

# Report on Dismantling Racism Trainings in the Presbytery of Baltimore

October 2020

## Summary

The Presbytery policy to provide Dismantling Racism training was adopted at its Gathering on September 13, 2018. Since then the Dismantling Racism Team was formally approved by the Commission on Reconciliation and a contract was signed with Baltimore Racial Justice Action, a Baltimore-based non-profit focused on providing racial equity trainings. Members of the Presbytery Dismantling Racism Team provide a welcome and brief theological reflection and lead a session on church history within the Presbytery. A total of 120 individuals have been trained as of October 2020. Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, members of the Presbytery were on track to have almost 100% compliance with the 2020 deadline. Commission on Reconciliation voted to extend the deadline into 2021 due to the pandemic. An analysis of turnover in the Presbytery (teaching elders, staff and committee/commission members) indicates a need for at least one basic training and at least one other continuing education opportunity annually. The Commission on Reconciliation is recommending some revisions to the policy based on lessons learned, including a more open approach to supporting continuing education and engagement.

This report will be submitted as part of the papers presented to the full Presbytery. It is divided into 4 sections:

1. Progress Report on the Activities to meet the Policy requirements
2. Financial Report
3. Evaluation of the Training Events
4. Considerations for Policy and Future Training

### **1. Progress Report on the Activities to meet the Policy requirements:**

**Total persons trained by October 2020 = 120 individuals.**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
All Teaching Elders are required to attend Baltimore Presbytery's educational program on Dismantling Racism, within one year after their arrival.	<b>49 Active Teaching Elders trained</b> serving congregations and Validated Ministries. 21 TEs pending, including 3 of the 4 new members installed this summer.
A follow-up report from the training should be submitted to the Commission on Reconciliation within 6 months of the training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular reports have been made to the Comm on Reconciliation.</li><li>• An online evaluation form was developed and sent out by the Presbytery immediately following most trainings.</li><li>• BRJA ended each training session with cards for questions and for suggested next steps.</li><li>• D.R. Team has hosted more than one Open Space conversation to get feedback and continue the conversation</li></ul>

<p>Failure to fulfill this requirement within the specified time will result in unpaid administrative leave until it is completed.</p>	<p>Beginning in Fall of 2019, the Presbytery staff sent out targeted email invitations for the training with strong response. The March 12, 2020 training was the largest registration until news of the pandemic. No one has been put on administrative leave for lack of compliance. COR has approved an extension of the 3-year deadline due to the pandemic. All TEs who were active members of the Presbytery as of Sept. 2018 have until September 2021 to complete their training.</p>
<p>This requirement will be included in the terms of call. Notation of their participation will be made in their permanent file. The Presbytery of Baltimore will communicate to Pastoral Nominating Committees and presbyteries who are requesting references on the status of candidates with respect to this requirement.</p>	<p>Training certificates are issued to each participant following the training and a copy is placed in the minister's official Presbytery file. The Presbytery also maintains a master list of mandatory trainings, dates completed and dates due.</p> <p>A statement about this training requirement was added in the Terms of Call reporting form.</p>
<p>Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) and Ruling Elders elected to serve on the Committee on Ministry (COM) and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) are required to participate in a training within one year of being commissioned (CRE) or elected to COM or CPM.</p>	<p><b>9 CREs</b> (now called Commissioned Pastors) were trained.  <b>10 REs serving on CPM or COM</b>  Presbytery staff work with CPM and COM chairs to identify people who need the training so they can be included in notices.</p>
<p>All Candidates for Ministry are required to attend a Dismantling Racism training or similar training (approved by the Presbytery). In the event that the timing or location of a training is not feasible, the candidate may work with CPM to determine an alternative means to meet this requirement.</p>	<p><b>5 Candidates completed the training</b>  1 Candidate attended ½ day of the training  2 pending after October  No requests have been received for alternative training.</p>
<p>All Presbytery staff is required to attend within one year of hire/election.</p>	<p><b>13 staff</b>, including Center staff, have been trained.  3 staff are pending</p>
<p>The Presbytery strongly encourages honorably retired teaching elders, ruling elders serving in leadership roles in the Presbytery, session members and other congregational leaders to participate in such trainings.</p>	<p><b>2 HR</b> (at the time of training) not serving on any Presbytery committee or commission. 2 other HR have expressed interest but were unable to attend due to Covid-19.</p>
<p>COR Approved making training available to other congregational leaders with space available.</p>	<p><b>32</b> others participated in the training that were not required. Of these, 12 are involved in some form of Presbytery leadership, including members of the Commission on Reconciliation. Many of the remaining 20 are leading dismantling racism related conversations or actions within their congregation.</p>

## 2. Financial Analysis

In Fall 2018, the Commission on Reconciliation agreed to underwrite the *Pilot* Dismantling Racism Training from its budget. With the adoption of the new policy, the Presbytery was asked to create a line item in the Presbytery Budget for future trainings. The Commission requested \$15,000/year and the Presbytery approved \$10,000/year for 2019 and 2020.

Registration was set at \$20 to mirror the Healthy Boundaries training while actual cost per person was approximately \$200.

