

MISSION COUNCIL CELEBRATES ONGOING RACE & CULTURE WORK

At the Missouri Conference Mission Council meeting on September 13, council members heard an update from Conference staff on the race and culture recommendations adopted by the Council in November 2021.

Presented by Director of Connectional Ministries Rev. Kim Jenne, some of the celebrations included work completed and work in progress. See the chart on page 21 for more information.

“We have a lot to celebrate regarding the work the Episcopal Task Force on Race and Culture identified in 2021,” said Jenne. “After the task force’s report, the Mission Council embraced a set of 22 recommendations across four areas of work: Beloved Community, Leadership and Recruitment, Equity Work and Training, and Accountability. These recommendations have projected goals over the course of the next two to three years.”

Missouri Conference’s race and culture purpose statement reads:

The Missouri Conference wants to become a brave, empowering place for people from diverse cultures and generations so that we can become a Church for all God’s people.

We seek to do this by equipping Conference leaders and local churches for multicultural leadership, cross-cultural connection and healing justice.

Rev. David Gilmore, Northwest District Superintendent, chairs the Black Church Strategy group. This group has periodically met since it formed in January 2022. The working group has broken into separate task groups to distribute tools and resources to Missouri’s Historically Black Churches and to foster a better understanding of their congregations inside and outside the walls.

Conference staff also shared that an internal 2022 goal of engaging 20 percent of Conference churches (140 churches) in race and culture work by Dec. 31,

2022. Conference programming staff and District Superintendents have spent the past year reaching out to churches across the Conference to hear the local church’s current work on race and culture and help resource them in that work.

You can read more about the Conference’s progress on the recommendations in the March 22, 2022 report and September 13, 2022 report. In addition to the recommendations, the Conference and district staff have embraced the purpose of the race and culture work and integrated into much of their work including diversifying Conference suppliers like caterers and contractors through Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and/or Woman Owned Business Enterprises (WBE).

To show your support for Missouri’s Race and Culture work, consider signing the Statement of Support. For more information about Missouri’s ongoing culture work, visit www.moumethodist.org/race-and-culture.

Honoring Native Land

In October 2021, in honor of Indigenous Peoples’ Day, the Missouri Conference revealed a land acknowledgement on the Conference website. At that time, the Conference committed to including the acknowledgement in the official records of the Annual Conference including the workbook and journal. The Conference also began sharing the acknowledgment at the beginning of the Annual Conference Session typically held in June.

Conference leaders were inspired by the Missouri Prairie Foundation’s Land Acknowledgement and utilized the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture’s Honor our Native Land resource pack in the development of the Missouri Annual Conference statement. Because there is missing history related to which Indigenous Peoples understood the land as home, the Conference also included “and other Native American nations.” The statement reads:

The Missouri Annual Conference is located on the homeland of a diversity of Native American nations. Despite European-American settlement and modern development, this land continues to have cultural

RACE & CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS PROGRESS REPORT

The below represents a selection of the 22 total recommendations approved by Mission Council in November 2021.

Conduct a survey of Missouri United Methodists regarding current attitudes relative to racism and bias. Survey conducted by Discipleship Ministries. BELOVED COMMUNITY	Completed November 1, 2021
All candidates for ministry will be required to complete Implicit Bias training to have a “complete file” by January 1, 2021. TRAINING & ACCOUNTABILITY	Completed January 1, 2021
Add “Diversity” to the “Expectations we have of each other” by November 1, 2021. TRAINING & ACCOUNTABILITY	Completed October 1, 2021
Every leader serving on Conference and district boards, committees and teams will be required to have implicit bias and cultural competency training by July 1, 2024. TRAINING & ACCOUNTABILITY	Soft Roll Out Begins September 1, 2022
Revise current Conference Nominations’ process to make it more accessible to all people and extend the leadership pool to incorporate more diversity as it relates to age and ethnicity. LEADERSHIP & RECRUITMENT	Completed January 1, 2022
Increase the number of people of color to 25% appointed to the Board of Ordained Ministry by July 1, 2024. LEADERSHIP & RECRUITMENT	As of July 1, 2022, there are nine people of color on the 48-person BOM (19%).
At least 25 percent of all Conference boards, committees and teams are <u>chaired</u> by people of color by July 1, 2024. LEADERSHIP & RECRUITMENT	As of July 1, 2022, 21% of those serving are racially diverse persons (up from 18% in 2021).
Name Mission, Service and Justice as a Core Practice by November 1, 2021. EQUITY WORK	Completed October 1, 2021
Develop a plan for diversity in Conference and district staff recruiting and hiring practices by January 1, 2022. EQUITY WORK	Approved by Mission Council on September 13, 2022.
The Conference and its districts should have a goal that the number of people of color employed on staff should be doubled by January 1, 2025. EQUITY WORK	On January 1, 2021, there were three people of color on Conference and district staff. As of July 1, 2022, there are five people of color on the 42-person Conference and district staff (12%).
Congregational Excellence will develop additional grant opportunities that are racially and culturally sensitive by July 1, 2023. EQUITY WORK	Historically Black Church Boost Grants launched May 2022 with an application deadline of September 1 and grant recipients notified October 1.

significance for the Ni-U-Ko'n-Ska (Osage), Nyut^achi (Missouria), Asakiwaki and Meskwaki (Sac and Fox), Báxoje (Ioway), Kaw, Kiikapooi (Kickapoo), Kaskaskia and other Native American nations.

These nations had a significant role in shaping the landscape, and they continue a sacred relationship with the lands on which our local churches and our Conference facilities are located. We commit to honor this distinctive cultural heritage in our fulfillment of the Missouri Annual Conference Mission, Vision and Values.

between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. Acknowledgment is a simple way of showing respect and a small step toward correcting the stories and practices that erase Indigenous People’s history and culture. Acknowledgment can become meaningful when coupled with authentic relationship and informed action. But the Conference hopes this beginning can be bring about greater public consciousness of Native sovereignty and cultural rights and move us toward equitable relationship and reconciliation.

What is Land Acknowledgement?

A Land Acknowledgment is a statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of the land and the enduring relationship that exists