

Interview with Bill Coleman by Linda Ferreria

Taped at the Episcopal Church of All Saints, Indianapolis, IN

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Transcribed by Catherine Crouch

Linda Ferreria Tell me the story or the journey from segregated Louisville growing up there to arriving at All Saints.

Bill Coleman Okay. I was born and raised in Louisville. Louisville was fully segregated the whole time I was growing up. I went to all Black schools. My church was a Black Baptist church. I started there as a small child. My mom took me to Sunday school and we got registered. And then I went to Sunday school. And then as I got older, I also went to Sunday school and church service. My parents did not attend that church, but I did. And so I was in the Sunday school, in the church. And at age about age 12, I don't remember precisely during an altar call, I felt the urge to get up. And I went up and I offered myself to Jesus Christ and I went home and told my mom. And it was sort of funny because the baptism was the same day as the day of the altar call. So she had to scramble around and get a white shirt and some white pants. So anyway, so that's my beginning of my religious travels. I went to that church, it was Virginia Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, and I went to that church until I went away to college at Kentucky State University, which is a historically Black college in Kentucky. Once I graduated from college, I got a job in Dayton, Ohio, working for the Air Force at a place called the Dayton Air Force Depot. And I was part of that operation for a year and a half, and then I got drafted into the Army. So during the year and a half, I visited churches in Dayton and I was never satisfied. For some reason, I don't know why, but I wasn't satisfied. So I got drafted into the army. I went away to the army for two years. Fortunately, I got in and out before the Vietnam War heated up. So I spent two years outside of Boston in the Army working in an office. I came back and shortly after I came back, I got married. And once I got married, we started looking for another church. My sister in law had already joined All Saints here in Indianapolis, but we were we were in Dayton. And so she suggested that we visit an Episcopal church. And we did. We visited St Margaret's Episcopal Church, which was an all Black political church in Dayton. We fell in love with it. And so we joined went through confirmation and hands on. We were confirmed in Easter of 1965. Oh, no, 1964. We stayed in Dayton for another two years and then we had our first child. And because the grandparents were here in Indianapolis, we decided to move to Indianapolis so we could be near the grandparents. So I came to Indianapolis and visited all the industries to look for a job, and I was hired by the Navy out at Naval Avionics Facility, which was at 21st in Arlington. And so I transferred over, we moved. And because my sister in law was here at All Saints, we came to All Saints. We didn't look anyplace else because we thought it was wonderful. I mean, we were already happy being Episcopalians, but the atmosphere at All Saints was just fantastic with the diversity. We thought Father Carthy was fantastic. I mean, the whole thing was just... it was like ideal. And having come out of a, first of all, segregated society in Louisville and then a highly divisive society in Dayton, this was just fantastic. So we fit right in right away. And we thought All Saints was marvelous. I can go on.

Linda Ferreria Can you can you talk some about the diversity here at All Saints? Were the pews integrated? Did people socialize together? Was there both Black and white folks in the leadership? Those kinds of ideas...

Bill Coleman Talk about the diversity at All Saints. What we liked about All Saints was the diversity.... we liked what All Saints was. My guess is recollecting that there were probably 30 to 40% people of color in the congregation. It was totally integrated. There was total interaction. The kids were obviously in Sunday school. I was appointed to do the youth group and the youth group that I ran had approximately 20 kids and I would say they were pretty much 50, 50 kids from the neighborhood, kids from white parents, kids from middle class parents, kids from Black parents. It was just a what I thought was an absolutely model situation. There were ...there were well-to-do white people here. There were well-to-do Black people here. There were neighborhood white people here. There were neighborhood Black people here. Some people were, as I said, well-to-

do. Some were average and some were poor. And it was an amalgamation that I had not seen anyplace else in my young adult life. And I just thought it was fantastic. People socialized. There was no - the pews were just totally co-mingled. There was no like Black folks sit over here and the white folks sit over there. The girls' choir was totally integrated. My youth group was integrated. It was just the ideal situation. People from the neighborhood. To the best of my knowledge all felt very comfortable. And I think most of the people from the neighborhood were people of lower economic status. I lived up in Butler Tarkington. Some of the other people lived around in the suburbs. But everybody came and everybody felt very comfortable. So it was an it was an ideal situation for me, particularly having come out of a segregated society. So. That's kind of how that is. Socially, uh we had. Folks in the neighborhood that were allowed or were were able to socialize with us in terms of the more economically comfortable people. We did go to their homes on limited occasions. LH Bailey, who was one of the senior wardens, had the the vestry all out to his home, which was out in Avalon Hills at the time. Roger DeBruler who was the member of the Indiana Supreme Court, was here with his wife and two kids and his extended family, which was another couple with several kids. And they all lived down... Where did they all live Bill? Stop. Stuck, stuck. What's down there? Where's Riley's home? James Whitcomb Riley's home. What is that? What do you call that neighborhood?

