

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

RACISM

&

YOU

A HANDBOOK  
FOR YOU  
TO  
UNDERSTAND  
AND  
WORK TO  
DISMANTLE  
RACISM

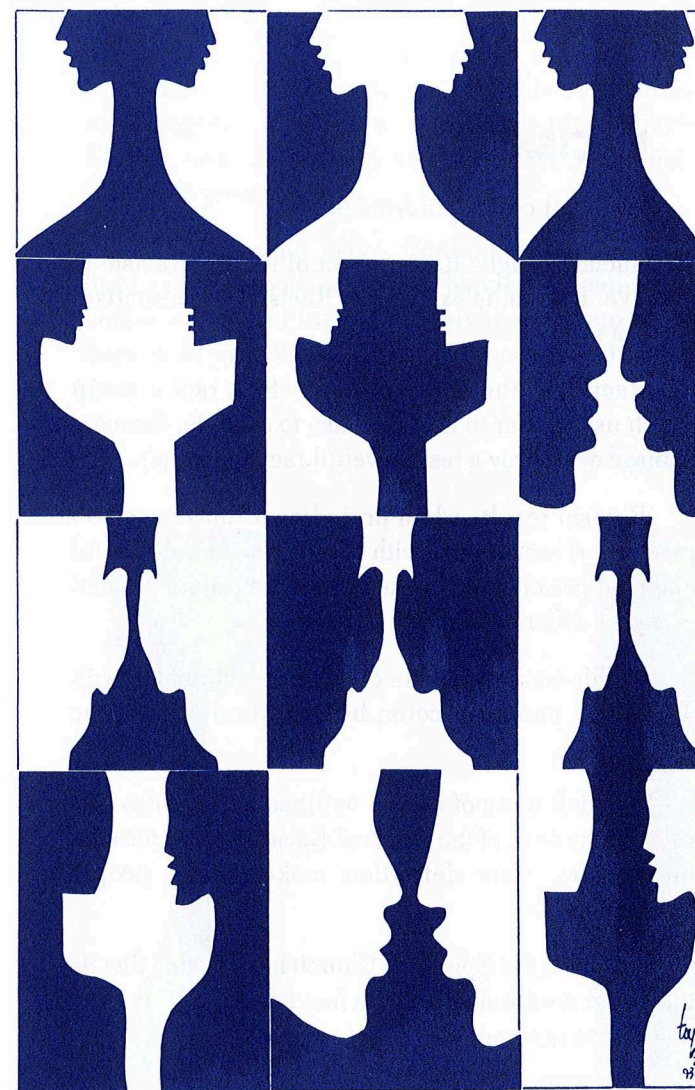
**T**his handbook is  
dedicated to the  
memory of the racism  
commission members:

Karen Graves

Gerald Wilkinson

and

Jimmie Hosoda.



**THE  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH  
RACISM &  
YOU**

## FOREWORD

### RACISM

WE must confront it head on.

Racism is ugly. Racism is debilitating. Racism is divisive. Racism is expensive. Racism is destructive. Racism is sin.

Racism is the abuse of power by a racial group which uses power to its advantage to exclude, demean, damage or destroy a less powerful racial group(s).

Racism results when prejudice or bias based on race (color) is combined with power. People who control and hold power and oppress people of a different racial group — different because of color — are racists.

In this society, people of color do not hold power. Therefore, people of color, by definition, can not be racists.

The definition of racism outlined here guides and informs the work of the National Episcopal Commission on Racism. This definition makes many people uncomfortable.

However, the Episcopal Church has decided that its task is to confront this issue head on, in spite of the discomfort of some.

This will mean, perhaps, that people who use power to oppress, deny justice and otherwise impede people of color in attaining full potential, will be uncomfortable.

This booklet, *The Episcopal Church, Racism and You*, is written to assist Episcopalians who are willing to confront the sin of racism. As a Church we've said that

we're committed to eliminating racism. As long as this sin remains embedded in our societal structure, a commitment to eliminate racism will mean that each one of us must be willing to confront racism on a daily basis.

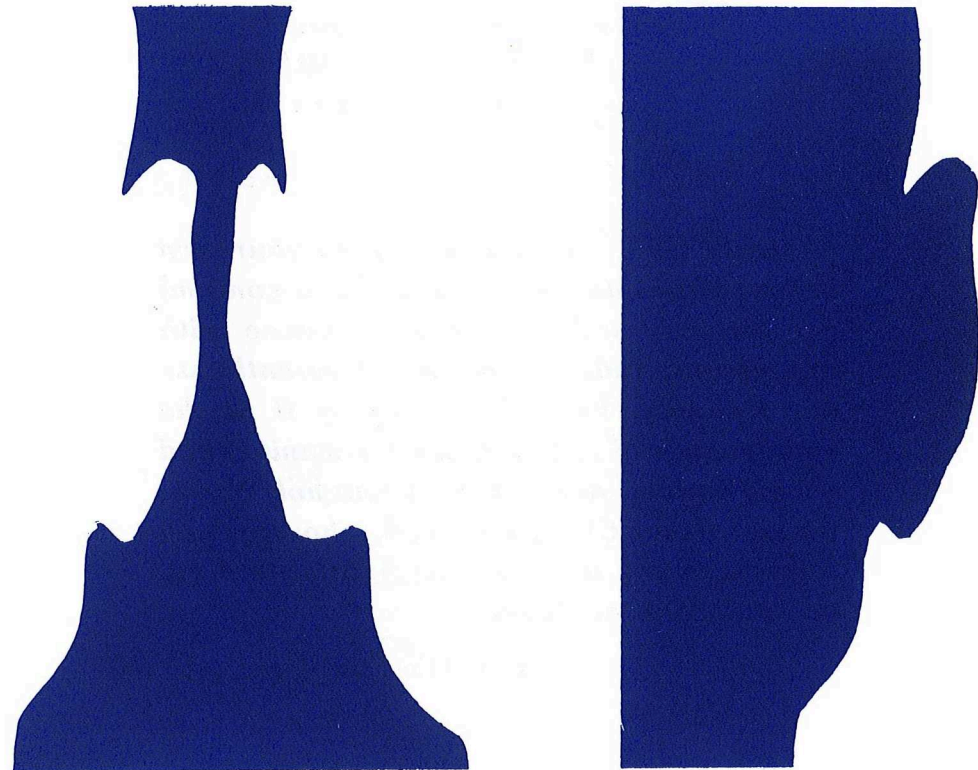
Some of us will ask, can racism really be eliminated? If each one of us begins to struggle with this sin within ourselves, within the Church, within society, then real transformation and liberation from this sin is possible.

