

Internal Institutional Analysis on Race Worksheet for Predominantly White Congregations

Intent:

The questions below are designed to support your congregation in dismantling racism by beginning within your own institution. This is not a survey to be taken by the pastor or church leadership body. This is a tool designed to support a long-term, broad-based effort to transform the culture of your church into an antiracist congregation. You are invited to undertake this effort in the spirit of 2 Samuel 24:24, *I shall not render to God that which costs me nothing.*

How Does it Work?

Utilize the questions in a way that will be most effective in your church system. The worksheet is structured so that sections may be given to leaders in correlating ministry areas to work through with their committees over time. Each question is designed to be a bread crumb that leads teams down a journey of introspection, analysis and action steps. Teams are encouraged to make SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) in response to where each question leads.

The questions are comprehensive to illustrate the comprehensive nature of the work of advancing racial equity. They are also not exhaustive, nor is it required that each question be explored. This tool is designed to introduce a line of questioning that guides committees and congregations to the point where they self-initiate new lines of inquiry, discover new avenues for growth and proactively view their church and the work of their various ministry areas through a racial equity and racial justice lens.

How Long Does it Take?

To use an analogy from the world of health and fitness, congregations cannot crash diet their way to dismantling racism and advancing racial equity within themselves and in the world. The work requires a lifestyle change. Take the time that is needed to follow where each question leads to its conclusion. This may be a single or multi-year process. Teams may choose to address one question thoroughly a month or define a subgroup to offer reflections and define goals on the whole. Consider gathering team leaders together for support, resourcing, collaboration and accountability.

Methodological Framework

A liturgical framing of the work at hand may be one of lament, confession, repentance and repair. Look honestly within. Envision possibilities. Prayerfully discern action steps in community. Grow. Repeat.

Area for Exploration	Types of Questions for Analysis
Personal <i>For those conducting the assessment (leadership teams, leaders and members)</i> <i>Define a spiritual practice to undergird the duration of your analysis.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your personal relationship with racism, white privilege and white supremacy?• What stories or experiences from your early years shaped your understanding of race?• When did you first realize you were white?• Have you ever used your whiteness as a tool for your own benefit, or to the detriment of others?• Have you taken an implicit/explicit racial bias survey?• What are your fears around race, racism and the work of antiracism? What are you hopeful for, for yourself, your congregation, your community?

Area for Exploration	Types of Questions for Analysis
<p>Church History</p> <p><i>"A Christian is one who is striving for liberation."</i></p> <p>- James H. Cone</p> <p><i>Consider consulting governance minutes, historical archives, your local library, online search engines and the long memories in your pews to inform your perspectives on the following.</i></p>	<p>Origins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the history of the land upon which your church is situated? Who were its native inhabitants? • How did the land come into the church's possession? • Who built the church building? • Did the construction of the church building impact any neighborhood residents from the standpoint of displacement? <p>Slavery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the history of slavery in your community? • What was the relationship between the church as an institution, its pastors and individual members, and slavery? • Did the church receive financial gifts from slaveholding families? • Did the church receive money from investments in slave labor and/or companies that used slave labor? • Did the church have a stance related to abolitionism? <p>Reconstruction & Jim Crow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the narratives at play in the church during this time? • Does your church know about the massacres of this era? <p>Civil Rights Movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the church's relationship to segregation? • What was the church's role in or messaging around the civil rights movement? Are there examples of it being supportive or non-supportive? • How did the church respond to the shooting of MLK? • How did the church respond to integration? Are there positive and negative examples? • Has the church taken any historical stances around race? If so, what were they? If not, why might this be? Where are there opportunities now? <p>The Church Today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has your church historically welcomed people of color? • Has intentional welcome of people of other races or racism ever been discussed by leadership? If so, what was the fruit of those discussions? If not, what steps might be taken to begin the conversation? • What programs, workshops, initiatives, partnerships, etc. has the church participated in around race and racism? • What stories from the life of the church illumine attitudes around diversity and race, either historic or contemporary? • Have church members been involved in community conversations around race, or the shaping of policy or processes that impact people of color? If so, what was their role, beneficial or detrimental? Where are there opportunities for them to be involved now? • Would the average member in your pew be able to narrate the history of your church in terms of race?

