



for our common life

Welcome to the first session of *For our Common Life!* Tonight's interview is with The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers. Canon Spellers is the Presiding Bishop's Canon for Evangelism and Reconciliation and speaks regularly before churches and dioceses around the Episcopal Church. You'll hear Canon Spellers talk about her most recent book, *The Church Cracked Open*; the book is a powerful witness to her own experience as a black woman in the church, to the opportunities she sees for the church's future, to the kinds of transformation we can experience together through the power of the Holy Spirit, and with tonight's topic in mind, to the nature of how we tell the story of our Episcopal and Anglican tradition when it comes to our need to repent of the sins of racism and white supremacy. One aspect of that particular conversation is the notion of *empire*, which for our purposes is a term connoting the Church's and individuals' participation in and benefit from a ruling authority's power for the sake of protecting or increasing its own power, privilege, wealth, and/or influence.

Canon Spellers spoke with great passion about not only her love for the Episcopal Church but how that love makes her "want to tell the truth" to and through the Episcopal Church. She sees this time for the Church as a pivotal moment, a time to recognize where privilege can lead not to preservation but identifying with Jesus' own self-emptying, when we must consider the things that have changed around us during COVID with a sense of humility and opportunity, and above all, that there is still a great hope for the Church and our diocese to follow Jesus without fear.

We hope you find our interview with Canon Spellers as captivating as we did, and we offer our thanks to Miguel Escobar, Executive Director of Anglican Studies at EDS Union, and the Rev. David Zwifka, rector of St. Luke's, Lebanon, for serving as our interviewing panelists.

SESSION ONE

DECEMBER 2, 2021

EXAMINING OUR EPISCOPAL & ANGLICAN TRADITION

WITH SPECIAL GUEST
THE REV. CANON
**STEPHANIE
SPELLERS**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION SESSION ONE

ON THE CHURCH

I LOVE IT SO MUCH THAT I WANT TO TELL THE TRUTH...AND I KNOW IT CAN BEAR THE TRUTH.

What truths have you heard about the Church this evening?

How might the Church need to change to bear and hear these truths better?

What did you hear that affirmed your experience of the Episcopal Church?

What did you hear that was challenging?

ON GROWING UP NEAR PLACES OF PRIVILEGE

THERE WAS NOTHING IN MY FAMILY LIFE TO PREPARE ME FOR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

What was your reaction to Stephanie's description of growing up near environments of affluence?

What kind of relationships does the Episcopal Church's have with privilege and/or affluence?

How can we value the experiences of people of color as true?

What can we learn from one another?

ON KENOSIS

IF YOU ARE ONE OF THE PRIVILEGED, THEN THE PATHWAY TOWARDS SALVATION IS A PATHWAY OF SELF-EMPTYING.

What does self-emptying mean?

How are we called to give up privilege?

What does it look like to be self-emptied of White privilege?

What does all of this mean for us looking forward?