



Council of Bishops

The United Methodist Church



"Now is the time"

Dismantling Racism: Council of Bishops Lenten Devotional Series

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, Raleigh Episcopal Area

Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Scripture:

II Corinthians 6:1-2 - As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

Key points:

- This is the season to hold dirt, dust, earth – and ashes – scriptural signs of humanity, mortality, sorrow, repentance.
- As we mark our bodies with ashes in humility we are connected to all who suffer and are in pain, particularly the pain of racism, colonialism and tribalism.
- The mark of ash, dust, dirt is a sign of our solidarity in common commitment to social holiness, to fully embrace the ministry of building beloved community in all places marked by oppression.
- Now is the time to engage the important work of antiracism as followers of Jesus Christ.

Three Things:

1. What story shaped or mis-shaped my early life in regard to race?
2. How does that story persist, consciously or unconsciously, in helpful or harmful ways?
3. What stories strengthen your heart to hope and work for inclusion and equity for all people?

What is God saying to you through this week's devotion?
