

# A STATEMENT FROM BISHOP WRIGHT

THE CONTINUED WORK OF THE CENTER  
FOR RACIAL HEALING

March 16, 2024

Greetings beloved in Christ. I am aware some of you have received an email from Dr. Catherine Meeks regarding the present work of The Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, and me personally, and I felt I should communicate with you directly.

Please know I remain truly grateful for Dr. Meeks' work as the founding Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center. During Dr. Meeks' tenure, with the help and generosity of many, good and groundbreaking work was accomplished in support of racial reconciliation and healing in the Diocese of Atlanta and beyond. Dr. Meeks informed me in January 2023 that it was her wish to retire from her role as Executive Director at the conclusion of the year, and a process was begun to determine next steps. In the months leading up to Dr. Meeks' retirement in December 2023, it became clear that the Center would benefit from additional clarification around its organizational structure, financial sustainability, and the scope of the executive director's role. I made the decision to pause the process in order to focus on this work.

Indeed we are moving forward on a number of fronts and have great hopes for the future. Since January of 2024, we have appointed a head dismantling racism trainer, launched a campaign to recruit new trainers, reduced facilities costs, and secured a forty-thousand dollar grant from the Presiding Bishop's office. In addition to an expanded number of dismantling racism trainings, we are also exploring a new program partnership with the Fearless Dialogues organization, and working with the Center's staff to offer programming for both college students at nearby campuses and the wider community. We are actively in conversation with an Interim Executive Director candidate. Our work begun years ago continues to bless God's people.

On January 11, 2024 I was notified that Dr. Meeks had filed a Title IV complaint against me. Her complaints were heard, recorded, and processed under the Title IV Canons for Bishops and processed by representatives of the Presiding Bishop's Office and the Disciplinary Board for Bishops. On February 22, Dr. Meeks and I were notified in writing by the President of the Disciplinary Board for Bishops that the Reference Panel had determined to take "no action... other than appropriate pastoral response pursuant to Canon IV.8," and that "the matter was dismissed."

That conclusion aside, this rupture in a formerly very generative partnership and the subsequent events sadden me deeply. I remain committed to building on the good work Dr. Meeks and our colleagues began at the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing.

As we make our way toward the celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord, join me in prayer for the ministry we share in working together for racial reconciliation and for the healing of all involved in this matter.

With every blessing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. C. H.", is centered on the page. Behind the signature is a faint, purple circular seal or stamp, which is partially obscured by the ink. The seal features a central emblem, possibly a cross or a similar religious symbol, surrounded by text that is not legible due to the low opacity.