

DRAFT
Mission Statement
Virginians for Reconciliation

WHAT: The Virginians for Reconciliation is a volunteer citizen group formed for the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the country's first enslaved African people landing in Virginia in August 1619, and reflecting upon Virginia's role in enslaving African-Americans.

WHY: The Declaration of Independence acknowledges that all people have inalienable rights endowed by our Creator, and the Constitution guarantees equal protection under the law. The Scriptures say that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God. These spiritual, political, and economic truths are fundamental American guarantees and yet they are not fully realized in all our communities.

The demographics of America are shifting and it is estimated that we will be a majority non-white nation in 30 years, so the need for greater understanding is critical. Virginians have a unique opportunity in 2019 to accelerate healing the current racial wounds. We have not fully acknowledged the depths of the divisions nor developed solutions that move towards unity and reconciliation economically, legally, and relationally.

WHY VIRGINIA: Virginia was home of first slaves, epicenter of the American slave trade, and capital of the confederacy. In 2017, white supremacists held a violent, deadly protest in Charlottesville. However, Virginia is also the home of trail-blazing leaders like Barbara Johns, Oliver Hill, Maggie Walker and the nation's first black Governor, Doug Wilder. We have made good progress in Virginia, and we can lead in the path of healing and reconciliation in 2019.

HOW: Virginians for Reconciliation will host a series of events to engage Virginians around the hard truths that exist in black and white America, with the goal of establishing a new construct where people of different races will have a much healthier dialogue and work closer together for the common good.

WHO: Virginians for Reconciliation asks that Virginians from all walks of life and backgrounds participate in making 2019 a year of earnest racial reconciliation and healing, and promoting a more just and civil society in America.