

Recommendations of the Diversity Task Force
4/3/20

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The following 3 recommendations were developed during a robust discussion during a retreat on Feb 17-19th of 2020. Subsequent meetings have sought to detail each recommendation with specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-sensitive goals (SMART). The goal is to present the recommendations and SMART goals to the Diversity committee of the BOA by May of 2020.

We are called to pray for the Kingdom of God to come and God's will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Our hope is for the prophetic imagination of the church to guide the FMCUSA, we therefore advise local church pastors, superintendents, the Board of Administration, and the Board of Bishops to inspire a vision for the multicultural church in ways that push all tribes within the FMCUSA to grow beyond their tribal boundaries, confess the sin and system of racial hierarchy, and celebrate the image of God in creation.

1. To develop, codify, and communicate a vision for the Free Methodist Church USA that defines the identity of the FMCUSA as multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and socially diverse at each level of the church (local, conference, denomination)
2. To articulate a denomination-wide call for confession of the sin and system of racial hierarchy and repentance towards a vision where the image of God in creation is celebrated

We understand the Bible to speak to the diversity of creation in ways that inform the spiritual and social formation of the church. We value intentionally communicating the

position and direction of the denomination about historic race and racism, justice, systemic oppression, and reconciliation. Therefore, in reference to the Book of Discipline (section 3221.b), which states the position and direction of the denomination on diversity, historic race and racism, justice, and systemic oppression; we recommend the development of a theology of diversity and ministry training for the BOB, BOA, and GOT (Global Overseers Team).

1. Design, develop and deploy a theology of diversity that addresses both sexism and racism.
2. Training will address the “Worth of Persons” including anti-sexism, the objectification of women, the erroneous belief in a biblical preference of maleness, unbiblical propagation of male hierarchical structures, egalitarian marriage, anti-racism, the decentering of whiteness and rebalancing of power.
3. We value this training as a requirement of a professional development program for current pastors, transferring pastors, those seeking credentialing/ordination, MEG boards, BOA, BOB, GOT and WMC executives.

God’s work calls us to testify to God’s greatness. Our deep belief is that what matters is measured. -We therefore recommend the BOA determine ways to measure (evaluate, assess) the work of racial and gender equity at the local, conference, and denominational level. By equity we mean: the access, opportunity, and participation of all persons regardless of race or gender.

1. Adopt a measurement tool to regularly provide a means for conferences to gather data.
2. Revise the annual report to include questions that gather data on racial and ethnic composition of local churches.
3. Regularly report the progress on the data collected to the BOA, GOT, and BOB.