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<p>Denominational Affiliation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the regional or national position of your denomination of affiliation as it relates to racism and white supremacy? • What denominational study materials are available and have they been utilized in your local congregation? Why or why not? • What is your denomination's history with race and racism? How has its polity and position related to race evolved over time? • Are there senior leadership positions within your denomination held by people of color? • Does your church's denomination have a racial justice position paper? Has it been shared with your congregation or among racial justice advocates within your congregation? Why or why not, and how might this be done? • How is your denomination addressing the racial reckoning crisis of 2020? • Do the staff members of your denomination reflect racial diversity? • Who and what are the denominational resources available to support your congregational efforts to dismantle racism?
<p>Congregational Culture</p> <p>For a glossary of terms such as "racial equity" and "white supremacy" visit, www.racialequitytools.org/glossary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is your congregation realistically open to all people, or does it prefer to encounter a diversity of people elsewhere? • Can you envision your church being open to people of color preaching, teaching, leading and worshipping side by side? If not, why? What are the obstacles? How might this resistance be addressed? • Is discussion of racism normal and encouraged in the congregation and among leadership or seen as a diversion? • Is racial equity a stated value of your church? If so, how has it been articulated implicitly or explicitly? Is that value posted within your church building, bulletin, or on your website and social media where members and others can easily see? • How often does a person of color teach a class or preach in a year? What might a step be to grow this? • What percent of music in worship is sourced from composers of color, and draws from diverse musical traditions? What might be a step to grow this? • How often are diverse voices consulted when shaping programming, worship, hospitality, fellowship or outreach initiatives and perspective on church or local issues? • How often do you address racism, white privilege, or white supremacy from the pulpit? If they are not addressed, what are the obstacles to doing so? Where might be a place to start? • How often do you address racism in prayers? How might you begin? • Are people of color within the church invited to inform and shape the culture, practices, and decision-making of the congregation? If not, how might you foster active reflection on why, and how to encourage more balanced participation? • Is white culture treated as the norm, in that white preferences are given priority in decision-making? How might other voices be heard?

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<p>Education</p> <p><i>Consider taking Eddie Moore's 21 Day Race Equity Challenge: www.eddiemoorej.com/21daychallenge or exploring the resources available online at The Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing at centerforracialhealing.org</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What voices are informing and shaping your theology? Are you drawing from and referencing diverse theological scholarship in your preaching and teaching? • Are book studies or discussion groups about racism undertaken? How does your church support members in seeking information around issues of racism and white privilege within the church and culture? • Have trainings about racism been held with the church staff and leadership or within the congregation? Who might be a resource to consult? • Is education around racism taking place with adults, children and youth? • Do you have a Weekday School? If so, what are its practices for celebrating Black History month and spotlighting black leaders, authors and artists? • What is the process by which children are selected for enrollment, and where do you promote your opportunities? • Are your Weekday School teachers trained in dismantling racism and advancing racial equity as leaders and in their classroom? What resources are available for early childhood and educator formation and education? • What is the process by which teacher vacancies are promoted and filled? How might your processes encourage application by people of color?
<p>Finances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where does the church hold its money? Is this a predominantly white institution? Are there alternatives that support institutions led by and resourcing people of color? • What are the lending practices of your bank as it relates to businesses owned by people of color? • Have you reviewed the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) report of your financial institution to see how they are supporting the community? • What percent of the operating budget goes to support facilities contracts with businesses owned and operated by people of color? • When it comes time to put out an RFP to contractors, are you giving consideration to businesses owned by people of color? • Do the contractors you work with provide a living wage to their employees? • Who has influence over the budgeting and use of your financial resources? • Where do your church's resources go? If your budget is a moral and spiritual document in addition to a practical one, how does it align with your values to advance racial equity? Where is there room for growth? • How might members be encouraged to consider the above questions in their household budgets and practices? • Are there opportunities for the church to invest in community funds that champion businesses owned and operated by people of color? • If the church has an endowment, is the portfolio based on socially responsible investing (SRI) based on ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) considerations.
<p>Friendships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are members encouraged to build relationships across racial lines? • Is your church providing opportunities for members to build connections across racial lines? Where do you see this happening or holding the most potential? • Are you providing occasion for meals to be shared across racial lines? What might be the virtues of a shared table together, and how can it be set?

