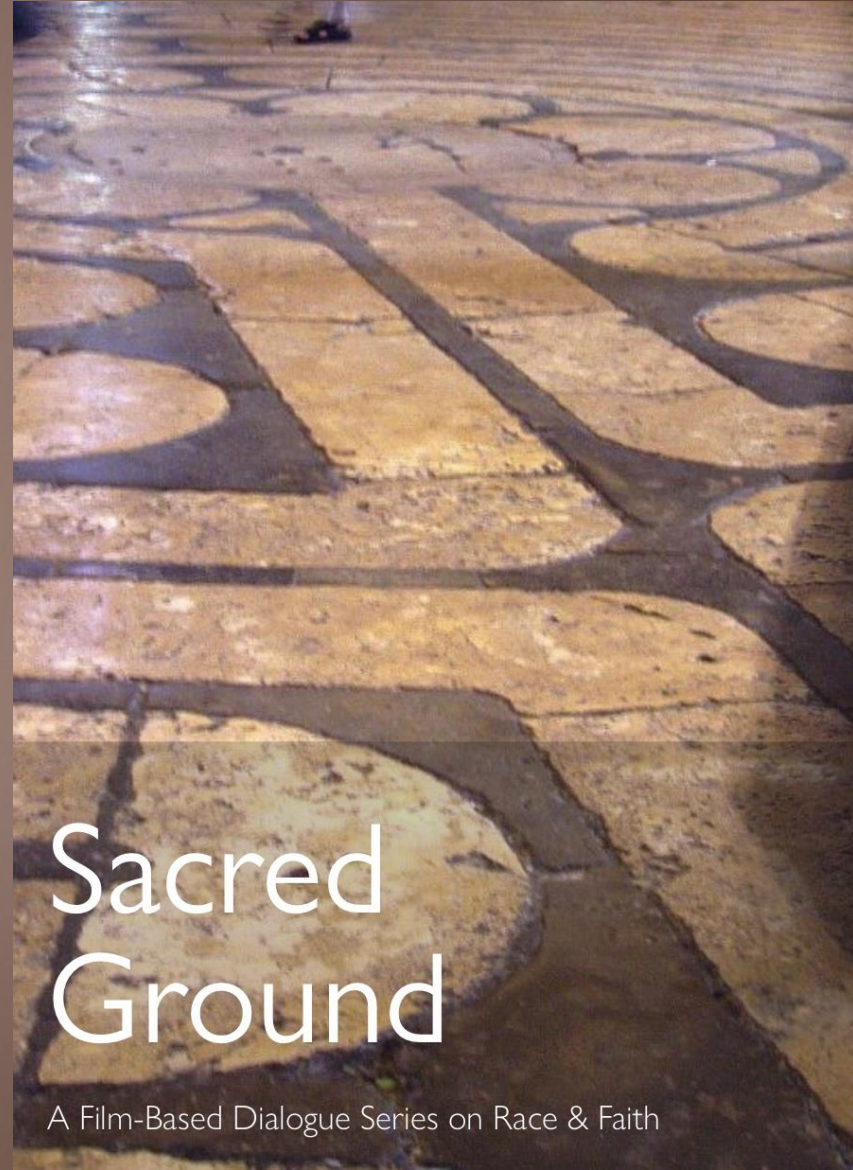


# Sacred Ground: An Introduction

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, PASADENA

2025



## Sacred Ground

A Film-Based Dialogue Series on Race & Faith



“All life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

*The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



“There is another element that must be present in our struggle that then makes our resistance and nonviolence truly meaningful. That element is reconciliation. Our ultimate end must be the creation of the beloved community.”


*The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

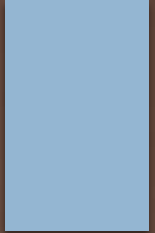
# What is Sacred Ground?



- ▶ *Sacred Ground* is part of ***Becoming Beloved Community***, The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society.
- ▶ This series is open to all, and especially designed to help white people talk with other white people.
- ▶ Participants are invited to peel away the layers that have contributed to the challenges and divides of the present day – all while grounded in our call to faith, hope and love.

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- ▶ It is an attempt to be responsive to the profound challenges that currently exist in our society -- focused on the challenges that swirl around issues of race and racism, as well as the difficult but respectful and transformative dialogue we need to have with each other about them.

