Becoming Anti-Racist in the Community II

November 1, 2020
Purpose: to provide a space for our community to discuss, process, and storytell the ways they have perpetrated racism through action and inaction, then connect those personal stories to systemic racism.
Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Overview of topic
3. Breakout room discussions
4. Sharing back to the large group
5. Sharing resources and closing
Microaggressions
“Microaggressions are small daily insults and indignities perpetrated against marginalized or oppressed people because of their affiliation with that marginalized or oppressed group, and here we are going to talk about racial microaggressions—insults and indignities perpetrated against people of color. But microaggressions are more than just annoyances. The cumulative effect of these constant reminders that you are “less than” does real psychological damage. Regular exposure to microaggressions causes a person of color to feel isolated and invalidated. The inability to predict where and when a microaggression may occur leads to hypervigilance, which can then lead to anxiety disorders and depression. Studies have shown that people subjected to higher levels of microaggressions are more likely to exhibit the mental and physical symptoms of depression.1”

From Becoming Anti-Racist I

Microaggressions

- Unconsciously delivered, pervasive & automatic in conversations and interactions

- Often dismissed and glossed over as being innocent and innocuous

- Detrimental to people of color because they
  - Impair performance
  - Sap spiritual energy
  - Create inequities

_Derald Wing Sue et al, American Psychologist, 2007_
Microaggression examples

1. “Where are you from?”
2. “Where were you born?”
3. “You speak good English.”
4. A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language
5. “You are a credit to your race.”
6. “You are so articulate.”
7. Asking an Asian person to help with a math or science problem
8. “When I look at you, I don’t see color.” “America is a melting pot.” “There is only one race, the human race.”
9. A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes
10. A store owner following a customer of color around the store
11. A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it
12. “I’m not racist. I have several Black friends.”
13. “As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority.”
14. “I believe the most qualified person should get the job.”
15. “Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough.”
16. Asking a Black person: “Why do you have to be so loud/animated? Just calm down.”
17. To an Asian or Latino person: “Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal.” “Speak up more.”
18. Dismissing an individual who brings up race/culture in work/school setting
19. Person of color mistaken for a service worker
20. Having a taxi cab pass a person of color and pick up a White passenger
21. Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer behind you
22. “You people...”
23. A college or university with buildings that are all named after White heterosexual upper class males
24. Television shows and movies that feature predominantly White people, without representation of people of color
25. Overcrowding of public schools in communities of color
26. Overabundance of liquor stores in communities of color
Questions for Week 1

Through your journey toward anti-racism, what actions (possibly microagressions) have you realized cause harm?

What impact could that harm have caused? *(practice with your group)*

How was that harm connected to systemic issues?

How do you act differently with that knowledge/experience?
Justice and Equity in the Era of Zoom

View the following resource (written by Pastor Joe and I!) here.
As we step into a future of ministry that will continue to include virtual gatherings, it is essential we hold to the commitment of bringing forth God's justice and righteousness, even as our modes of ministry change and evolve.

The prophet Amos reminds us we are called to prioritize justice, equity, and righteousness, that God's Beloved Community is present now and forever.
RENAMING… As your gatherings begin, give participants the opportunity to share who they are and how they prefer to be called (example: Joseph vs. Joe) by renaming themselves.

Get permission in offering to rename them as the host of the call. Encourage participants to include their pronouns.
TO MUTE OR NOT TO MUTE ... Be intentional about asking people to stay muted or unmuted. The voices of Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, and other marginalized groups are often silenced while those with privileged identities are permitted to dominate a conversation.

These disparities can be mitigated by asking everyone to mute themselves when not speaking so all participants are mindful of each other.
INVITING OTHERS ... Mutual invitation (having each person invite the next person to speak after they finish) can be a very helpful facilitation tool, especially on Zoom.

If you want participants to invite each other, set a standard for inviting the next person by choosing persons based on their location on the Zoom screen (example: Next, I'll invite Nica because she is to my right on my screen).
For any gathering, the goal is for everyone to feel welcome and empowered to participate fully in the amazing ministries your church and community have to offer.

Everyone brings their own stories to the online table. Continue to ask yourself: How could a person's marginalized or privileged identity be showing up in this space? How can I help mitigate its negative impact?

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.

AMOS 5:24 (NRSV)
Leaning into discomfort

It will be challenging, it will be uncomfortable

Lean into the discomfort
- Ask yourself, “why?”
- Remember our purpose here

We are in the business of calling people in, not calling people out

Keep going!
Sharing out
Notes on what stuck out from today's breakout rooms:
Our purpose at Bothell UMC

To become Christ in the community, we must become anti-racist in the community.
So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo, Chapter 12

Resources from Becoming Anti-Racist I (bothellumc.org/anti-racist)
Next session: November 15, 5–6:30