**You** can start today. Confront the sin of racism head on. We have a chance to make real our baptismal promises. We can live the commandment of loving our neighbors as ourselves. *Let our task begin with you.* We must confront racism head on.

**Diane M. Porter**

Senior Executive for Program

June 1993





**You** may wish to join in prayer with other Episcopalians each Friday to pray for social justice and the elimination of racism:

**A WEEKLY PRAYER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE  
ELIMINATION OF RACISM.**

Start praying according to your time zone.

Eastern Standard Time	1:00 PM
Central Standard Time	12:00 NOON
Mountain Standard Time	11:00 AM
Pacific Standard Time	10:00 AM
Alaska Standard Time	9:00 AM
Hawaii Standard Time	8:00 AM

In this way, we can all pray together.

*Almighty God, who created us in your own image: Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among nations, to the glory of your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Book of Common Prayer, page 260

Foreword	ii
Preface	vi
Introduction	viii
Background: The Racism Audit	11
Findings	
Recommendations	
Summary	
1. So Few Minorities in the Church	15
2. As A Good Christian I Must Support Diversity	18
3. Called to Fight for Diversity	19
4. Unfair Treatment	20
5. Facing Racism	21
6. Reducing Racism	22
7. Race-Ethnicity: Important to Identity	24
8. Accepting Differences	25
9. Improving Ethnic-Racial Relationships	26
10. Exaggerated Concerns?	27
A Call to Action	28
For the Church	
For Clergy	
For People of Color	
For White People	
For Congregations and Schools	
For Families	
For Parishes Without Members of Color	
For Everyone—Parishes, Schools, Dioceses, Provinces, Seminaries and Other Episcopal Entities	
Glossary	32

**TABLE OF  
CONTENTS**





## **What is the mission of the Church?**

### **PREFACE**

*The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.*

## **How does the Church pursue its mission?**

*The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.*

Book of Common Prayer, p. 855

*“ . . . in no area of our life are we more challenged to be the Church than in the eradication of racism. I believe that in order to confront the sin of racism as God would have us do, we must ground ourselves in what it means to be the Church. That is the way of faithfulness.”*

**The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning**  
**Presiding Bishop**  
in an address to the Executive Council,  
Albuquerque, New Mexico.  
June 16, 1992

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he Episcopal Church, Racism and You poses challenges based on key findings of a racism audit conducted at the 1991 General Convention of the Episcopal Church. As a result of the audit, the full membership of the Episcopal Church — everyone, all ages — represented through the church leadership is determining the stance the Episcopal Church will take in relation to racism in society. Episcopalians are being asked Am I reinforcing or perpetuating racism? Am I willing to confront racism and work towards its eradication?

Racism, described as “America’s original sin”, is in our midst. In this midst, we, as the Church, must hold out hope and a vision of a new creation where justice and equality prevail.

Our Nation has become more racially, ethnically and culturally diverse. Yet, “differentness” is devalued. The Episcopal Church is taking a bold step in its willingness to challenge the status quo, strive toward justice and eradicate racism in its personal and institutional manifestations.

Racism is a difficult subject for most people. Many prefer not to deal with, address or even recognize the degree to which racial and ethnic differences affect people’s lives. Most people decry the blatant forms of bias. This is the easier task. The harder task is to recognize the subtle forms of prejudice based on race and ethnicity.

The Episcopal Church, through its racism audit, has decided to take on the harder task. Through Baptism we promise to seek and serve Christ in all

persons, strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.

We have made the promise. But how is the promise lived out institutionally? Like society, the Episcopal Church, includes not only those who oppress or benefit from oppression, but also the victims of oppression.

This is the source of the crisis. In this crisis, as Christian people, we must act effectively based on an understanding of the inherent evil of racism. Christians believe, in large part because our reality comes out of a crucifixion, that a moment of crisis is also a moment of hope.

This hope means that a non-racist society is possible. We may not be able to create the perfect society, but we do have the responsibility to embody the values of the reign of God in our society.

We can work to create a society where it is easier for people to live together, equitably. This will not happen without conflict. If conflict is seen as a sign of life — we are able to struggle because we are alive — then conflict can be seen as a possible means of bringing about transformation.

This society needs the grace of conversion. We need a conversion which allows more of those who benefit from the white racist institutions of our society to see the world from the perspective of the victims of this structure.

The Episcopal Church through its National Commission on Racism is taking seriously an evangelical ministry in the white community. The Commission is seeking mission strategies to empower the Episcopal Church to more effectively liberate the white community from the sin of white racism.

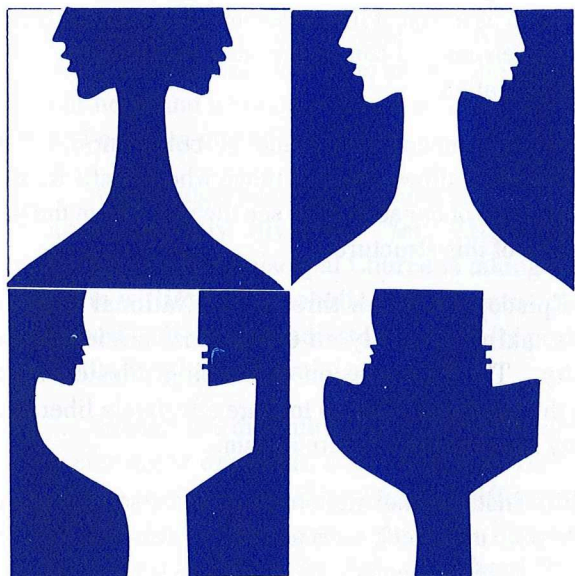
If white institutional racism is a major source of evil in our society, then we must seek ways to address this evil in its community of origin. This might mean developing Christian education programs that enable young people and older adults to unlearn white racist values.

