The Task Force on Slavery & Justice:

- is composed of **13 individuals**
  - 5 faculty with expertise in Furman’s history and public memory/reconciliation
  - 5 staff with diversity initiatives, admissions and financial aid, and archives
  - 3 students or alumni
- Has made Furman a member of the “**Universities Studying Slavery**,” a consortium hosted by UVA.
- was formed by **Provost George Shields** in response to *Paladin* news article.
- created the project to document the story of Furman’s past “not told,” especially revealing narratives of former slaves like **Abraham**, who we only know from a photo (above, in the logo, taken at Cherrydale’s plantation home with James C. Furman).
- researched the letters and diaries of the Furmans, deeds of land and slave sales, previous university and regional histories, and stories of the enslaved. **Steve O’Neill** worked the fall semester (via course release time), with half-a-dozen student researchers helping to transcribe.
- is hosting a **series of speakers** and consulting conversations, including: Furman descendent Felicia Furman and her extended family and linked descendants; renowned historians, philosophers, and theologians in the area of slaveries legacies (e.g., James Loewen, Ed Ayers, Bill Leonard, Vernon Burton, Robert Bernasconi); other campus leaders in this area (e.g., Rhondda Thomas, Elizabeth West & Bobby Donaldson).
- develops **projects** that survey students, inventory campus, document oral histories with alumni and the extended campus community, and illuminates progress toward reconciliation in similar processes.
- will conclude when it makes **recommendations on July 28, 2018**, based on its findings and its goals as a group.
Our overarching goal is to “turn away from ignorance or indifference, to put truth-telling, understanding, and repair as our preeminent values regarding the university’s past.” Sub-goals include:

- **Overcome isolation** by some identity groups on campus, through telling a shared past and through shared efforts to remember that past.
- Change perceptions of campus visitors and applicants, that we are **honest and aware** about our past.
- Create a turning point now, relative to past and future, to make **intergenerational justice** a defining attribute of the Furman name.
- Educate students and the world more broadly that historical knowledge is an opportunity for community **advancement**, and that nobody profits when money alone defines how we tell our story.
- Create a more **participatory** process than has been used in the past to discuss race and Furman’s history.
- Be a **leader** relative to peer schools and community organizations on this issue, given our name and origin story.

**Anticipated Recommendations:**

- Given our goals and the history discovered so far, the majority will be **educational**: more accessible university histories (digital and print), bolstering programs that seek to leverage that history into dialogue about inequities, and incorporating moments of instruction and rituals that have students reflect on the university’s complex past.
- Move toward **financial** equity, especially when it links directly with historical slavery, whether in campus pay inequity, ending the finance of modern forms of slavery, or exacerbating inequality through our admissions practices and educational programming.
- We will also advise **physical** changes to the university that better acknowledge the labor of the enslaved and represent in the permanent landscape the diversity of the university’s aspirations. The creation of a stronger staffing and oversight of campus artifacts and spaces will probably accompany some immediate calls for historical context displays and reducing overrepresentation of certain voices (i.e., those that worked in their time to perpetuate injustice, especially when the context provided better information or they used demagogic or abusive tactics to meet their goals).
- Lastly, there will be **outreach** to alumni and community members that would broaden the impacts beyond our gates. Programs could unite disparate groups in oral histories or community projects, improve access to genealogical or archival information, and link potential students to the university through such programs.

Please let us know your ideas, availability for participation, and recommendation suggestions.