Linda Ferreria It's not far from there.

Bill Coleman You guys know that - I'm just drawing a blank.

Linda Ferreria Me, too, and I know exactly what you mean. But I can't say it now.

Bill Coleman I'm mad at you now. Is that on the screen? Take it off.

Linda Ferreria Well.

Bill Coleman Anyway, so we visited. They. We visited their homes. They visited us on a on on a less limited basis. But what I thought was remarkable about All Saints was that here and in this atmosphere, everybody felt comfortable. Everybody felt equal. Bailey's wife, Diane, and their two kids were in my group. When we put on a activity, the folks in the neighborhood were equally as involved as the folks who came in from the north side or south side. So it was just a very, very comfortable environment.

Linda Ferreria So let me ask you, you can go from one side to the other here. Were there some particular things you observed that you would say, "I think this is why this good amalgamation happened." And then when you're done with that, maybe go on to talking about what made All Saints vulnerable to losing that wonderful both integration and programing? Because when you came back, it wasn't all in place when you came back from.

Bill Coleman Okay. So what was what was the atmosphere?

Linda Ferreria Might be leaders, might be particular leaders, might be policies.

Bill Coleman Everyone felt a part of decision making. Everyone felt part of not the leadership, and like they they were valued. So for example, I mentioned Bailey, who was the senior warden, I think, when I first came here, I'm having a hard time. Maurice Edelen became Senior Warden while I was here; I was Junior Warden and I responded to requests from the entire congregation on issues that were the responsibility of Junior Warden. And I had to work at taking care of the parish house, which was up at 39th and Delaware, and I presume that it got sold after I left here. But it was just ... it was an amalgamation. It was where everyone felt comfortable when it came time to putting on a program; everyone was involved. We rotated going down to Longs Donuts and bringing the donuts in on Sunday, three dozen donuts every Sunday. We still had the old Victorian house. That was on the other side of Dayspring, and that's where the Sunday school lessons were. And the kids felt free to run in and out and up and down.

And we did do some work for the youth group on Where do you think you're going to go from here? And it was very interesting that some of the kids had absolutely no idea what they were going to do. Some of the kids had never thought about it. And these were kids who were 14, 15,

16 years old who began to think about it because we talked about it in the youth group. There was a lot of a lot of freedom, a lot of interaction. And I think that the kids just felt terribly comfortable as kids can because they don't see barriers like sometimes adults do. Yeah, that's kind of how we did it.

Linda Ferreria So you might talk a little bit about doing your law training and needing to move to (Washington DC) and then coming back and finding it different.

Bill Coleman At the end of my time here, I ended up getting a divorce, which I don't want to talk about.

Linda Ferreria That's okay.

Bill Coleman At the time I was here, I was going to night law school. One of the reasons that the move from Dayton to Indianapolis was beneficial was Dayton did not have a law school at that time. And so I could come here and the IU law school here in Indianapolis had both a day curriculum and night curriculum, and they had it structured so that people who were already in careers could go to night school, take the fall load, accommodate the full load, and get out and actually get out in two years. I didn't get out in two years because I took a year off for family reasons. I smiled at my friends and said, I'm taking it off because I'm going to do my lawn and my flowers and so forth. I raised roses, which was one of my avocations, but I got out in three years, passed the bar exam. My boss at the Navy was very supportive. He basically said, "As long as your work is up to speed, you can crack open your law book and get ready for tonight's class."

So he was very understanding when I graduated, I stayed there for a brief period of time and then I got a job with the general counsel of the Navy in Washington. So the reason I moved to Washington was to go to work for the general counsel of the Navy. I worked for the General Counsel of the Navy for two years on a missile project. And then I was invited to go down to what's called the Executive Office of the President to work in the Office of Management and Budget. So for 16 years I worked in the Executive Office of the President interacting with the West Wing of the White House on projects and issues. And once I was eligible to retire, I retired.