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- ▶ It invites participants to walk back through history in order to peel away the layers that brought us to today, and to do so in a personal way, reflecting on family histories and stories, as well as important narratives that shape the collective American story.



- ▶ It holds the vision of beloved community as a guiding star – where **all** people are honored and protected and nurtured as beloved children of God, where we weep at one another's pain and seek one another's flourishing.

# Producer Katrina Browne



*“At this stage in American life and in the life of our Church, white Episcopalians and other white people could make an especially powerful contribution to the journey toward racial justice and reconciliation by entering into deep listening and dialogue with each other, some of whom may be significantly and uncomfortably different from themselves.*”


*These differences could be in terms of socioeconomic and political perspectives, and at root, differences in perception of what ails this country with respect to race and class.”*

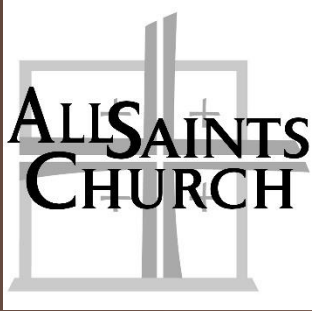


# All Saints Church Context



- ▶ All Saints Church in Pasadena is a resourced, predominately White congregation with a growing percentage of BIPOC members and a decades long history of leveraging its privilege in the service of social justice in the church, the local community, the nation and the world.
- ▶ It has identified two of its core values as **radical inclusion** and **courageous justice** and it justifiably celebrates a legacy of living out those values – at times taking great risks to push the envelope as a leadership church.

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- ▶ It is also a community where the very privilege that has been the source of the power behind this legacy of advocacy and prophetic witness has been largely unexamined -- and part of its untold history includes participation in a Jim Crow past by participating in the founding of St. Barnabas in the 1920's.
  - ▶ In 2016 the Vestry adopted a [Racial Justice Resolution](#) intended to equip the congregation to engage in a deep dive into unpacking the racial dynamics of that unexamined privilege – a resolution which included the formation of a **Racial Justice Advisory Board (RJAB)** to assist in implementing the various resolves.



## RACIAL JUSTICE RESOLUTION

*Adopted by the Vestry of All Saints Church, Pasadena, on April 12, 2016*

*Revised by the Vestry of All Saints Church, Pasadena, on June 26, 2018*

Be it resolved that the Rector, Vestry and Staff will lead All Saints Church Pasadena on a path of activism for racial justice, committing to practice radical inclusivity of all racial, ethnic and cultural groups, and to both promote and practice allyship.\*

We further commit to interrupt racism in all its manifestations at the personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural level as well as to the work of recognizing, understanding, appreciating and celebrating both our similarities and our differences.



- ▶ Increase opportunities for members to build cross-racial awareness, sensitivity, empathy, knowledge, and to develop skills in inter-group relations.
- ▶ Create brave spaces for courageous conversations where all voices are heard and all are encouraged to commit to sit with discomfort, be authentic, and challenge themselves to be transformed

# Next Steps



Sacred Ground is not brand new to All Saints Church.

In 2021 a number of parish leaders and staff members assisted in introducing the program here in the Diocese of Los Angeles.

Many of those who participated at that time were hoping to widen the circle by creating a parish-wide opportunity to engage with the material.

This is the work ahead of us in 2025 and beyond..

# Next Steps



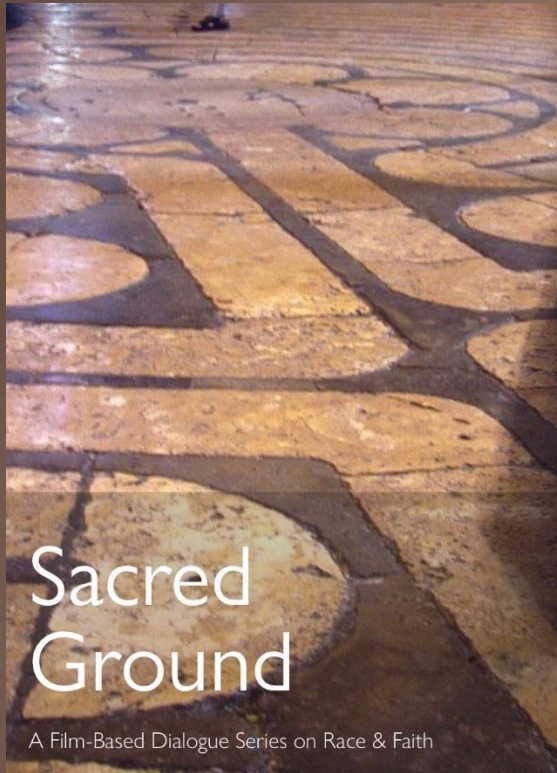
We are grateful to be returning to Sacred Ground as a process for healing relationships which have been wounded by a void in the ability to talk about and embrace each other's racial history and identity.



