West

Music: John Oxenham (1852-1941)

Words: Harry Burleigh (1866-1949)

Lift Every Voice and Sing II #62

OPENING ACCLAMATION *Standing*

Dear People of God, our history is marred by oppression, by the enslavement of those who differ from us, and by the forces of racism that attack human dignity. The sin of racism is woven into our lives and our cultures, in small and great ways, in things done and things left undone. As followers of Christ, we reject racism and the oppression of other human beings. In building Christ's beloved community, we must strive to love all people, respect all people and work for the good of all people. We must stand alongside God's children of every race, language, culture and work together as agents of repair, justice, peace, and reconciliation.

Officiant God is in this place.

People **And we gather in the name of God.**

Officiant We gather to hear God's truth.

People **And to prepare ourselves to walk the path of truth and justice.**

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING

Reader

The great prophets have consistently called us to work on behalf of others, putting our priorities on building relationships and sharing God's abundance so that all can flourish.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Through the Word of God in Scripture,
Through the Word of God among us
Through the Word of God within us.**

PSALM 31:1-5, 23-24

In te, Domine, speravi

Please join me in reading portions of Psalm 31 responsively by whole verse.

¹ In you, O Lord, I seek refuge;
do not let me ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.

² **Incline your ear to me;
rescue me speedily.
Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me.**

³ You are indeed my rock and my fortress;
for your name's sake lead me and guide me;

⁴ **take me out of the net that is hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.**

⁵ Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

²³ **Love the Lord, all you his saints.
The Lord preserves the faithful
but abundantly repays the one who acts haughtily.**

²⁴ Be strong, and let your heart take courage,
all you who wait for the Lord.

LITANY OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, LAMENT AND CONFESSION

Officiant

We come into God's presence aware of past failure to follow God's commandments and seeking forgiveness. We come to pray for all who have been abused and for the healing of minds and memories. We pray to God as one community in penitence, faith and hope. In the assurance of forgiveness, let us kneel as we are able before God and humbly confess our sins: our participation in racism, and our failure to acknowledge and heal the harms racism has perpetuated.

The congregation may kneel or remain seated.

Reader Human sin disfigures the whole creation, which groans with eager longing for God's redemption. We confess our sin in penitence and faith.

People **Hear us, O God.**

Reader We acknowledge where St. Paul's in the Valley and St. Philip's Episcopal church were planted. We remember that this was the land of the Cherokee people.

People **Forgive us Lord as we repent our sins.**

Reader We acknowledge that our church stood by when Black brothers and sisters were treated as less than human, both as fellow citizens of the world and as the beloved of God. Our church ignored the cries of the innocent.

People **Forgive us Lord as we repent our sins.**

Reader We acknowledge that our church stood by when Black families were forcibly separated and segregated, when God's children were treated as property. We remember that founding members of St Paul's in the Valley included enslavers. The Church accepted the favors and economic benefits of the subjugation of Black people.

People **Forgive us Lord as we repent our sins.**

Reader We acknowledge that, for much of the Church's history, Blacks were refused admission to Episcopal seminaries; passed over as candidates for ordination to the priesthood; denied employment in white churches; and frequently deployed to depressed and resource-barren parishes.

People **Forgive us Lord as we repent our sins.**

Reader In our country, crosses were burned, neighbors were killed, and children were denied equal access to the resources of our society. Instead of caring for others, our church answered in the words of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

People **Forgive us Lord as we repent our sins.**

Reader Systems of oppression and racism linger in our country and community. We acknowledge the ongoing displacement of people of color in our community due to gentrification and unfair property tax laws.

People **Give us a voice to speak out against injustice, O Lord.**

Reader We acknowledge the pain and suffering of our Black brothers and sisters who have been subjected to racial profiling and to unjust convictions and sentencing.

People **Give us a voice to speak out against injustice, O Lord.**

Reader We recognize the times that we have failed to recognize racism in ourselves, in our church, in our society, and for the times we have recognized but failed to act.

People **Dear Lord, teach us and forgive us.**

Reader We acknowledge our complicity in systems of privilege and power over those whose skin color, culture, or creed differ from our own.

People **Dear Lord, teach us and forgive us.**

Silence is observed

Reader The names of all of those enslaved who were brought here, born into slavery here, who died and were buried in unmarked graves, cannot be fully known. But the souls of those people are in the air that we breathe. We say aloud those names that we do know from historical records, and by naming them, honor the dignity and humanity of all who were enslaved.

