

The 4 Values of Reparations

REPARATIONS is founded on Christ's command to **LOVE** our Neighbor as Ourselves.

There is a breach in the Body of Christ, caused by Slavery and its Descendants. Christ's Love dictates that Repair is needed.

Where Repair is needed, these 4 Values must lead the way.

TRUTH

- Tell the truth about Slavery and Racism
- Refuse to hide from historical fact
- Acknowledge our role in it.
- Repent

JUSTICE

- Heal God's Beloved Community
- Restore dignity
- Renounce revenge but change the power dynamic which puts whiteness at the peak of power

INTEGRITY

- Know who we are
- Embrace internal consistency, wholeness, and honesty
- Hold the vision of God's Beloved Community as our greatest good.

TRANSFORMATION

- Grow into God's Truth, Faith, Hope, and Love
- Commit to changing as individuals and church
- Commit to self-examination and humility

The Four Values of Reparation

❖ TRUTH:

Jesus said, "The truth will set you free." Living in Christ's truth means seeing the world both as it is and as Christ desires it. It means examining critically one's own life, one's community, and God's dream of Beloved Community with honesty and unflinching courage. In the context of slavery and its ongoing effects, truth requires us to study how this country, community, church was built on the backs of enslaved people and to call it what it was...

Truth as a value for Reparation means speaking that truth. We speak it to ourselves, to our community, to the church, and to God in the form of confession, spiritual examination and commitment to healing the injury. We speak the truth to those in power as part of that healing.

❖ JUSTICE:

"Let Justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos 5:24) "Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public." (Cornel West)

In the context of Reparation, Justice is more than simply penalizing those who do wrong or giving some form of payment to those who have been wronged. Justice is healing. Justice in God's Beloved Community is a condition in which every person feels wanted, at ease, and safe in their community. It is a condition in which every person feels that they belong — without condition or reserve. Justice leads to an experience of the world that is trauma free. Justice as a guiding value for Reparation is never about revenge for harm done but about changing the power dynamic which currently puts whiteness at the peak of power. Justice is getting to Right Relationship in which all people see themselves and each other — and treat themselves and each other — as equal and equally beloved children of God. Justice in the context of Reparation is as much about conversion — individual and communal — as it is about actions. This never-ending task is essential to living into our baptismal covenant. Because of its enormity, we may be reluctant to confront injustice and

work for God's justice. But justice requires that we let go of our hesitancy and begin (or continue) the work.

❖ INTEGRITY:

"I know, my God, that you examine our hearts and rejoice when you find integrity there." (1 Chronicles 29:17)

"In your teaching, show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us." (Titus 2:8, NIV)

Whether we are talking about individuals, communities such as the Church, or our relationship with God, integrity implies internal consistency. It implies wholeness and honesty. It implies a sense of "What you see is what you get."

Integrity is a crucial value for Reparation because it requires us to know who we are. It requires us to look deeply at ourselves, our words, and our actions and ensure that they match.

Integrity is not self-destructive. It is self-instructive guided by adherence to a moral or ethical code. It is a corrective to stubbornness or being held captive by past teaching or tradition. It is the act of living into our better angels. As we approach Reparation, to have integrity means to hold on to the vision of God's Beloved Community as our greater good, and to revise our words and actions as necessary to reach that community.

❖ TRANSFORMATION:

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)

Perhaps the primary purpose of the Church is Transformation. We are called to grow into God's Truth, into God's Faith, Hope, and Love, and the Church exists to facilitate that growth. We walk in faith together knowing that the vision of the Beloved Community is not yet realized — and that the Church has often stood in the way of its realization — but that we and those with whom we walk aspire to it. We offer our lives to be transformed into the lives God wants for us.

In the context of Reparation, we accept that true Repair cannot happen until we are transformed as individuals, as community — especially as the Church — and in relationship to God. We recognize that while changing laws and policies may be necessary, this alone will not repair the breach, the deep gash in the tapestry of God's vision for us. For that to happen, we must be changed.

The work of reparation is necessarily an ongoing, spiritual pursuit, and we appreciate that we may not yet see where we need to be going. As St. Paul says, we see in a glass dimly and know only partly. We only see imperfectly what the Beloved Community can be like.