

Donald Fishburne, retired rector of Saint Paul's Episcopal Church

Scripture teaches us to be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Faith without works is dead. People of faith can change the world:

The Episcopal Church partnered with the African American Episcopal Church in this country after leaders and members were gunned down in a Bible Study at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, S.C. On Sunday, September 6, we observed Confession, Repentance, and Commitment to End Racism Sunday) <http://ame-church.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Liberty-and-Justice-for-All-SundayWorship.pdf>) in which the AME Church in this country challenges us: "Racism will not end with the passage of legislation alone; it will also require a change of heart and thinking. This is an effort which the faith community must lead, and be the conscience of the nation. We... call upon every church, temple, mosque and faith communion to make their worship... a time to confess and repent for the sin and evil of racism — this includes ignoring, tolerating and accepting racism — and to make a commitment to end racism by the example of our lives and actions."

The international Awareness Foundation lives out its vision to empower Christians everywhere to be a counter force of love and peace to the intolerance and aggression that now prevails in so many of our communities, and to build understanding between the faiths." The Foundation is based in London and is headed by a Syrian-born Episcopal priest, The Rev. Nadia Nassar, who has preached and taught in Chattanooga. (<http://www.awareness-foundation.co.uk/index.php/team>) The Awareness Foundation has been working for years to help minister to people living in the midst of warfare — and to people having to flee, as we see these days in Hungary, Austria and Germany.

I am one of the founding board members of an ecumenical ministry to make possible meaningful jobs for men and women being released from prison. In Tallahassee, FL, this ministry is replicating the fruitful Ready4Work ministry changing lives in Jacksonville. (<http://operationnewhope.org/ready4work>)

I am working with The Episcopal Church nationally on pilgrimages for high school and college students, as well as men and women studying for ordained ministry, to make pilgrimages in the Southeast to experience the history of the civil rights movement in this country, using examples in Charleston, Memphis, Selma, Birmingham and Montgomery. Learning from history, people of faith work more effectively to end racism in our day.

The ecumenical ministry GreenFaith.org mobilizes people of different faiths to change the world through environmental leadership. (<http://www.greenfaith.org/media>)