

## Presbyterians and Race: a Reflective Experience in Power and Social Justice Saturday Sept. 19 in Alexandria



**Saturday, September 19, 10:00 a.m.-noon (gather at 9:45).** The Reformed Institute will hold a reflective walk in Old Town Alexandria, VA to sites that mark key moments in the story of Presbyterians, white privilege and black resistance from colonial days to the present. The walk will focus on reflection, inspiration and a challenge to action for racial justice at each of the sites below. Limited to 25 participants. (Masks required, a van is available for those with physical limitations.)

**Presbyterian cemetery (starting point)** where white slaveholders and workers for abolition are buried side by side. We will also pass the Frederick Douglass Cemetery, where many black families are buried.

**The Freedom House:** now a Museum built on one of the largest holding pens for enslaved peoples, often “owned” by white Presbyterians like Carlyle and Alexander, but with their own stories of resistance and dignity.

**Site of Appomattox Statue** to dead Confederate soldiers, including white Presbyterians, who fought for the “the Lost Cause,” and recently removed by the city after VA law changed.

**Beulah Baptist Church:** founded by Rev. Clem Robinson, a graduate of Presbyterian Ashmun Institute (PA) for African-Americans, and site of *first theological school* founded for former slaves during Reconstruction.

**Alexandria Academy:** first semi-public school for whites in Alexandria, organized and led by Presbyterians, and supported by George Washington’s scholarships for poorer students. Robert E. Lee was schooled here.

**The Progressive Club:** Established by black federal workers, denied access to established clubs, in order to strengthen social networks and offer hospitality to professional black families.

**Old Presbyterian Meeting House:** colonial church founded by city fathers, with prominent slave “owners,” some slavery resisters, and some black congregants in the early days.

**Contraband and Freedman’s Cemetery:** burial site of black Freedmen who struggled with white supremacy and those who successfully escaped slavery during Reconstruction. Their stories continue to inspire and guide present struggles for racial justice. (Vans will take us here, and back to cars at the Presbyterian Cemetery.)

This walk is dedicated to engaging Reformed history and theology with all its voices, and to serve as a resource for challenging white dominance, lifting up black resistance and furthering racial justice. Leaders: Dr. Kent Myers, Judy Herseith, Dr. Perzavia Praylow, Pamela Russel, Dr. Larry Golemon

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