I remarried; my wife and I came back. My wife was the second wife who is also from Indy. So we came back. We had two children who were what we call "tweeners". They're 12 and they were getting ready to make the transition from elementary to middle school, so it was a good time to come back here. So we came back and the reason we didn't come back to All Saints was because we got emails. We got a couple of emails from former members of All Saints who said "You should try Trinity because you have these young pre-teens and Trinity has a very well developed youth program. They have the Rite 13 program and then the Journey to Adulthood program." And so that had a big influence on what we did. I visited All Saints a couple of times after actually starting at Trinity and the - it wasn't quite the same because the people that I was very friendly with, both Black and white, weren't here anymore. There was...there were a few because they recognized me, but most weren't here anymore. And so the connection didn't materialize. And then there were a couple of people who said, "Well, the gays took over." But what I remember is my new wife and I belonged to a church in D.C., and that church was St James on Capitol Hill. St James, even though it was on Capitol Hill, was a typical urban style church, almost the same as All Saints. It was diverse. It was about 50/50. It was high church, low brow people. And it was really cool. And so ...but ...I do remember at St James, even though St James was very welcoming to gays (in fact I think one of the earliest gay marriages was at St James) people began to drift away because of the AIDS epidemic. People didn't want to do common cup. People were concerned about, you know, because there was a lot of ignorance in those years about what AIDS was about. I mean, remember, Ronald Reagan wouldn't even say the word. So that had a great impact on a lot of people who just didn't understand and didn't know how to find out. So Saint James began to lose people. We noticed that before we left. And so that was part of the atmosphere, I think, of why that dynamic that was here in the sixties and seventies, sort of, was lost. I also think that, as I said before, the gentrification of this area has had a dramatic impact on who lives here, what their economic status is, and how comfortable they feel. And I don't think that a lot of people of color feel comfortable in today's environment, both at All Saints or at Trinity. I don't know much about Christchurch on the circle, but I don't think there's a comfort level that's not there in my ...in my perspective. I'm comfortable because I'm just

comfortable, you know, and I don't let people get on my nerves and I'm fine. So. But I think that the reason because the leadership, at least during the time I was here, was very balanced between the most...the middle class Black folks who came here were very comfortable and the interaction was really dynamic. And there was no real - there was not a lot of cliquish-ness or anything like that. So I just think it was a comfort zone and it's not there. It wasn't there then (when I returned to Indianapolis). Okay.

Linda Ferreria And when you visited All Saints, it was or it wasn't then still as integrated or about as integrated (as the time of your membership)?

Bill Coleman It was not as integrated. People had moved on. The people who communicated with me, who had been at All Saints were either, well, I think they were they were at they were at Trinity, or they had gone to St Philip's or they had gone to the Circle. They had moved on for whatever reason. And I was gone, so I don't know. I didn't communicate with All Saints or any of the churches here after I got to Washington. Once I found St James, I was comfortable again. It was like a mirror image of All Saints at the time, and I was very happy, so it was very comforting.

Linda Ferreria I'm a little uncertain about which....

Bill Coleman Let me ask a question. We talked about who was here, the Hights were here. George, Jean and Jeannice, their daughter.

Bill Coleman So and so when I got here around, I got here in November of 1967. And when I got here, the Hights were here. George, Jeanne and Jeannice; the Edelens were here. Maurice and Ida and Bruce and Julie. The Motes were here and they had younger kids. I don't remember their kid's names. I remember Gretchen because she babysat for us, but I don't remember the other kids names. The Baileys were here, as I said earlier, with Diane and their twin girls. Father Carthy had two daughters whose names I've forgotten. And then there were there were a bunch of neighborhood kids. And so that really was a great, dynamic kind of group. And everybody was very friendly and very vocal and the kids just did wonderful. I didn't see that when I came back because all those folks were gone. Billy was gone. Edelen may have been here in the seventies into the eighties, but he wasn't here when I came back. I came back in 1996, so I was gone from All Saints from May of 1977. And I came back to Indianapolis in August of 1996. So I was gone 18 years. So there are all kinds of dynamics. You know, the kids are all grown up and gone to college and graduated. So it was it was just a different era. I don't even remember who the rector was when I came to visit those few times that I came back just to see All Saints and try to remember how it had been. So I don't remember the rector. I don't.

