

## **Repairers of the Breach Speaker Series**

**“Unlawful for Any Christian”? Slave-owning Anglican and Episcopal Churches in Early Virginia**

**September 29, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. via Zoom**

[Repairers of the Breach](#), our diocesan task force for dismantling racism, begins a speaker series on September 29 with a talk by Dr. Jennifer Oast, professor of history at Bloomsburg University.

Continuing the work of Becoming Beloved Community, the Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing and justice, this series will build on the learning of our March pilgrimage, "Walking Toward Truth," which visited sites of memory in Hampton, Jamestown and Williamsburg. Dr. Oast, author of Institutional Slavery: Slaveholding Churches, Schools, Colleges, and Businesses in Virginia, 1680-1860 (Cambridge, 2016), has entitled her talk “Unlawful for Any Christian”? Slave-owning Anglican and Episcopal Churches in Early Virginia."

Anglican parishes were the first institutions in Virginia to own slaves, which were acquired initially through donations and later through deliberate purchase. The parishes became the masters of slaves with little hesitation; while one eighteenth-century minister declared he thought it was “unlawful for any Christian and in particular for a clergyman” to employ slaves, his view was the minority one in the early eighteenth century, when few Englishmen, either in the colonies or back in England, questioned the existence or morality of slavery. The Anglicans’ success with institutional slaveholding sent Virginians the message that not only was slaveholding not “unlawful” for a Christian, but that it could be of great benefit to them.

This talk explores how slavery was used and thought about in Anglican and Episcopal parishes. It also examines the lives of individual African Americans who were enslaved to the churches.

**Join us via Zoom for this informative session on September 29th from 6:30-7:30.**

**[Click here to register](#) and access the Zoom link.**