

St Philip's

episcopal church

Anti-racism Survey 2026

Church Name: St. Philip's Durham

Name of person completing survey: Sue Guptill

Role: RJR member, Vestry member

Does your congregation have an RJR? Yes

Describe activities, including racial history of church or community.

Learning:

- Truth-Telling Panels
- Vestry/staff mandated DR workshop participation
- EfM includes work by Howard Thurman, Pauli Murray, Verna Dozier, and Steven Charleston
- RJRC:
 - Collaborating with Durham allies to understand our collective history of oppression and resistance
 - Annual Pilgrimage to Stagville
 - Organized viewing of Wilmington Coup documentary, followed by discussion (open to parish and others)
 - Did Pilgrimage to St. Luke's Salisbury (along with representatives from Sacred Spaces Committee) to learn more about their project with the goal of raising up a more inclusive vision of the saints among us
 - Did two Truth-Telling forums to discuss our racial history
 - Hosted the Stagville Memorial Project to allow us to learn more about the history of enslavement at Stagville
 - Hosted Pauli Murray's niece Rosita Stevens-Holsey to talk about Murray's history of racial and gender activism

Action:

- Participated in annual community MLK march and community gathering

- Continued our work with and in support of Urban Ministries Durham in direct response to the recognition that many of our unsheltered neighbors have been marginalized by racism
- Supported our large Liberian community by providing funding for churches and medical work, recognizing that our Liberian parishioners escaped the horrors of Civil War in Liberia, but were met with racism in the US
- Made space free of charge to LEAP, the Latino preschool that takes weekly field trips to our property, The Trees, where children and parents learn to embrace and not fear not only the wilderness but being outside in general. Their testimonies about how this has changed their lives are remarkable and inspiring
- Built relationships and offered hospitality to numerous groups led by BIPOC leaders for BIPOC guests based around both collective healing and community engagement.
- Through RJR, connected with Mount Level Community Partnership for Racial Justice to contribute to summer Freedom School through Durham Cares
- Participated with Durham CAN (Congregations, Associations, and Neighborhoods) in work that addresses historical systemic racism, e.g., housing access
- Financially supported these community initiatives: Buen Pastor, Durham Congregations in Action, Durham CAN, Episcopal Farmworkers, LEAP, Liberian Medical, Pauli Murray Center, Stagville Memorial, UMD Partnership

Worship:

- EfM specifically uses words from Cole Arthur Riley's book *Black Liturgies* as part of their understanding of their ministry
- At our property *The Trees*, we have a Stations of the Cross path designed to cultivate meditation on contemporary instances of violence against the vulnerable, including racist violence; further, it points to Jesus to invite healing to ways that liberal political or inherited church tendencies do not engender attitudes or practices of full reckoning or genuine justice-making.
- Regularly incorporate traditional African American traditional music in our liturgy, both for congregational singing and choral anthems
- Held full gospel MLK day celebrations using the April 4th Propers for MLK on the holiday weekend.

How does work affect sense of discipleship?

We have made an effort in all of our activities to tie what we are doing with an understanding of how this relates to our call from Jesus and to our Baptismal covenant. Sometimes we have focused on our neighbors (near and far) who have very different life

experiences from most of our congregation; sometimes we have recognized that racial trauma has occurred to our own members

What worked and didn't work

Our Truth-Telling forums were well-attended and led to deeper discussions (and more questions!). The Stagville Pilgrimage and Wilmington Coup events were also very successful. Attendance at the MLK Community event (by our parishioners) was not as well attended. Where we are not doing as well is in male participation in racial justice leadership. Our RJR is 88% female, and all of our activities are organized and led primarily by women. Also, few parishioners are participating in Diocesan events.

Describe how church has made use of Diocesan resources

As mentioned above most staff and Vestry members have done Dismantling Racism. We have done two Sacred Ground Circles. Several parishioners attended the Absalom Jones service.

What help and support from the Diocese do you need?

We are aware of Diocesan resources, so probably don't need additional ones.

Plans for 2026

Annual Stagville tour, additional Truth-Telling forums, continued participation in Durham CAN, and continued support of community activities to reduce racism or mitigate the effects of racism. As we move forward with structural and cosmetic changes to our worship spaces, continue to advocate for recognition of the contributions of BIPOC to our faith.