

The Diocesan Board of Education

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

Matthew 25:35-36

The older I get the more I am becoming increasingly aware that the phrase, ‘before you judge a man walk a mile in his shoes’ is very difficult. It’s not so much the first part, I agree with that, but it’s the idea of walking in another person’s shoes (and this is not about me having very small feet and everybody else’s shoes would be too big for me!!!!). I have found no matter how hard I try there are certain things I will never understand what it feels like.



I was struck recently in church hearing some friends of mine describing what it is like to experience racism, and they had all experienced some terrible things. However, it was not only some of the things they had had to deal with that moved me, it was their experience of a lack of acceptance that has stayed with me. Things like going to a new place and wondering if they will be accepted. They described that on a surface level there is often an acceptance but when you go deeper things look a little more complex. For example, the food shared at our gatherings or the music used for worship in church have not always in the past reflected my friends’ culture. It’s also not uncommon for people to try and shorten or change their names to make them (seemingly!) easier to pronounce – or for my friends to feel like they have to shorten or change their own names to try and make things easier for other people. It doesn’t matter how much I try to walk in my friends’ shoes this is not something I can understand, as it is not something I have experienced.

This coming Sunday is Racial Justice Sunday and evensong at the Cathedral will be a special service. I am delighted that we have been asked to have children involved in different ways – we have some pupils reading in the service and we will also play a song recorded by pupils at one of our schools. We recognise we are a very big Diocese geographically and that Racial Justice Sunday falls in half term, which makes school participation difficult. That is why we made the decision to create a recorded collective worship (one for primary and one for secondary) to enable all of our schools to reflect on this day. The theme for the National Church of England is around Refugees and this is what we have based our Collective Worship on. Again, while gathering the wonderful songs and readings and prayers from our schools, it made me think about the importance of ‘walking in another person’s shoes’.

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It made me acutely aware that there will be children and young people in our schools for whom this is a lived reality for, one that I have not experienced and cannot truly know how it feels.

So, what do we do? Do we say we don't understand and therefore we should not do anything or we should not talk about it? I don't believe this is the way forward. I think there are a number of things we can do. Most importantly, we listen to people's experience, we learn from people, we support people. We raise awareness of how people are treated and how we can treat people better. Last week, I was lucky enough to hear the Archbishop of Canterbury talking about the Difference programme for secondary schools, which seeks to build welcoming communities by equipping young people with the skills to cross divides and navigate disagreement. This programme is built on three core habits: Being Curious, Being Present, and Reimagining. For me, this is the example Jesus set. He was curious about those around him, he was always wholly present and he helped everyone reimagine what the world could look like. In Matthew 25:35-36, he speaks of when we care for people – whoever they are, whatever their life circumstances then we should welcome them as though we were welcoming Jesus himself. However, this is not about taking pity on someone or saying 'I have it all so can help', it's about joining together, working together so that we see equity across all races, a change to celebrate the diversity in our lives, our schools and communities and see the richness that it can bring.

You can find out more about the Difference programme [here](#); a version aimed at primary schools is coming soon.

from Lynsey Norris, **Assistant Diocesan Director of Education**

Racial Justice Sunday at the Cathedral

On Sunday 11th February there will be a special evensong at Lincoln Cathedral to mark Racial Justice Sunday. Lynsey Norris is working with some of our schools to ensure our school communities are represented in this service and members of our central team will be attending. The service begins at 3.45pm but attendees may arrive from 3pm onwards. After the service you are invited to experience generous hospitality in the Chapter House. If you would like to attend (and to inform numbers for catering) please book your place here [A service of Choral Evening Prayer for Racial Justice Sunday \(office.com\)](#)

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Racial Justice Sunday collective worship resources