Newspaper Ad – Committed to a Jail

Dick

Slave Sale Record

Isaac and Elsie, and their two children Charlotte and John

January 1834 Bill of Sale

Nancy, Jane, Pendah, Charles, Polly, January

Slave Contract and Planter Diary 1844

Hetty and her increase meaning any future children, Ned, Fanny, Thomas, Eliza and her two children Rebecca age 8 and William Henry age 4, Lucy, her two children Francis and Florence and all her future increase, Simon and Prince

January 1846 Bill of Sale

Jenny, Abram, Bram, Joan, Job, Eve, Harriett, Guy, Beck, Francis, Sylvia, Diana, Cornelia, Marcus, Mary, Grace, Richard, Elizabeth, Mark Marcia, Cymone, Venus, Stephen, Fannie, Dolly, Sam, Lewis, Sedgwick, Jacob, Shaker, Saffron, Sylvia, David, Eleanor, Serena, Rose and Hannah

1847 Slave Contract

Caesar, Katy, Harry, France, Margaret, Susan, James, Elsey

March 26, 1855, Bill of Sale for Three Men and Three Women

Cudjoe, Thomas, Sam, Hester, Ellen, Sarah

1851 Executor's Sale of Slaves

William, Lavinia, Fredrick, John, Rebecca, William, Yandy, George, Jenny, Tyrah, Samsue, York, Adeline, Larissa, Sue,

Isabella, Catherine, Ansel, Marshall, Mary, Grace, Pyhlist,
November, Elvira, Affey, Johnny, Cato, Flora, May, Quash, Joe,
Henry, Marcus, Able, Sansue, Richard, John, Jane

1854 Slave Contract
Stephen, James, Susan

Planter Diary 1865
Erika, Brister, Rensky, Lander, Emanuel, Charity, Lasey, Jane,
Bob, Tom, Eve, Nan, Daphne, Tom, Scotty, Jackson, Lena,
Casandra, Ellen, Perry Jane, and her three children, Infants and
young children Charles, Hilland, Paul, Boy, Fontein, Rowan,
Alain, Robert, old Granny, Tom, Harry, Reeves, Fortune, Moon,
Bishop, Lizzy, Buchanan and Lawrence Claudia and Reuben,
Robert, Matilda, Mary, Morris

*Silence is observed; the people are invited to name enslaved persons known to them,
either silently or aloud.*

Officiant

Merciful God, grant that through the strength of your divine power, we might protect, affirm and serve one another. Make all forms of hatred cease, unmask all systems of corruption and power, and drive far from us all fear and prejudice. You are as near as our breath, and as close to us as the contours of our hearts and minds. This we ask through the power of your Holy Spirit that comes as a refining flame to those who are causing hurt, and a balm to those who are suffering. **Amen.**

THE NEW TESTAMENT *The congregation may be seated.*

Reader Jesus was clear about the purpose of his ministry. Jesus desires for all burdens – economic, social, physical and spiritual – to be dissolved.

A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 4: 16-21

When Jesus came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, He went to the synagogue on the sabbath day as was His custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and

found the place where it was written: The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind and let the oppressed go free to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. And He rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. Then He began to say to them "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Leader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Through the Word of God in Scripture,
Through the Word of God among us
Through the Word of God within us.**

RITE OF HEALING *The congregation remains seated*

Officiant God created us for unity with God, one another and all creation. Through our sinfulness, we are broken apart by years of conquest, abuse, violence, greed, loss and misuse. Whatever our legacy, through God's incarnational grace we are One in God's love.

People **We lay down our burdens and commit ourselves to work for
Healing and Restoration.**

The people are invited to silent reflection, and may come forward to light a candle during this time of reflection.

HYMN *Standing* There is a Balm in Gilead

Music: American Melody

Arr: Dr. Carl Haywood

Words: Traditional

Lift Every Voice and Sing II #203

Officiant

Let us pray together,

God of healing and hope, of justice and truth. Our hearts yearn for the reconciliation that comes from confession and truth telling and the work of the Spirit within. Understanding that what we do to others, we do to ourselves. We turn to God, asking to open new doors to equality and

respect. May we grow into the humans that God created us to be, and leads us to become. As possibilities for new ways open, let us dare to be human with one another for the sake of life itself, which is God's gift to each of us. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Derrick Gardner

REMEMBRANCES AND HOPE

- Reader* Today we offer thanks for many past and current achievements of the Black Community in Transylvania County, and their steadfastness as they built lives here.
- Reader* For the thriving business community in Brevard that Black people built,
- Reader* For Fred Mills, a Black stonemason from the Rosenwald Community, who lent his considerable talents to the construction of this church,
- Reader* For the many talented artists, musicians, actors, athletes, scholars who have come from this Black Community,
- Reader* For teachers, administrators, and staff who created a nurturing and effective environment at the Rosenwald School before schools were integrated,
- Reader* For the courage of Black leaders and parents who fought for school integration, and especially for those brave students who left Ninth Avenue School in Hendersonville to integrate Transylvania County Schools.
- Reader* For the Mary C Jenkins Community Center and the many ways they help our community learn more about history and culture, and their leadership in celebrating Martin Luther King Jr's birthday and Juneteenth.
- Reader* For the presence and support of the Rise & Shine Program to tutor and nurture scholars as they learn and grow,

Reader For the work of the NAACP of Transylvania County as they stand for justice and remind our community that Black lives matter,

Reader For all people who speak up for fairness concerning housing, taxes, voting, civil rights and health care.