We are confident that Sacred Ground will offer one of the steps we need to move us forward with the work that we have to do in 2025 and beyond.

And we are grateful to MaryAnn Ahart and Lori Kizzia for stepping up to serve as coordinators for the Sacred Ground initiative here at All Saints.

# Next Steps



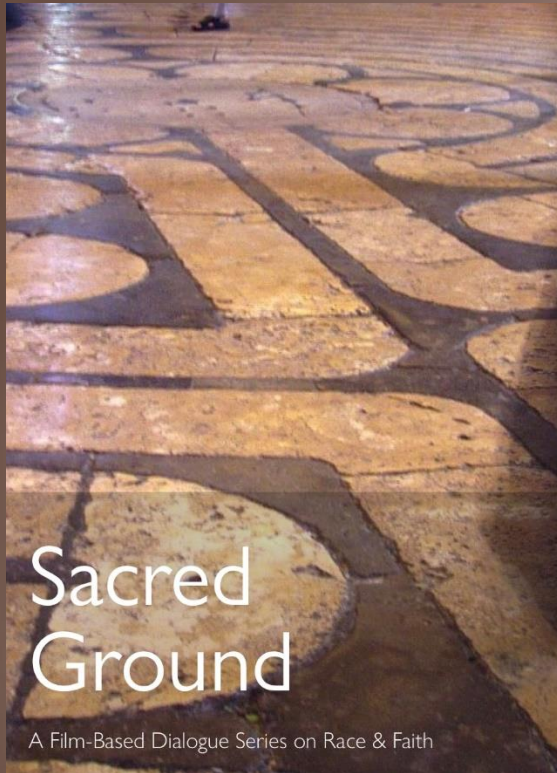
The timeline to introduce Sacred Ground 2025 at All Saints begins on **MLK Weekend** with a presentation in the Sunday Forum at 9:00 a.m.

Registration is planned to begin in February and the launch of the 11-part series of dialogue circles will begin in the Spring.

There will be opportunities for both in person and online, daytime and evening, weekday and weekend groups.

**(Please Note:** We have extended our roll out timeline due to the challenges of the Eaton Canyon disaster.)

# Next Steps



Trained facilitators will be working in collaboration with Sacred Ground Coordinators **MaryAnn Ahart** and **Lori Kizzia** and under the direction of staff member **Thomas Diaz**, Director of Connection & Care.

For more information, please reach out to [SacredGroundASC@gmail.com](mailto:SacredGroundASC@gmail.com).



# The Work of Becoming Beloved Community



- ▶ “We understand that while we are **all** called to this work, the work doesn’t always look the same.
- ▶ With that reality in mind, I have been in exploring the implementation of sessions that are uniquely designed for BIPOC communities.”

# Healing from Internalized Oppression



- ▶ *“We are going to emancipate ourselves from mental slavery, for though others may free the body, none but ourselves can free the mind. Mind is our only ruler; sovereign.”*

*— Marcus Garvey*

# Healing from Internalized Oppression



- ▶ Through a series of modules, this internalized oppression curriculum educates participants about institutional, interpersonal, and internal oppression to facilitate a healing process that empowers people for transformational ministry in the name of Jesus.
- ▶ Participants are challenged to personally explore their life experiences through a didactic group process that invites them on a journey toward wholeness.

# Healing from Internalized Oppression



“A meeting with the national church had been scheduled for Thursday January 9<sup>th</sup> in order to work through the timing and structure of these sessions, but in the midst of the devastation of the Eaton fire and All Saints response to it, that meeting had to be rescheduled.

These oppressive systems, structures, hierarchies, beliefs and values, are things that don't just infiltrate society, but they infiltrate our hearts, minds, culture and very bodies.

We are continuing to examine pathways for folks of color to address this truth. “

# Prayer for Social Justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