In order to cover actual costs, the Commission approved the following:

- Registrants **not** required by the Presbytery were asked to pay \$200/person with a scholarship option.
- Commission provided supplemental funds at the end of the year when available.
- Peacemaking Reserve Funds were authorized to cover the difference.

The basic costs for trainings remained steady through Spring 2020, but with the pandemic and the move to on-line trainings, the cost per person doubled due to the class size imposed by BRJA. Many ruling elders and other congregational leaders agreed to pay the higher tuition. It is important to note that there are expenses associated with the planning and follow-up in addition to the day of the workshop itself.

Prior to the pandemic there was typically 1 or 2 cancellations per training. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic the losses were much higher. Cancellations for the March 12<sup>th</sup> training was lower than feared, but if we apply cancelled registrations to future events the total loss for March was \$580. For the Fall workshop, the losses were much higher. The Dismantling Racism Team agreed to discuss with BRJA a larger on-line class size for 2021 and a new policy on cancellations.

Income	2018 Actual	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget	2020 Projected
Presbytery Budget	0	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
<b>COR Contribution</b>	<b>\$ 5,410</b>		<b>\$ 2,005</b>	<b>0</b>	
Registrations (\$20)	\$ 520	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,060	\$ 1,200	\$ 745
<b>Non-Required Registrations</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 2,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,340</b>	<b>\$ 1,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,100</b>
<b>Peacemaking</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 5,800</b>	<b>\$ 2,837</b>	<b>\$ 2,600</b>	<b>\$ 1,865</b>
Total Income	\$ 5,930	\$ 19,600	\$ 17,242	\$ 14,800	\$ 13,710
<b>Expenses</b>					
BRJA	\$ 5,400	\$ 18,000	\$ 15,720	\$ 14,300	\$ 13,210
Meals & Refreshments	\$ 380	\$ 1,150	\$ 928	\$ 400	\$ 500
Building Use	\$ 150	\$ 450		\$ 100	0

Web Fees			\$ 38		
Total Expense	\$ 5,930	\$ 19,600	\$ 16,648	\$ 14,800	\$ 13,710
Difference	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 594	\$ -	\$ -
	<i>1 training</i>	<i>3 trainings</i>		<i>2 trainings</i>	
		Note - Due to March 12 cancellations we have to apply \$260 toward future trainings			
		2020 is projected distribution since year is not final			

### 3. Evaluation of Dismantling Racism Training

42 Post-Training Evaluations were completed. These were sent out within a week or two of each training event. It appears that a smaller percentage of African Americans completed the surveys but hard to tell because we did not ask racial/ethnic identity of the first group.

Presbytery sent out a medium/long-term follow-up survey in October 2020 to all who attended one of the workshops between November 2018 – March 2020. We received 23 responses.

Dismantling Racism Team also hosted 2 Open Space conversations and a special Worship Service with discussion groups.

#### Post Training Surveys

**Q - Participants were asked to rate the following on a scale of 1 to 4, 1 = Strong Disagree; 4 = Strongly Agree.**

Questions	Average
Liked the overall Agenda	3.1
Training Created Common language and understanding	3.3
Helped me understand racism in the church	2.9
Provided tools I can use in the church and Presbytery	2.9
Chance to practice talking about racism in ways that are helpful	3.0

Over course of the trainings, the chance to practice increased. We also shifted the way we talked about church history in the Presbytery. We also revised the role play discussions using real church life scenarios.

**Q - Was discussion of history of racism in the Presbytery helpful to your understanding of racism in the Church?**

79% Yes and 21% No – People wanted more information and to explore the topic further. A particular topic that emerged was the moving of church buildings during the Great Northern Migration and subsequent “White Flight” for the city center.

**Q - How confident do you feel to talk about racism or racial equity issues within the Presbytery? (On a scale of 1 to 100)**

The responses varied widely one response at 1 and another at 15 all the way to 92. The average was over 70.

Narrative responses showed great diversity on what was most helpful/positive about the training and what to revise. While the length of the all-day training was a concern for some, there was also request for more – more dialogue, more information, more tools. There was frequent mention that the videos were helpful to provide historical context.

### **Medium/Long-Term Follow-up**

96% of respondents said they have continued their personal study of racism.

Almost half have led a discussion and over 1/3 were involved in activities in their community.

Ideas about future focus ranged from actions to dismantle racism within our congregations and local communities to expanding the education and dialogue among church members.

### **Considerations for Future Dismantling Racism Training and Presbytery Policy:**

- Questions about mandatory language - Are the categories correct? Should Comm on Should Reconciliation members be required? Should the Moderator be required or strongly encouraged? Adding exemption for TEs outside the bounds of the Presbytery.
- Follow-Up – Removing the required follow-up report as too difficult to implement. Presbytery will continue to offer different discussion groups, Open Space and written evaluations. A new reporting form for continuing education/engagement will allow for reporting on a wider variety of activities.
- Dismantling Racism Training language – We revised language to allow for more options while keeping a baseline training. We believe there should be some common topics and definitions that we use so we are able to work together more easily while also taking into consideration that people are entering the Presbytery conversations from different places.
- Propose a new policy about paying for the cost of training for those who cancel for non-emergencies.
- Ongoing support needed for implementation/action as we engage in this work, especially within our congregations and the Presbytery.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Krehbiel on behalf of the Dismantling Racism Team