Officiant

God of the past, the present, and future; By story and by Blood we are made of those who came before us. We celebrate those lives that endured the deepest evils and who persevered, who resisted, who fought, who dreamed of a world in which all are created and treated as equal. Grant to us wisdom to realize the power of their legacy and courage to adopt their spirits and their faithfulness as we continue to work toward the world of which they dreamed. This we ask of the God of all ages, the Alpha and Omega. **Amen.**

MUSICAL OFFERING

Derrick Gardner

ACT OF COMMITMENT *Standing*

Officiant

Dear People of God, we have been baptized into the household of God. By the power of the Holy Spirit we have been cleansed from sin and born again that we might continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ. God calls us to be a people of reconciliation, serving a world in need. We are all called to the work and ministry of racial justice and repair.

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, building up the Body of Christ inclusive of all people, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers for repair and justice?

People **I will with God's help.**

Will you persevere in resisting all evil that creates division and hatred, exploitation and subjugation, discrimination and disfavor, and when you fail, will you repent and return to the work of God's justice?

People **I will with God's help.**

Will you proclaim by word and deed the good news of God in Christ Jesus that every human being is made in the image of God?
People **I will with God's help.**

Will you seek to serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself and ever seeking greater unity with those who are different from you?
People **I will with God's help.**

Will you seek to serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself and ever seeking greater unity with those who are different from you?
People **I will with God's help.**

Officiant

May almighty God empower you to continue God's work of repair, give you courage to overcome fear and to embody love. May God give you grace to grow in self-awareness and personal integrity and strengthen you to seek the unity that is in Christ so that we may rejoice with all God's children. **Amen.**

BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Music: John Rosamond Johnson (1873-1954)

Words: James Weldon Johnson (1871-1978)

Lift Every Voice and Sing II #1

WORSHIP LEADERS

Officiants	The Rev. Elizabeth Roles The Rev. Elise Johnstone The Rev. Angela Emerson
Music	Derrick Gardner
Readers	Peggy Bridges Sim Cozart Mary Dryselius The Rev. Angela Emerson Libby Fisher Craig Gralley The Rev. Bill Livingston The Rev. Diane Livingston
Liturgy Committee	The Rev. Elizabeth Roles The Rev. Elise Johnstone The Rev. Angela Emerson The Rev. Diane Livingston Dolores Brown Peggy Bridges Mary Dryselius Libby Fisher
Ushers	Ed Nezelek Kathryn Polmanteer

The Rev. Elise Johnstone currently serves as Rector of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Seattle, Washington. Before joining St. John's, she served as Canon to the Ordinary for the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Classics from the University of Georgia, a Master of Divinity from the General Theological Seminary in New York City, and a Doctor of Ministry in Liturgy from the University of the South School of Theology in Sewanee, Tennessee.

Derrick Gardner is a musician, educator, composer, and arranger whose passion for music has shaped a lifelong commitment to creativity and community. As the Founder of SoundGarden LLC in Brevard, North Carolina, Derrick continues to inspire students and musicians of all ages through meaningful musical experiences. A longtime educator, Derrick served as Music Director at Brevard Academy for 15 years and previously led The Arts For Christ (TAFC) Band. His career as a performer and collaborator has taken him to stages and festivals across the United States and internationally. Derrick finds great joy in sharing music through performance, teaching, and worship leadership at Destiny Church in Brevard. Through every avenue, his mission remains the same: to use music to inspire, connect, and transform lives.

Cover Art: *Jesus of the People*, by contemporary American artist Janet McKenzie, was selected as the first-place winner of *The National Catholic Reporter's* global competition "*Jesus 2000*." *Jesus of the People* was revealed on The Today Show, generating enormous worldwide response, much of it violently hateful. McKenzie's dark interpretation modeled by a woman challenges stereotypical thinking by including two groups traditionally marginalized and left out of iconic imagery of Jesus – people of color and women. Ms. McKenzie's imagery is regularly carried in vigils and demonstrations across the country supporting social and racial justice. (The artwork is used by permission.)

*****Notes*****



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MINISTERS: The Baptized People of God
The Rev. Elizabeth Roles, Rector

OUR VISION: *Rooted in God's word and guided by Christ's example, St. Philip's Episcopal Church will be a loving, inclusive community committed to living out Christ's commandments.*

OUR MISSION: *Guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and informed by Scripture, tradition and reason, we will:*

- *Learn and teach by word and example how God continues to be at work in the world and in our lives;*
- *Love and serve all people as Christ loves us;*
- *Grow in faithful stewardship of the resources God has given us; and*
- *Celebrate joyfully this faith in our life, worship, prayer, and service.*