Linda Ferreria In 1996, you would have either had the interim minister or Gordon Chastain would have started.

Bill Coleman I think there was an interim.

Linda Ferreria Then I think you had-

Bill Coleman I think there was an interim. But...but, the interim, I don't remember. I don't remember.

Linda Ferreria Let me ask you about broader observations. You've been at Trinity a number of years now. So Trinity, like All Saints, is doing its anti-racism work, and one of the things that you have talked about that I'd like to hear you talk about is the efforts that you're making to... and what you find in terms of preaching to the choir.

Bill Coleman Okay.

Linda Ferreria And any thoughts you have about what to do about it?

Bill Coleman I returned and and started... aligned myself with Trinity. I started working in the outreach programs. I worked at the food pantry, and then I was also part of the group that started the Early Learning Center, and we started to look at anti-racism...thanks to Karen King. And also,

it was about that time that the WFYI movie about Atticus High School came out, and so we sponsored two sessions of that movie in the evening at Trinity. And people said that was a great experience across the parish, that it was a great experience and there was a lot in the movie that they did not know. And so what that sparked was a small group of people who had been concerned about anti-racism and integration and implicit bias and those kind of issues that affect our society. So we began to do programs. We talked about education. We talked about the disproportionate discrimination against young Black men in the in the school systems. We looked at the disparity in health care. We looked at all those issues and we had a nucleus of people. Our mailing list for our social justice group is about 14 people, and our active people who really participate and help make programs is about 6 or 8. People would come out to an evening program. And as we got further into it, we began to lose people because I don't know if they've heard the message now and they don't need to hear more about the message. We had a very successful "waking up white" program. And since that point in time, we've had a drop off in participation across the parish. I attribute that to two things. A lot of people have multiple responsibilities. But a lot of people have just drifted away. And so what we've seen in the last two years in most of our presentations is a small group of people, about 20 who are actively involved in various aspects of the program for outreach and racial reconciliation. So we will get those same few people every time. When we did Sacred Ground, we had 15 people, but they were all the people who are actively involved in the outreach programs or the parish or the vestry. With the broader population of whatever the 100 people who came before the pandemic don't come back. And we reach out. We promote. And when we put on the program, we have the same 15 people. I don't know what the reason is other than: we've heard the story and now we're satisfied, or we're not interested anymore, or we're busy. We've got kid stuff; we've got PTA, we've got Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. We've got other things to do. So I frankly think that part of our general population has heard the story and they're not interested anymore: it doesn't affect me. When I say me, I'm talking to the general population again. I've got things that I have to worry about. It's not - let me say it differently. In my household anti-Racism is a dinner table discussion. My kids who are now successful adults are very keen on anti-racism. My kids are multi-racial. I have white... I can't say it... stuck again. I have a mixed family. I have a mixed family, okay? My son in law who happens to be Mother Megan up at Trinity's younger brother is married to my daughter. My son, who lives in Florida, is married to a lady he met in Italy who is Polish. My daughter, who lives in L.A. is married to a French Canadian hockey player. I have a son in Tucson who is in a biracial marriage. And I have three kids that are in single racial marriages, but they are all attuned to what goes on in this country, and they're all attuned to the racial issues and to anti-racism. And I mean, I can go on and on and on about having the conversation with my sons over how to interact when they're approached by police so that they don't get themselves into trouble by just being - by exercising their rights and so forth. So but I don't think in the general population that there's that much concern.

Linda Ferreria So let me.

Bill Coleman Okay. I've...I've veered off on it.

Linda Ferreria No, no, you're right on it. You're actually exactly on it. And I think you're saying you're discouraged because (I'm just going to stick with your language) the general population is not discomforted.

Bill Coleman Right.

Linda Ferreria You live in a mixed race household. I live in a mixed race household. It is an everyday conversation. I want to see if you can go further with this in terms of what are we to do with the Diocesan call? For us, to not just do our history and to do it frankly and honestly, but to come up with an action plan. If you want to talk about what it's like to have people go home and be comfortable when you still have to stick with the situation as it is.

Bill Coleman You don't want this.