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<p>Mission & Community Outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many church mission partners have black ED's, staff, or black-led programming? • How often do you consult diverse voices to inform your perspective on the needs and concerns of people of color in your community and opportunities for your church to be relevant? Who might be an ally in this? • What percentage of your church's budget goes to initiatives led by people of color? • What percentage of your membership is directly involved with community organizations and agencies that work directly with people of color? • What percentage of your member involvement in community initiatives places them in the position of a) "giving to" people of color, b) "working for" people of color, or c) "being with" people of color in relationships of mutuality? How might initiatives in line with "a" and "b" be developed to look more like "c"? • Does your church have a racial justice task force or group dedicated to this mission? Who in your congregation might be interested in forming one? • Who are the community mission advocates in your congregation? How might they be nurtured to view their work through a racial equity lens? • Who are the racial equity advocates in your congregation? In what ways might they serve as resources to various program areas on racial equity? • Does your church have a long-range community engagement plan as part of its mission? If not, what might be the benefits and components of such a plan, and who might help develop it? • Do your pastors or lay leaders regularly encourage involvement in citywide racial justice initiatives from the pulpit or in communications? Why or why not? Where in the city is work being done that might be a gateway to deeper civic/congregational collaboration? • Has your church considered developing an intentional partnership with a congregation of another predominant racial composition? • Where might relationships among the clergy, church leadership, or members of the congregation serve as a basis for exploring institutional partnership?
<p>Personnel</p> <p>For an analysis on the impact of white culture in institutions, visit www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/2_Gulati_AB3.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you pursue a diverse applicant pool for open pastoral positions? How might you be intentional about reaching a diverse candidate pool? • How do you currently recruit for open staff positions? • Where might you promote open staff positions to increase diversity in your candidate pool? • Do your evaluation and review procedures reflect a racial equity approach? • Is your staff trained around racial equity? Who might conduct such a training? When and how will it be scheduled? • Do people of color on staff share in decision-making around church policies, practices and staff or organizational culture? • Has your personnel team engaged in reflection around how stated and unstated workplace norms may be tied to white cultural norms?

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Leadership Development (internal and external)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your church have a priority and plan to develop the leadership of staff and church members who are people of color? What might the components of such a plan be? • Are you leveraging church internships or employment opportunities to promote leadership development among students of color? If not, when and how might you begin to do so? • Are your members encouraged to advocate for the participation and voice of people of color in their workplaces, boards and in local politics? • Are broader community initiatives, campaigns, and educational opportunities led by people of color promoted among your membership for participation? • Does your church advocate for anti-racism within its broader denomination, among partner organizations, and with facility contractors? • Are leaders and church partner organizations led by people of color consulted in your strategic planning? What might be appropriate questions to ask?
Acknowledgements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Juvenile Justice Network Anti-Racist Organizational Assessments: njjn.org/uploads/Anti-Racism_Organizational_Assessments_1.pdf • Racial Equity Tools: racialequitytools.org • America & Moore Education, Research & Consulting 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge: eddiemoorej.com/21daychallenge. • The Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing: centerforracialhealing.org • Paying Attention to White Culture and Privilege: A Missing Link to Advancing Racial Equity: www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/2_Gulati_AB3.pdf • For questions or discussion regarding this instrument, or to become part of a cohort for accountability, resource sharing and support in dismantling racism and advancing racial equity within your congregation, contact Rev. Dr. Katie Crowe at kcrowe@trinityave.org or at 704-651-8680.