People of color, those who have clung to hope and the promise of a new day, must be willing to prod the dialogue along and keep it alive.



To move toward a just and fair society, we as a Church, individually and collectively, must move forward swiftly to bring about a renewed and undaunting commitment to justice where inequity prevails.

Like the people of Israel crossing over to a new land, both options are before us — death and life, racism or non-racism. As a Church, we have chosen life. The racism audit shows that we are ready to begin a journey towards life. In so doing, we can become a more healthy community of faith.



**T**he Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church decided to conduct what they called a “racism audit” at the 1991 General Convention.

The audit was undertaken to determine what stance, if any, the Church was to take in relation to racism in society. The Church’s leaders determined that it was important to understand the attitudes of lay persons and clergy before formulating policies in response to racial and ethnic concerns

**BACKGROUND:**  
**THE RACISM**  
**AUDIT**

An “organic questionnaire” was designed where responders could report opinions and perceptions on their own terms. Our organic questionnaire does not impose language or concepts from other times or places. The questionnaire was developed from statements made by Episcopalians. It was revised, pilot tested and reviewed. The final questionnaire of sixty-six items was answered by 1,438 delegates.

The audit was administered in the House of Bishops, the House of Deputies, the Women’s Triennium, the National Altar Guild and to the youth who formed the youth delegation. Lay people were in a slight majority by fifty-seven percent. Women comprised forty-six per cent of the responders. The average age of all respondents was fifty-three.

The sixty-six responses were sorted into three clusters that identify the major themes in the responses.

The first cluster contains items that explore whether concerns in the Episcopal Church about race and ethnicity are excessive or appropriate. A minority of respondents (15% to 25%) indicated belief that the



concern is excessive. While a strong majority of the clergy and laity agree with a greater emphasis, they are not without opposition. Those opposed believe that the issues are overemphasized and the Church overreacts. The data seem to indicate tension between the two viewpoints.

The second cluster focuses on the institutional Church's treatment of racial-ethnic minorities. A significant majority believe that people of color are not accorded full equal treatment and participation in the Church. Over one-third of the respondents agree that the Church is overly racist. When the question of racism within the Church is raised, there is significant division of opinion.

The third cluster focuses on the willingness to work to reduce racism. Again, a majority (two-thirds to three-fourths) indicate that they have actively worked, spoken and prayed in an effort to reduce racism.

### Findings

Data from the audit consistently indicate that leadership for changing racial and ethnic relations within the Church and in society comes more from ordained than from lay members.

Key to how the Church moves forward pertains to how people understand what has been termed the relationship between "the pursuit of cultural diversity," on the one hand and "following the Gospel message," on the other. For some members, these two objectives are in accord, while for others, following the Gospel is primary and pursuing cultural diversity is secondary.

This effort to improve relations among diverse racial and ethnic groups created tensions. Preferred treatment for some at the expense of others arose. In any endeavor involving change, feelings of envy and resentment, too, are part of any endeavor to change. And change processes work more effectively when people can acknowledge their feelings instead of attacking and condemning others.

This booklet, **The Episcopal Church, Racism and You**, summarizes and discusses responses which are representative of the sixty-six questionnaire items. This booklet also offers an action plan.

### Recommendations

The report on the audit, "Race and Ethnic Relations in the Episcopal Church," produced after the 1991 General Convention reminds the Church that changing attitudes and practices is painstaking and arduous

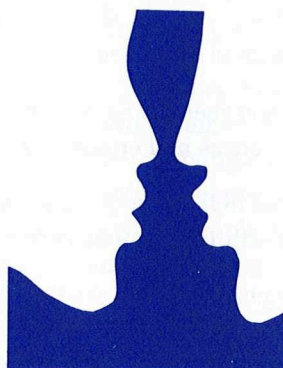
"Struggles and conflict about racial and ethnic relations are as old as humankind. The wish for quick and easy solutions is understandable, but the reality is that authentic change takes sustained competent work over a long period. For programmatic efforts to have the desired outcomes in the long run, the most important commitment must be to tell repeatedly the multiple truths characteristic of vital (as well as troublesome) racial and ethnic relations. The chief enemy of progressive change is when the desire for comfort overcomes the need for accurate reports of human experiences."

### Summary

- Respondents were predominantly White.
- The highest number of nonwhite respondents were from Province 2 followed by Province 3.
- Four-fifths see themselves as good Christians by supporting cultural diversity.
- Two-thirds said that racial-ethnic group membership is an important part of their identities.
- Eighty-nine percent feel the Episcopal Church is accepting of their ethnic differences and cultural heritage.
- Eighty-six percent believe they consciously and actively work to improve racial-ethnic relations in the Church.
- Seventy-two percent do not believe the concerns of the minority groups are exaggerated.
- More than 80% feel the Church is called to fight for cultural diversity.

- Fifty-eight percent agreed compared to 42% who disagreed on whether or not people in the Church hide from racism in the Church.
- More than two-thirds personally participated in activities to reduce racism.
- The majority believe that concerns about race and ethnicity are warranted and that people of color are not always accorded equal treatment.
- A smaller majority actively work to reduce racism.
- A significant minority do not agree with the concerns and do not work to reduce racism.

Readers should be aware, as they examine the information in this section, that all respondents did not indicate their membership in each of the six groups provided for self identification. Thus as one compares totals from one table to another, the numbers will not add up to the sums one would expect, if all respondents answered every group membership question.