Linda Ferreria I do want it. I live it too, I just live it as a white woman.

Bill Coleman Okay. So your question is, where do we go from here? What do we do? We have educated ourselves. We have talked about it. We've put on panels. We've had courses. We've looked at the history of the Episcopal Church. We looked at the history of Christianity in the United States. We looked at the history of Indiana. We looked at the history of our parish. I do not believe that we're going to make any substantial progress in the near future. I would hope and pray that we do, but I just simply don't think we are. The current political environment is not conducive. I think that, for example, there's a recommendation that's coming up at the end of our Becoming a Beloved Community, which says that predominantly white churches should partner with predominantly Black churches. I'm not sure that that'll work. Uh, people like to stay in their comfort zone, and if there is a project like a food pantry, yes, you may get that to happen on a limited scale. But for people from a Baptist church in this neighborhood to come with you and say trade off once a month, we go to their church, they go to our church, I just don't think that's going to happen. And I would pray and hope that it could. I'm not being pessimistic because I'm a negative person. We've been doing this now at Trinity for five years. We have not seen any increase (of people of color) in the pews. Some people have left because of various other political reasons. We have some people who left because Trinity has a moderate gay population and they left because of that. There's very little people of color in leadership. We had one person on the vestry. I'm the only person on the social justice and racial reconciliation team. We have one person who is on the Outreach Advisory Council. We have two people at the food pantry. And that's reaching out on a regular basis, trying to create more diversity. And I think that the most that we can do is educate people, and hope that they will take what they learned in the education process and use it in their daily lives. And I think a lot of people do. There are a lot of people who I see and interact with on an occasional basis that I think have their hearts in the right place. They have their minds in the right place and their spirit in the right place. But having them actively involved on a regular basis is difficult. And I just think we're we're doing the best we can with what we have. We have gone over implicit bias. We've gone over racism. We've gone over the history. We've gone over it over and over again. We will get a new face periodically.

Determining what type of program to put on is important. For example, when we did the disparity between maternal and infant health care and we had the person from the state program, we had the person from the health center over on 34th Street, we attracted a different audience on that one time basis, but they came because that was their interest, and we didn't see many of them again. When we had the superintendent of IPS we drew a fairly good audience, but once that was over they were gone to whatever pursuits that they are dedicated to.

So I think that, somewhat, the idea of an action plan that requires people to dedicate time and energy over long periods is just not practical. And I, frankly, believe once you know the story, if there isn't some other dynamic thing you can get involved in, you go away and you find something else. And I just think that's just the way it is. I think we have to understand that we're not going to get a groundswell of people who are going to come to meetings and and presentations. So if they have it in their spirit, that's the most important thing. And so I think that's where we are- we can't count those. We can't quantify. That's the other problem. We can't quantify our success because we don't have any measuring tool other than who's in the pews. Or who comes to the meeting. And who's in the pew... It would be very desirable to go back to the 60s and 70s of what All Saints was, because it was marvelous. But times have changed. The dynamics have changed. It's just different.

You know, I think it's marvelous that we have a Black presiding bishop and a Black bishop of Indianapolis. And I think all that's great. But if you go to the convention, who do you see? You know, you see three or four Black people and everybody else is white and they all have good hearts. But it's just not going to work, I don't think. Anyway, hopefully you can edit that so it comes out sensibly.

Bill Coleman Okay, well, let me say this: are we still shooting? We're going to keep on shooting whether... Okay. Okay. So, you know, I ...like I said, part of what I liked about it was, was there was a total comfort among the folks who were here. If there were cliques, I never saw them. I was Junior Warden while Mike Mooney was rector. And I can remember doing the parish picnic and just having a great time at the parish picnic. We went down to Waycross... Waycross We took, I can't remember whether we took a bus or whether we rode in private vehicles, but we had about 20 kids and parents at Waycross. We swam; we played water balloons. We bought a

30 gallon garbage can, and we scrubbed it out and we filled it up with ice and water and put about four quarts of Kool-Aid in it and stirred it up. And the kids could dip down with a dipper and fill up their cups and drink the Kool-Aid. It was really a blast. The Edelens, Maurice, who was at Lily and his wife was a social worker who I believe worked for the state. The Hights, George was out at Fort Harrison as an accountant. His wife was a schoolteacher. My wife was a schoolteacher. I was a professional out at the Navy. One of the people I remember very vividly was a lady who lived in the neighborhood who was just an average, everyday African-American person; I think you interviewed her daughter.

