

**TO:** Executive Council

**FROM:** Standing Committee on Advocacy & Networking for Mission / Joint  
Standing Committee on Governance & Administration for Mission /  
Standing Committee on Ministry & Mission

**DATE:** April 19, 2012

**RE:** Reaffirms the Importance of Ongoing Anti-Racism Training

**Resolved**, that Executive Council, meeting in Salt Lake City, from April 18-20, 2012, reaffirms the importance of ongoing Anti-Racism Training for the church, and commits Council to participate in Anti-Racism Training at its regularly scheduled meetings on a periodic basis.

**EXPLANATION:**

[From the Archives Online at  
[http://www.episcopalarchives.org/Afro-Anglican\\_history/exhibit/awakening/sin\\_of\\_racism.php](http://www.episcopalarchives.org/Afro-Anglican_history/exhibit/awakening/sin_of_racism.php)]

The Episcopal Church continues to struggle with a legacy of segregation and racism. After a period of retrenchment in the 1970s when the Church addressed issues such as Prayer Book reform, the ordination of women, and the rights of other minority voices, the 1990s saw a renewed call for racial equality and cultural diversity.

In March 1994, the House of Bishops issued the Pastoral Letter on Racism, which definitively stated that, “Racism is totally inconsistent with the Gospel and, therefore, must be confronted and eradicated.” Basing its message on the baptismal covenant, the Bishops invited all baptized Christians to enter into a new covenant to fight racism and to, “proclaim the vision of God’s new creation in which the dignity of every human being is honored.”

Over the years the Church has issued various other statements on racism including a pamphlet called *The Church Speaks on Race*, which includes key statements from the Church spanning the years 1940 to 1963. Church activists pressed for the Church to confront its institutional racism beginning with the first call for a racial audit in 1985 (A078). Successive calls for self-examination produced in 1991 (D113) and 2000 (A047) two nine-year commitments to end racism in the Episcopal Church. Recognizing the lack of progress in 2000, the General Convention required anti-racism training (2000-B049) as a regular part of the preparation to be a fully formed Episcopal leader. In 2006 (C011) various dioceses began to examine and document the benefit the Church has derived from its historical complicity in slavery, segregation, and discrimination.

The most recent General Convention Resolution regarding racism and anti-racism training is as follows:

<i>Resolution:</i>	<b>A142</b>
<i>Title:</i>	<b>To Recommit to Being Anti-Racists for the Next Three Triennia (Until 2018)</b>
<i>Topic:</i>	<b>Racism</b>
<i>Committee:</i>	<b>10 - Social and Urban Affairs</b>
<i>House of Initial Action:</i>	<b>Bishops</b>
<i>Proposer:</i>	<b>Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism</b>

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*Resolved*, The House of Deputies concurring, That The Episcopal Church recommit and declare itself to be dedicated to continuing to work against the sin of racism and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Office of Anti-Racism and Gender Equality continue to design and deliver anti-racism, classism and ethnic discrimination training that examines factors and circumstances which maintain racism, classism and ethnic discrimination in the Church and in civil society; and be it further

*Resolved*, That all dioceses and provinces receive anti-racism training if they have not already done so or renew training that has been previously taken; and be it further

*Resolved*, That dioceses and provinces develop programs and ministries to dismantle and eradicate structures of racism, both internally and externally, and integrate the practices of anti-racism into their ongoing life and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Anti-Racism Committee of Executive Council develop a monitoring and reporting process for the dioceses, and that dioceses make annual reports to the Anti-Racism Committee of Executive Council.

## **EXPLANATION**

We would lift up to this convention the principles of an ecumenical organization of which The Episcopal Church is a member, Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC). This organization, which consists of nine Protestant denominations working in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation, has identified the sin of racism as the chief impediment to Christian collaboration and unity. CUIC has asked that we hold ourselves and each other accountable for eliminating racism in our churches and in civil society. We think that it is essential to continue to lift up these two key points if we are to create the "beloved community" of which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke:

" We are to name racism as a sin; and

" We are to hold each other accountable for its elimination.

Therefore, we want to pledge ourselves to continue to name and shine the light of Christ on all of those places where racism and other forms of oppression still exist and to hold ourselves and our sisters and brothers in Christ and all of the faith and secular communities accountable for our individual, collective, and institutional acts of both courage and cowardice, acknowledging that our faintheartedness and our refusal to confront evil and, wherever and whenever it exists, denigrates our professed love for Jesus and the imperative of the Gospel.