## 1. SO FEW MINORITIES IN THE CHURCH

**Q. Am I bothered by the fact that there are so few minorities in our Church? Why are so few at General Convention? Is more input needed from the “others” to eradicate racism and free the “others” from oppression?**

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by province and race-ethnic group. The number of respondents by province varies widely — from 43 for Province 9 and 293 for Province 4. With 86% of the total sample, whites are overwhelmingly the largest group, followed by blacks at 8%, Hispanics at 2%, and Asians and Native Americans at 1% each.

With such small numbers and percentages of people of color responding, generalizing about the attitudes of minority groups in the Episcopal Church — based on the audit — must be done very cautiously.

By province, the race-ethnic groups vary considerably. The highest percentage of black respondents (22%) came from a single area — Province 2. Hispanics, 49% came from Province 9. The highest percentage of Asians (4%) came from Province 8 and the highest percentage of Native Americans (6%) came from Province 6.

Except for Province 2 where blacks are present in significant numbers and Province 9 where Hispanics represent a significant proportion, people who are other than white were present in small proportions.



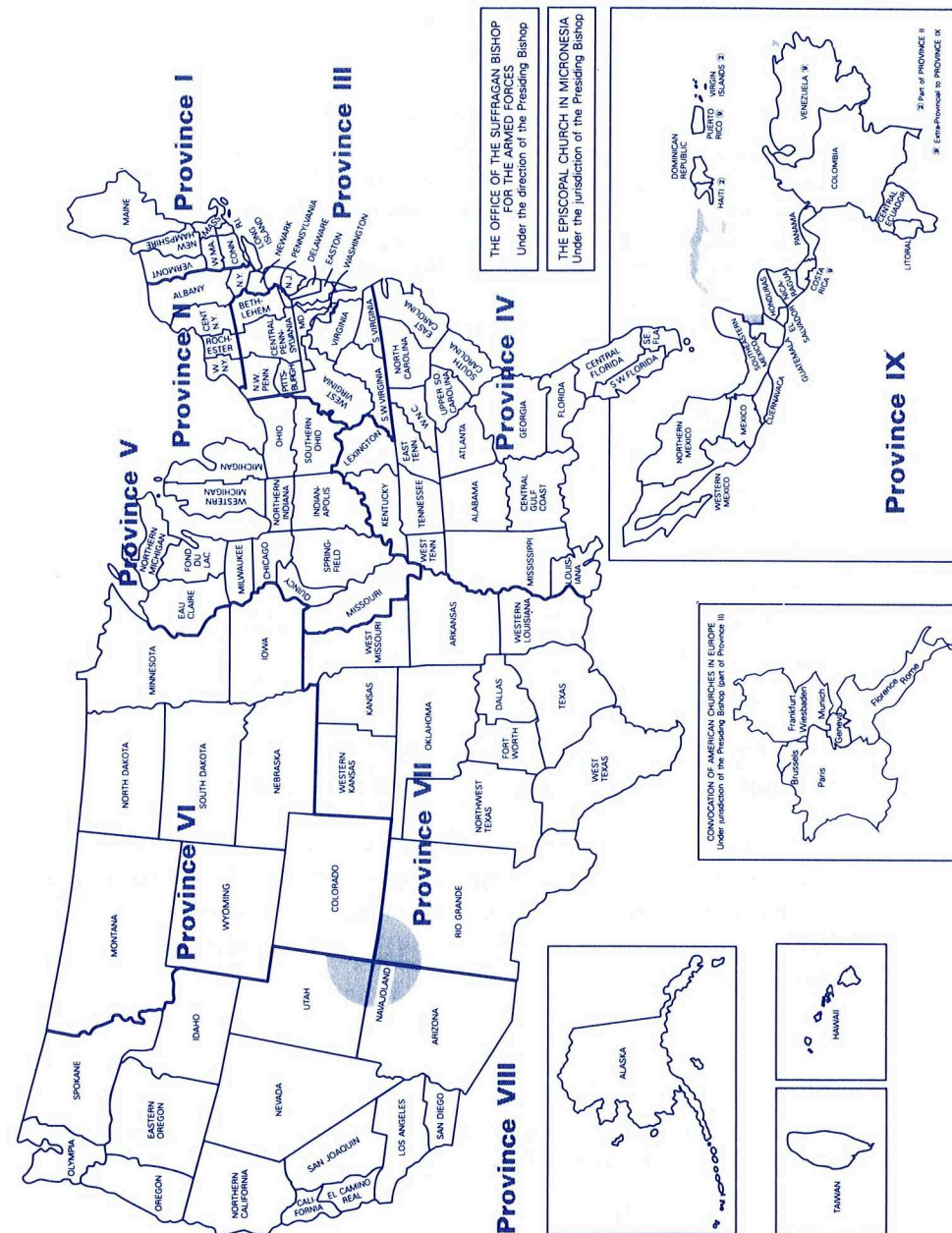
**TABLE 1**

<b>Province 1</b> (New England)	1	10	1	0	2	97	111
<b>Province 2</b> (NY, NY, VI, Europe)	1	32	2	1	1	107	144
<b>Province 3</b> (Mid Atlantic)	2	18	0	0	4	167	191
<b>Province 4</b> (South)	2	15	0	0	0	256	273
<b>Province 5</b> (Middle West)	0	15	2	2	4	156	179
<b>Province 6</b> (Dakota, WY, CO)	1	1	3	6	1	89	101
<b>Province 7</b> (Southwest)	4	4	1	3	3	145	160
<b>Province 8</b> (Far West)	9	6	1	7	4	201	228
<b>Province 9</b> (Mexico & Central America)	1	8	21	0	2	11	430
<b>Totals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1229</b>	<b>430</b>

## Reflection

Read Acts 2: 1-12

What is the implication for the Episcopal Church of the Pentecost experience as a litmus test for what Churches ought to look like?