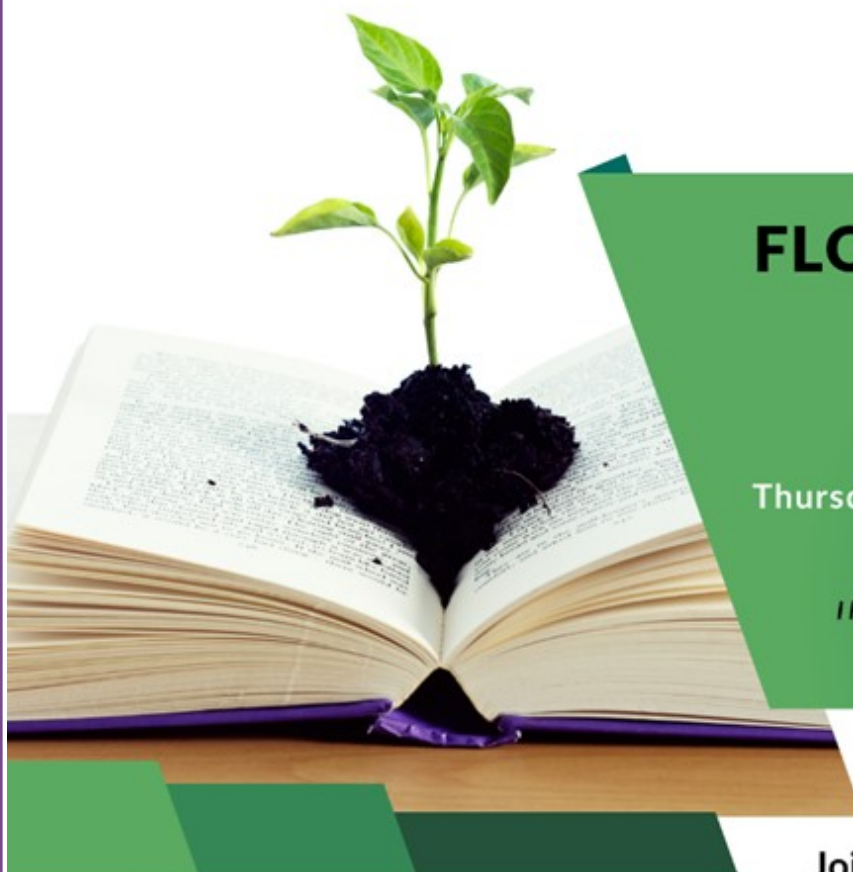
Also, in preparation for Racial Justice Sunday (which falls at the start of half term) we have produced a recorded collective worship for primary and secondary schools to use on the 9th February. This will include children and young people leading prayers, songs and much more. The secondary worship will be premiered on our YouTube tube channel at 8:30am and the primary worship will be premiered at 9am; however, you will be able to watch these at any time once they have been launched. The theme for the worship will be the welcome of refugees, based on the national Church of England resources. While there will be nothing of a sensitive nature in the worship we are aware many schools have welcomed refugees to their school family and may want to watch the service first before using it in school. The link for the services will be sent to schools the day before. We hope you will find it a helpful resource.

Upcoming LDBE Courses—

Dat	Time	Course	
06/02/2024	13:30-15:30	Developing Knowledge in RE	online
08/02/2023	10:00-16:00	New Church School Headteachers Induction Day	In person
28/02/2024	16:00-18:00	Collective Worship: Enabling pupils and adults to flourish	online



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Board of
Education



FLOURISHING FOR ALL

LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE

Thursday 21st March 2024
10am-3:45pm

*I have come that they may have life,
and have it to the full.
John 10:10*



The Rt Revd Stephen Conway
Bishop of Lincoln



Andy Wolfe
Executive Director of Education, Church
of England



Vic Goddard
Principal of Passmores Academy and star
of the Bafta nominated Channel 4
documentary 'Educating Essex'

Join us for our Annual
Headteacher, Senior
Leader, Chair of Governor
& Clergy Conference

The Showroom, Tritton Rd,
Lincoln, LN6 7QY

£185 school staff (non SLA £290)

£145 Governors (non SLA £225)

£75 Clergy

More speakers still be be announced...

To book use the link below or the QR code
www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/leadershipconference

