

Welcoming Racial and Ethnic Diversity Inventory and Assessment for Committees on Ministry Instructions for Use

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! 1 Cor. 5:17

Introduction

This Welcoming Racial and Ethnic Diversity Inventory and Assessment for Committees on Ministry is meant to begin and deepen conversations, offer new insights, and explore new avenues for growth and learning as COMs seek to “practice hospitality to all persons” (see the [Marks for Faithful and Effective Committees on Ministry](#), pp 16 - 17). Practicing hospitality to all persons begins with warmth and generosity of spirit but doesn’t end there. Creating an inclusive and just climate of hospitality in our Committees on Ministry is a fundamental obligation and requires self-reflection, organizational assessment, education, and a faith commitment to true hospitality for all of God’s children. Hospitality rooted in justice enables COMs to responsibly use their power to engage in discernment, be open to the Holy Spirit’s wisdom and movement, and make faithful and just practices and decisions for and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. Welcoming all persons, which includes *welcoming the whole person*, is a core competency for COMs. This self-assessment tool is one way to identify opportunities for learning, growth, and transformation for your Committee on Ministry. It can feel daunting, even overwhelming, to address racial bias in systems we’ve inherited, “but with God, all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26). A commitment born of love and genuine desire to be God’s Beloved Community makes a way for brave conversations and constructive actions that open doors of justice and opportunity for thriving for all people.

The purpose of this self-assessment tool is to assist COMs in identifying and assessing key aspects of attitudes, practices, policies, leadership development and organizational structure in order to identify areas for learning, skill building and organizational transformation. This assessment is one opportunity among many to embrace the call to be, in all its splendor, The Body of Christ. Paul reminds us that “in Christ, there is a new creation” when we are willing to be transformed by the Spirit of Love.

How to use this self-assessment:

- This self-assessment is meant to be completed individually by each COM member.
- To increase the likelihood of honest answers we recommend having all the members of your COM fill out the questionnaire individually and anonymously and submit it to COM leadership by a pre-determined deadline. This can be done electronically, i.e. through a Google form, or at an in-person meeting in which the survey is handed out, or the self-assessment could be sent to respondents electronically and respondents then print and mail the survey to a specified address.

- Completed self-assessments are then read and reflected upon by COM leaders with the support of Conference staff.
- Areas of strength are celebrated – including full participation in completing this assessment – and recommendations are created for how to build on those strengths. Areas of growth are identified with recommendations for further learning.
- COM leaders create a summary of the results to share with the whole COM, identifying areas of strength and areas for growth and learning.
- Then, we recommend a conversation with all COM members present to allow an opportunity for discussion and reflection. This collective process of discovery and understanding helps the group take responsibility for on-going learning and to make and commit to a plan for growth and further learning.
- Once your COM has identified next steps for learning and growth, collaborate with your Conference staff to plan for implementation. [MESA](#) has a growing [library of resources](#) to support your learning and growth. We are also available to schedule a consultation if desired. Contact the Rev. Melanie Oommen, Minister for Committee on Ministry Development and Leadership at oommenm@ucc.org if you would like to schedule a conversation.

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