## 2. AS A GOOD CHRISTIAN I MUST SUPPORT DIVERSITY

**Q.** If I believe that as a good Christian I must actively support cultural diversity, what can I do to model this behavior for those who do not share my belief?

---

**Question:** I believe that I can be a good Christian without actively supporting cultural diversity.

---

**TABLE 2**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	12%	88%	111
<b>Province 2</b>	17%	82%	148
<b>Province 3</b>	18%	81%	193
<b>Province 4</b>	34%	65%	272
<b>Province 5</b>	15%	85%	180
<b>Province 6</b>	25%	75%	102
<b>Province 7</b>	29%	70%	163
<b>Province 8</b>	16%	84%	228
<b>Province 9</b>	34%	66%	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>1543</b>

The majority of delegates from all provinces believed that a good Christian actively supports cultural diversity. Although there is some variation among provinces in the percentages of agreement and disagreement, the level of similarity is much greater than the level of disagreement.

### Reflection

Read Luke 10: 26-37

What is the inescapable implication of the story of the good Samaritan? (or read Matthew 22:35-40).

Who are your neighbors?

## 3. CALLED TO FIGHT FOR DIVERSITY

**Q.** Why is my Church called to fight for cultural diversity? Must I take up this fight?

---

**Question:** The Episcopal Church is called to fight for cultural diversity.

---

**TABLE 7**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	86%	14%	109
<b>Province 2</b>	89%	11%	146
<b>Province 3</b>	85%	15%	194
<b>Province 4</b>	75%	25%	181
<b>Province 5</b>	84%	15%	181
<b>Province 6</b>	78%	22%	100
<b>Province 7</b>	72%	28%	160
<b>Province 8</b>	86%	14%	227
<b>Province 9</b>	86%	14%	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>1545</b>

Generally, the provinces concurred that the Episcopal Church is called to fight for cultural diversity. All racial-ethnic groups agreed. However, there were differences in the degree to which each racial-ethnic group supported this statement. Blacks (95%) were more likely to support this statement while 81% of whites support it.

Bishops (88%) supported the statement at a higher percentage than other participants.

### Reflection

Read Ephesians 2: 13-22

The Christian Church today has been fashioned into a family/community made-up of every race and tongue under heaven. Yet we find that this reality is not always evident at the local level of the faith community that worships and studies together. Is this not something to strive for as imagery for the incarnation of the presence of Christ?

#### 4. UNFAIR TREATMENT

**Q.** As long as one person feels that they are treated unfairly in my Church, I must work to overcome this injustice and bring harmony in our membership.

**Question:** I have been treated unfairly in the Episcopal Church because of my race or ethnicity.

**TABLE 8**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	20%	80%	112
<b>Province 2</b>	26%	74%	144
<b>Province 3</b>	18%	82%	190
<b>Province 4</b>	16%	84%	270
<b>Province 5</b>	20%	80%	178
<b>Province 6</b>	15%	85%	101
<b>Province 7</b>	15%	85%	165
<b>Province 8</b>	14%	86%	223
<b>Province 9</b>	20%	80%	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>1528</b>

There were differences in the degree to which the racial-ethnic respondents disagreed that racial-ethnic groups were treated unfairly. White respondents (85% ) were most likely to disagree, while Black respondents were least likely to disagree, 43%. Respondents holding different roles generally disagreed that racial-ethnic groups were treated unfairly in the Episcopal Church.

#### Reflection

Read Philemon 15-17

Think about the Eucharist meal as the welcome table. Then put yourself in the shoes of Onesimus, the slave. How and what do you imagine he felt as he returned?

#### 5. FACING RACISM

**Q.** How do I face or confront racism? How do I help others to face racism?

**Question:** People keep hiding from dealing with racism in the Episcopal Church.

**TABLE 9**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	66%	34%	110
<b>Province 2</b>	68%	32%	148
<b>Province 3</b>	64%	36%	194
<b>Province 4</b>	50%	50%	274
<b>Province 5</b>	63%	37%	182
<b>Province 6</b>	53%	47%	100
<b>Province 7</b>	47%	53%	162
<b>Province 8</b>	58%	42%	228
<b>Province 9</b>	48%	52%	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>1540</b>

More than half (58%) of the respondents agreed that people hide from dealing with racism. Regardless of race-ethnicity, respondents generally agreed that people hide from dealing with racism.

Blacks (84%) agreed that people hide while whites and Hispanics (both 55%) were least likely to agree. Respondents holding different roles generally agreed that people hide from addressing racism in the Church.

#### Reflection

Read: Ephesians 4: 1-7

The rich variety of individual gifts contributes to the unity of the Church. God calls us all to unity of the wonderful diversity of the created order and the creatures within it. How can we use this diversity to work together from a position of strength, rather than from being paralyzed by fear?



## 6. REDUCING RACISM

**Q.** What do I personally do and what am I committed to doing to reduce racism? What is my action plan? What practical steps will I take to reduce racism? Does my behavior reflect my commitment to reducing racism?

**Question:** Within the last year, I personally have participated in activities to reduce some form of racism in the Episcopal Church.

