

## **St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**

### **Living out our baptismal vows**

**Celebrant:** Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?  
**People:** **I will, with God's help.**

**Celebrant:** Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?  
**People:** **I will, with God's help.**

*"The wealth gap between Black and white Americans has been persistent and extreme. It represents, scholars say, the accumulated effects of four centuries of institutional and systemic racism and bears major responsibility for disparities in income, health, education, and opportunity that continue to this day."* (<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/06/racial-wealth-gap-may-be-a-key-to-other-inequities/>)

While there are many factors that have created this crisis, the systemic racism embedded within financial systems, practices, and policies raises barriers to home ownership for black families thereby closing the door to building intergenerational wealth.

Although a systemic issue there are actions, we, as individuals, can do to make a difference. First and foremost, educate yourself about the issue:

- Suggest your book club read a relevant book for discussion. Examples include
  - The Color of Law (Richard Rothstein),
  - Evicted (Matthew Desmond) and
  - Freedom to Discriminate (Gene Slater).
- Organize a film discussion group. Relevant films and videos include
  - 'Our America Lowballed' (ABC Owned Television Stations),
  - 'Owned' (Independent Lens PBS, Prime Video), and
  - 'Priced Out' (Stream on YouTube, ITUNES, Google Play, Amazon or Kanopy using your library card)
- Check out reputable internet sites. Possible search terms include redlining, intergenerational wealth housing, housing inequality etc. Some sites to get you started include
  - Bridging the Wealth Gap (Hud.gov)
  - Intergenerational House Ownership (urban.org)
  - Housing Discrimination Underpins the Staggering Wealth Gap Between Blacks and Whites (epi.org)

In addition to educating yourself and others consider these other actions:

- Make an unrestricted gift to OwnIt, allowing them to use the funds where it is most needed.
- Consider using an OwnIt Ambassador or a realtor of color when selling your home.
- Send realtors and financial institutions letters about the issue using the templates written by parishioner Judy Mills.
- Raise awareness of those around you e.g., share the articles written by parishioner Anne Keller

- Include in your estate planning that the sale of your home should use a realtor of color or an OwnIt ambassador.

***Lastly, join the St. Andrews Intergenerational Wealth Gap Housing committee!***