

THE CALL

God has commanded us to love one another as God has loved us and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

- John 13:34

Why does the GMS Anti-Racism Team exist?

In 1998, the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly passed Resolution #3 which brought into being the existence of the Anti-Racism Team.

Supported by Bishop Peter Rogness, the GMS decided that it was time to work on racial and diversity training. The timeliness of this decision is evidenced by the continuing growth in polarization between white persons and persons of color, the rise in hate-based crimes and increased hate-based speech.

God has commissioned us to share God's word with all people.

- Matthew 28:19

The geography of our synod contains diverse populations that are not represented in our congregations.

In 2003, the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly passed Resolution #2 which called the GMS Anti-Racism Team to serve as a resource to help congregations begin, and continue, to lift up cross-cultural and diversity concerns.



For more information on Resolution #3, 1998 and Resolution #2, 2003, see the Greater Milwaukee Synod website: www.milwaukeeesynod.org

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in *Why We Can't Wait* (Signet Classics, 1964), 120:

"Our nation was born in genocide when it embraced the doctrine that the original American, the Indian, was an inferior race. Even before there were large numbers of Negroes on our shores, the scar of racial hatred had already disfigured colonial society. From the sixteenth century forward, blood flowed in battles over racial supremacy. We are perhaps the only nation which tried as a matter of national policy to wipe out its indigenous population. Moreover, we elevated that tragic experience into a noble crusade. Indeed, even today we have not permitted ourselves to reject or feel remorse for this shameful episode. Our literature, our films, our drama, our folklore all exalt it. Our children are still taught to respect the violence which reduced a red-skinned people of an earlier culture into a few fragmented groups herded into impoverished reservations.... It was upon this massive base of racism that the prejudice toward the nonwhite was readily built and found rapid growth."

DEFINITION OF RACISM:

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RACE PREJUDICE
+
THE MISUSE OF POWER BY SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS
=
RACISM

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A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP PAUL ERICKSON

"As a synod, we are continuing to grow into our anti-racist identity, which means so much more than simply attending a training or declaring ourselves on the 'right side' of the issues of the day. We need to engage in the slow, deliberate. And sometimes painful work of disentangling ourselves and our congregations and communities from the lies that have perpetuated oppression based on race. I hope that our work in this arena will become woven into the very fabric of life together in this synod, and that our witness will be clear, strong and effective."

WE ARE THE CHURCH

The Greater Milwaukee Synod Anti-Racism Team is made up of a variety of people. We are People of /color and People of White, Various Genders, Young and Old, Lay and Rostered (Clergy and Deacons), LGBTI+ and Straight, Urban and XUrban, and from diverse economic and class backgrounds. Some of us are veterans of the racial justice movement, others are new to it.

Whatever our outward appearance or circumstance, we are all passionate about sharing God's love for one another and being instruments of change for greater racial equality in our church and society.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, on God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

- Ephesians 4:4-5

All Bible passages are taken from the NRSV