**TABLE 10**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	75%	25%	111
<b>Province 2</b>	74%	26%	145
<b>Province 3</b>	79%	21%	190
<b>Province 4</b>	73%	27%	273
<b>Province 5</b>	75%	25%	178
<b>Province 6</b>	63%	37%	101
<b>Province 7</b>	68%	32%	162
<b>Province 8</b>	75%	25%	220
<b>Province 9</b>	62%	38%	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>1516</b>

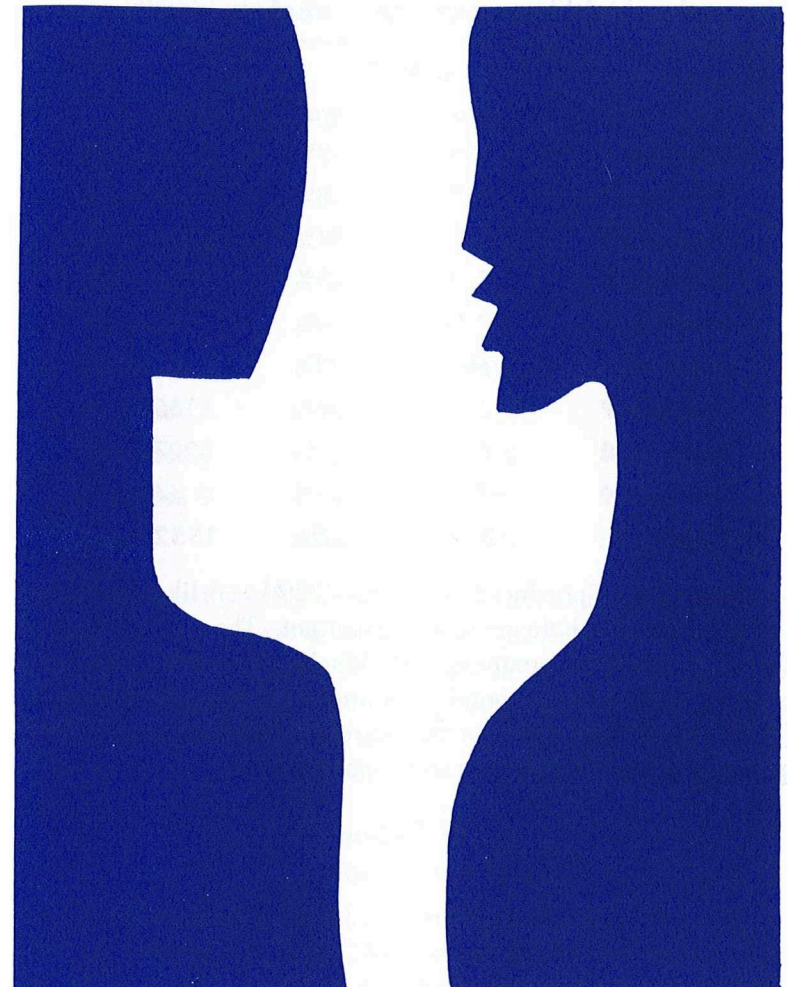
A majority of respondents in the provinces, regardless of race-ethnicity, agreed that they were personally involved in activities to reduce racism. Asians and Hispanics were least likely to have participated in such activities, compared to Blacks (77%), whites (71%) and Native Americans (77%).

Respondents holding different roles also agreed that they personally participated in activities that reduced racism. Bishops (91%) were most likely to have participated in activities while Triennial delegates (66%) were least likely to have participated in such activities.

## Reflection

Read Galatians 6:2-5

“Bear ye one another’s burden’s” is one of the essential guidelines of the Christian life. Racism is a burden we all share. Responding to a call to work to eliminate racism is essentially Christian ministry. What are some ways that we can be intentional about this?





## 7.

### RACE-ETHNICITY: IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY

**Q.** By understanding that racial-ethnic group identification is important to most people, what am I doing to support and show respect for people in my daily life?

**Question:** For me personally, my racial-ethnic group membership(s) is an important part of my identity.

**TABLE 3**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	83%	17%	110
<b>Province 2</b>	72%	28%	146
<b>Province 3</b>	69%	31%	194
<b>Province 4</b>	77%	23%	276
<b>Province 5</b>	71%	30%	180
<b>Province 6</b>	68%	33%	101
<b>Province 7</b>	65%	36%	165
<b>Province 8</b>	69%	31%	227
<b>Province 9</b>	75%	25%	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>1552</b>

Regardless of province, respondents (72%) were likely to believe that their racial-ethnic group was important. The analysis showed that all racial-ethnic groups agreed. Blacks (91%) were more likely to agree while white respondents were a little less likely to agree (78%). Regardless of role in the Church, respondents in this group generally agreed that identity was important.

#### Reflection

Read Romans 8: 14-17

This passage is a clear affirmation that we are all children of God. As God's children we have received a "Spirit of adoption." Doesn't this recognition within ourselves allow us the freedom to affirm that we all have an intimate relationship with God who created and endowed us with all of our racial-ethnic identities?

## 8.

### ACCEPTING DIFFERENCES

**Q.** What can I do to bring about the acceptance of ethnic differences and the cultural heritages of many people in my church and in my daily life?

**Question:** The Episcopal Church is accepting of my ethnic differences and cultural heritage.

**TABLE 4**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	86%	14%	109
<b>Province 2</b>	81%	19%	144
<b>Province 3</b>	89%	11%	191
<b>Province 4</b>	95%	5%	272
<b>Province 5</b>	87%	13%	174
<b>Province 6</b>	90%	10%	102
<b>Province 7</b>	89%	11%	165
<b>Province 8</b>	91%	9%	223
<b>Province 9</b>	81%	19%	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>1532</b>

Regardless of province, respondents believed that their ethnicity and cultural heritage was accepted in the Episcopal Church. Racial-ethnic groups also agreed. However, there were differences in the degree to which racial-ethnic groups perceived the Church's acceptance of ethnic-cultural differences. Whites were more likely to feel accepted while Hispanics (65%) and Blacks (65%) were less likely to feel accepted.

#### Reflection

Read Romans 12: 3-13

Paul is pointing us to a conception of the true community with the characteristics of a living organism — each part has its function to work for the good of the whole. Think about the infinite diversity in this imagery and the broad differentiation of function within an overriding unity of life and purpose.

## 9.

### IMPROVING ETHNIC-RACIAL RELATIONSHIPS

**Q.** What am I doing to improve racial and ethnic relations? What can I do to be more active. What can I do to encourage others to be active in improving relationships among ethnic-racial groups.

