Building the Beloved Community:

Bringing Durham Together Through Relationships, Trust, and Action

Durham’s people are searching for peace rooted in equity, acceptance, and wholeness. We come from diverse backgrounds and experiences and have many talents and gifts. Yet we live with too much poverty and violence, too much misunderstanding and distrust, too much inequality and injustice. Deep-seated myths about race and systems that support them keep us from being the loving, inclusive, interfaith community our faiths encourage us to become.

We believe that dialogues about race can help us come together in relationships that can nurture authentic unity for a changed future. By listening carefully, speaking openly, and learning from each other, we can create new understandings and friendships. We hope to develop trust across barriers that now separate us. Together we can work more effectively and genuinely for each other’s well-being and for our common good.

An Invitation to Faith Communities

Although religious language, practices, and traditions have been abused for racial oppression in our society, DCIA believes our faith communities can also inspire and guide resistance and recovery from racism. To help build the beloved community in Durham, we invite congregations and spiritual organizations in the Durham area to participate in "Building the Beloved Community" together. Please join us this year in:

- Public forums in which congregations discuss their experiences of learning and change in relationships with congregations whose members are mostly of a different race or ethnicity.
- Facilitated discussions with those from a congregation different from your own using prepared questions to engage in open, mutual sharing, and learning.
- Shared meals, shared worship activities, and shared learning activities (readings and/or videos) with members of a partner faith communities to learn and plan together.
For many of us, this is a difficult challenge. It may be hard to know where to get started. We encourage congregations and leaders to take a simple step like inviting a congregation from a different background to visit you. Or better yet go visit them. Or take another faith leader for lunch. A simple intentional step is a good way to begin.