Linda Ferreria Was that Carol Allender's mother or Barbara Jean Bingham's mother?

Bill Coleman I'm not sure which one. But their kids were here in Sunday school and she was... it was actually what I would call a perfect picture of what All Saints was about, because she and Diane...

Linda Ferreria Oh, I know who you mean.

Bill Coleman ...basically ran the kitchen together and, you know, we had trouble over I shouldn't say this on camera. We have rivalries about the kitchen. There was no rivalry about the fact that they were there rolling up their sleeves, working together. So the... go ahead.

Linda Ferreria Name who ..who was in leadership, I think you said, Maurice.

Bill Coleman Maurice Edelen was in leadership both under Mooney and I think under Jack Eastwood. And he brought his real managerial experience to the fore.

My interest was primarily with Christian education and the kids and teaching Sunday school and having the youth group. One of the things we did, which was sort of controversial, my youth group actually had a soda cracker and 7UP Eucharist. I don't know if I told you that before. It was interesting because we did it on Sunday evenings. We met on Sunday evenings. We did it on Sunday evenings. We did not in any way deviate from what it was - from the prayer book. We didn't deviate. And Father Carthy, I think, was a little bit concerned that we did it, but it was like we asked for forgiveness after the fact. And he was very, very understanding about it, and partially because one of his daughters was the instigator. But that went over I mean; they did it. And they were very concerned about it. And they wanted to take part and they wanted to be involved. And and so that's the way it worked.

Linda Ferreria You made it real.

Bill Coleman Yeah, I remember. Henderson.

Linda Ferreria John Henderson, right.?

Bill Coleman No. Cliff Henderson.

Linda Ferreria Cliff Henderson was the Treasurer.

Bill Coleman He was the Treasurer. I do not know what Cliff's profession was, but (he was) very, very pleasant. So all these folks worked together, either on the vestry or in offices or in responsibilities to make All Saints what it was at the time. And this was all in my period during the 1960s and 1970s. We didn't have a lot of money, so at times we had to come up with special money to do certain things. But it was just a very delightful experience. We did have problems when the Common Cup came in. I mean, when the open communion was a problem, we had some people that did not like that idea and I never truly understood, except they were traditionalists and they didn't want a change. We had a little bit of pushback, but we couldn't push too hard. When the prayer ...when the new prayer book came in, I personally liked the 1928 prayer book because I'm just old; I thought it was poetic. I thought the language was beautiful, and it took me a while to get used to the new prayer book. And I actually thought, in a selfish way, that the 1928 prayer book was educational for the kids because it taught them English. I

obviously didn't win that argument. I mean, it was a done deal when it came, but, but it was interesting. Go ahead.

Linda Ferreria Yeah, let me (ask) and then fill me in. But I wanted to ask one more question, because as we finish all this taping and we begin to prepare to create it into a documentary, I wondered if you had reflections or recommendations about... how you see three white women here, right... How we get insight into the holes in our thinking?

Bill Coleman You know what, let me tell you what I think. First of all, in my lifetime and in my whole being, I need white people to understand that every Black person that I know gets up every day realizing that they are Black in a white society, and that no matter how hard they try, they can go around the corner and somebody will smack them or they can catch the wrong police officer and get abused. Or: there's just so many ways that being Black is difficult. You can get... I used to tell my buddies...you got to be careful because you only got one step out of the ghetto and all it takes is an angry white person to put you back in there by screwing up your job or by accusing you of doing something illegal. Or - it's just, it's very frustrating.

Uh, there's a quote from W.E.B. Dubois that says, "You have to have two persona. You have to have a persona that you have with your family and the other people like you, and then you need a persona to deal with the white world." And I've had so many people...let me say it another way: What I hope that white people will do is understand that it's not inappropriate to ask. It's not inappropriate to say, "Well, why is that?" I have friends; I have a good friend who asked me when he found out I was from Louisville to say that he had been to Louisville and he had gone to a meeting at the Brown Hotel. And he said, "Did you ever go to the Brown Hotel?" And I say, "Are you out of your mind? The Brown Hotel wouldn't let a Black person in the door when I was in Louisville" and he was shocked. But I said, "You don't have to be embarrassed that you ask; if you ask in the appropriate way, you can get an answer that's a sensible answer, because I know you don't know how it is to wake up every day Black. And so I'm not ...I don't have my feelings on my sleeve. If you... if you're interested and you want to know."