**Question:** Consciously and actively, I work to improve racial and ethnic relations in the Episcopal Church.

**TABLE 5**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	89%	11%	111
<b>Province 2</b>	91%	9%	145
<b>Province 3</b>	87%	13%	194
<b>Province 4</b>	84%	16%	276
<b>Province 5</b>	81%	19%	180
<b>Province 6</b>	85%	15%	100
<b>Province 7</b>	85%	15%	165
<b>Province 8</b>	89%	11%	227
<b>Province 9</b>	88%	12%	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>1548</b>

Black males (97%) most strongly agreed that they actively work to improve relations in the Church. Of the Bishops, 99% agreed. Responses of other racial-ethnic groups and Church leaders were in the 76% to 96% range.

#### Reflection

Read 1 Corinthians 1: 10-17

Christian churches are to be centers of unity. This ought to so grip our imagination that we are inspired to work endlessly against anything that threatens the realization of this ideal.

Reflect on ways that your parish, school, community and workplace can work to improve racial and ethnic relations in the Episcopal Church.

## 10.

### EXAGGERATED CONCERNS?

**Q.** Which of the concerns of racial-ethnic groups in the Church can I address? What action can I take to see these concerns not through my lens but through the lens of the people affected by racism. (People of color might consider this question through the lens of a racial-ethnic group other than their own.)

**Question:** The concerns of racial minority groups in the Episcopal Church are exaggerated.

**TABLE 6**

	Agree	Disagree	Number
<b>Province 1</b>	18%	82%	112
<b>Province 2</b>	23%	77%	145
<b>Province 3</b>	24%	76%	194
<b>Province 4</b>	42%	58%	275
<b>Province 5</b>	25%	75%	181
<b>Province 6</b>	28%	72%	102
<b>Province 7</b>	32%	68%	166
<b>Province 8</b>	21%	79%	226
<b>Province 9</b>	34%	66%	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>1551</b>

Regardless of province, respondents generally disagreed that the concerns of racial-ethnic groups in the Church are exaggerated. There were differences in the degree to which each racial-ethnic group supported the belief that minority concerns were exaggerated. Blacks (83%) were more likely to disagree, while Hispanics (67%) and whites (69%) were last likely to disagree with the statement.

#### Reflection

Read Galatians 6: 9-10

In writing to the Galatians, Paul believed with all his soul that the Church has primary responsibility as custodian of Christian faithfulness. He knew that this faithfulness comes through shared experiences in the Christian life.



## **A CALL TO ACTION**

### **For the Church**

The following recommendations are made based on a careful analysis of the audit results and in response to majority opinion:

- that all bishops call for actions to increase the church's awareness about racial-ethnic issues, concerns and interests.
- that all provinces explore ways that different racial-ethnic groups can advise provincial leaders about the issues and causes that they feel are appropriate for the Church's involvement.
- that the Church develop creative and thought-provoking materials for Christian education that
  - celebrate diversity within the Church;
  - speak to issues of race and ethnic discrimination;
  - heighten awareness of the laity and call them to action;
- provide liturgies to observe the cultural diversity of the Church; and
  - provide a means for reflecting individually, on personal attitudes and beliefs about racial-ethnic issues.
- that a process be created that brings together lay and ordained members from different racial-ethnic groups to explore issues of unity and diversity and that these proceedings be videotaped accompanied by a printed resource that informs the membership of the conclusions reached.

- that the audit be encouraged at the parish level with the requirement that it be administered by qualified lay and ordained people trained in race relations and the use of an organic questionnaire.
- that dioceses recommend actions for clergy and laity to alleviate racism and ethnic oppression.
- that a racism audit be administered, analyzed and reported to the Church at successive General Conventions.
- that each diocese form a racism commission to evaluate anti-racism efforts.
- that the Church encourage, seek and evangelize more people of color.
- that the Church through its ministry support persons of color in the ordination process.
- that bishops and leaders use appointments as a way to bring in more people of color.

### **For Clergy**

White clergy who have been unwilling to offer the possibility of education, repentance and conversion to their white parishioners have become enablers of the white institutional racist values embedded in our society. Therefore white clergy need to

- understand that their pastoral task is not to enable or even protect the healthy and well-fed, but to preach, teach and pray for repentance and conversion.
- equip themselves through anti-racism training to take seriously their ministry to the white community.
- be enabled to become pastors who free the victims and forgive and restore the oppressors.
- be willing to give up positions of privilege to increase the numbers of clergy of color on diocesan councils, standing committees, deputies to General Convention, etc.



### **For People of Color**

- Talk with other people of color and whites about the issues you face because of your race-ethnicity.
- Develop skills for handling and confronting inter-racial or cross-cultural conflict.
- Seek opportunities to join with white people in networks so that these may serve both people of color and whites.
- Seek out white people individually and develop relationships rather than always facing white people as a group.
- Emphasize the differences and commonalities between people of color (your racial-ethnic group) and white people.

### **For White People**

- Increase awareness of what it means to be a racial-ethnic minority and learn about the dynamics of racism.
- Scrutinize your behavior towards people of color.
- Confront areas of discomfort.
- Become an effective ally and stand with the victims.
- Recognize the differentness among people of color; avoid stereotyping and tokenism.

### **For Congregations and Schools**

- Multiculturalize educational materials and worship.
- Evaluate hiring practices and downsizing in terms of racial equity.
- Offer educational events that deal with racial justice.
- Become informed about institutional and personal racism and its manifestation.
- Establish the basis for a bias-free environment.

### **For Families**

- Become informed about racism and its manifestations in daily life and institutions.

- Talk about the Baptismal Covenant and how we promise to live out the Covenant.
- Never allow or use racially derogatory or racially charged or motivated terms, actions, or behaviors.
- Stand with the victims of racism.
- Create a home environment which is multiracial by including pictures, visual representations, books and social events that are multiracial and multicultural.

### **For Parishes Without Members of Color**

- Learn about the Episcopal Church and its anti-racism work and accept, rather than deny, the existence of racism.
- Study the Baptismal Covenant in light of racism.
- Understand the definition of racism and how it is different from bias, prejudice and other forms of discrimination.
- Identify and invite community leaders of color to talk about how they experience racism.