One of my colleagues two weeks ago asked me, well, "Why did Madam Walker move to Indy?" And I don't know why Madam Walker moved to Indy, except she knew about Indiana Avenue, which was known nationwide for its arts and so forth. Well, how did she become a millionaire? Well, she found a niche market. A niche market on how to take care of Black hair. But there's a larger cultural issue about Black hair, because you grow up with this concept as a Black person about good hair and bad hair. Well, that's terrible. But why is that? It's because we live in a white society where the model for beauty is white and narrow nose and thin lips and blond hair. And so historically, even in the Black community, people tried to be as much as they could like the model that the Europeans brought in as to what is beautiful. So you need to understand all that stuff. If you're going to deal in: how do we get rid of institutional racism? How do we get rid of implicit bias? All those things have an impact on implicit bias in addition to the policies which can get warped, like redlining.

I grew up in a red lined community. I moved to Dayton; I had to move into a red lined community. I moved into a community that was in a phase of transitioning. I was the first Black person in the block, and in two years, all the white people were gone. I have friends that moved on the east side of Indianapolis; they had exact same experience. They moved into a neighborhood; block by block and as they moved in, the white people moved out and they went to Carmel or Fishers or wherever, Lawrence, or wherever they could. People need to understand that, and they need to understand what I think it does to the psyche. Because when everybody started moving away from me, I thought: I know there's nothing wrong with me, but way back in that little kernel, back in the back of my brain, there's a little knot that says, "There must be something wrong with you, Bill". And there isn't. So I can get emotional, you know? I just think that... I don't think it's going to change. I don't think it's going to change. I think it might get better incrementally, but I don't think it's going to change. And I don't think we're going to get more than the 5 or 6 Black folks in the pews more than we have now because we're not comfortable. We went over to the New Era Church over at 34th, 30th and I-465; those people are comfortable. They're comfortable in their own environment. They come over to All Saints and I mean; they come over to Trinity and, you know, it's like they're oddballs. I don't like being an oddball. Anyway, you probably wish I hadn't said all that.

Linda Ferreria Thank you. No, you're saying exactly, exactly what I was asking for-

Bill Coleman I mean, I want to see more. I can see more. I can promote interaction. I like interaction. I like for you to ask me, well, what is the dynamic that you and I can share? I think that's fantastic. But I think the general population isn't going to change. And you got people like Ron DeSantis doing stuff and Donald Trump and the Indiana legislature who, you know, wants to be able to sue the schoolteachers because they teach the real history of the United States. I don't have any faith that that's going to change. Okay.

Linda Ferreria I'm actually with you there. But the question is still, what do you do in the midst of that if-

...

Linda Ferreria You live it.

Bill Coleman Well, yeah, I live it, but you know it and you know it and you know it. So we're going to have a ...we're going to have a video of people saying, well, I'll give you a good example and I'm... then I'm going to shut up and leave... I had a teenage...had boy who is now a professor at the University of Arizona who was a terrible teenager. And in Sunday school, he was disruptive. I know he was, because he thought he was a clown. He thought he was funny. And the person who was running the youth group at Trinity became so frustrated that he called him a "thug". Okay. Now, if you're going to be running a youth group, you can't lose your cool. But he lost his cool and he called him a "thug". All the kids reacted. They all said, "That was terrible." He came home with big tears in his eyes, "The man called me a 'thug'." Well, you know, you shouldn't have been acting a fool, but that wasn't what I said. We called and we complained, and the guy called and apologized. But my point is, if you're going to be in those kind of situations, you've got to be ready to deal with what you get. And so anyway, why did I say that? I don't know why I said that. I love you guys.

Linda Ferreria Thank you so much. Thank you.

Bill Coleman I love you guys very much.

Linda Ferreria And you said it because you wanted to say: we dealt with every one of these incidents with our kids. Yeah. Yeah. That you just live a life and where you deal with it again and again day to day for yourself-

Bill Coleman I appreciate your time. Sorry for rambling on and on.

Linda Ferreria Thank you so much.