### **For Everyone — Parishes, Schools, Dioceses, Provinces, Seminaries and Other Episcopal Entities**

- Contact the Racism Commission staff through the National Church's Advocacy, Witness, and Justice Ministries Unit who are available for training and other consultative work.



**culture** the sum total of ways of living developed by a group of people. Culture refers to values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, folkways, behavior styles and traditions.

**discrimination** any kind of action taken to deprive members of a certain group or a person of their civil rights.

**empowerment** enabling people to experience themselves as competent, valuable and worthwhile, both as individuals and as members of a cultural group.

**ethnicity** refers to group connectedness based on commonalities, such as religion, nationality, language, region, regional identity.

**oppression** the systematic mistreatment of the powerless by the powerful; involves the devaluing or non-acceptance of the powerless group or person. It may be economic, political, social and/or psychological.

**power** the capacity to produce desired effects on others; it involves the capacity to influence for one's own benefit. Also the ability to define reality so that others respond to your definition as if it were their own.

**powerlessness** the inability to exert influence. People defend against feelings of powerlessness by behavior that brings them a sense of power.

**prejudice** a judgment or opinion about others, made before one has the facts.

**race** a biological term classifying people who have the same physical characteristics such as skin color, and other shared physical characteristics.

**racism** the systematic oppression of one race over another. It occurs at the personal and institutional level.

## **GLOSSARY**



**SINCERE THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE ASSISTED THE WORK OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
COMMISSION ON RACISM:**

**JOSEPHINE ABALOS • ABIL WOMEN • GRACE AHN • DIANA AKIYAMA • CLAYTON  
ALDERFER • OWANAH ANDERSON • RICHARD AGUILAR • HERBERT ARRUNATEGUI • HENRY  
ATKINS • JOYCE PHILLIPS AUSTIN • HOBART BANKS • MAX BELL • BLACK WOMEN'S TASK  
FORCE • BARBARA BRAVER • VERNELLA BROWN • EDMOND L. BROWNING • ROSE  
BRUNELL • CCMD • DANIEL CABELLERO • LLOYD CASSON • RICHARD CHANG • CHE • WINSTON  
CHING • PAMELA CHINNIS • THE CITY AND COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES • DAVID COLLINS • JOHN  
COLON • DAWN CONLEY • JUDY CONLEY • CONFERENCE OF SUPERIORS OF RELIGIOUS  
LIFE • ELLEN F. COOKE • COUNCIL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINISTRY • DIOCESES OF  
ARKANSAS, LOS ANGELES, SOUTH CAROLINA, SOUTH DAKOTA, SOUTHEAST FLORIDA,  
WEST TEXAS • JACK DOCKER • SCOTLAND DAVIS • JERRY DRINO • MARTHA DUNN-STROE-  
HECKER • ECONOMIC JUSTICE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE • ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARD-  
SHIP COMMITTEE • EPISCOPAL ASIAMERICA MINISTRY COMMISSION • EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
WOMEN • EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON BLACK MINISTRIES • EPISCOPAL COUNCIL ON INDI-  
AN MINISTRIES • EPISCOPAL LIFE • EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE • EPISCOPAL PEACE AND JUSTICE  
NETWORK • EPISCOPAL URBAN CAUCUS • CHRISTOPHER EPTING • TOLLY ESTES • THE  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL • GARY FILSINGER • ETHAN FLAD • SONIA FRANCIS • LINDA GRENZ • DEL-  
BERT GLOVER • BRIAN GRIEVES • CAROL HAMPTON • JAMES HAMPTON • NICK HILL • THE  
HOLY SPIRIT • HOWARD UNIVERSITY • IRENE V. JACKSON-BROWN • VINCENT JENKINS • DWIGHT  
JOHNSON • LENNOX JOSEPH • KANUGA PLANNING COMMITTEE • CHRIS KELLER • RODNEY  
KING • SHERYL KUJAWA • KRIS LEE • HAROLD LEWIS • JUSTIN LEWIS • KAY LOGAN • YVONNE  
MCBEAN • SARAH MCCRORY • BARRY MENUEZ • RUBY MILLER • NATIONAL ALTAR  
GUILD • NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HISPANIC MINISTRIES • NATIONAL TRAINING LABORA-  
TORIES • EARL NEIL • DON NICKERSON • JOSEPH PELHAM • DAVID PERRY • JAMES  
PORTER • PROPHETIC JUSTICE UNIT, WCCC • BERTIE RAY III • GENE ROBINSON • ED ROD-  
MAN • WILLIAM ROWE • WAYNE SCHWAB • WILLIAM SIBLEY • ANN SMITH • STANDING COM-  
MISSION ON CHURCH IN METROPOLITAN AREAS • THE STATE OF ARIZONA • ANDY  
STAUFFER • CABEL TENNIS • KAREN TERNENKO • FRAN TOY • UNION OF BLACK EPISCOPALIANS • THE  
UNITED THANK OFFERING • URBAN BISHOPS' COALITION • WILLIAM WANTLAND • ORRIS  
WALKER • LEROY WELLS • JESSIE WILLIAMS • JANE WOLFE • ZIBILLA WOLFE • YWCA • MICHAEL  
YASUTAKE • CARLOS ZERVIGON &**



**DEVELOPED BY  
THE ADVOCACY,  
WITNESS &  
JUSTICE  
MINISTRIES UNIT  
OF THE  
DOMESTIC &  
FOREIGN  
MISSIONARY  
SOCIETY**

**EDITORIAL:  
IRENE V. JACKSON-  
BROWN, PH.D.**

**DESIGN:  
DWIGHT JOHNSON  
DESIGN**

**THE EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH CENTER  
815 SECOND AVE.  
NEW YORK, NY  
10017**

**SPRING 1993  
61-9309-1**

**YOU**