



THE RACIAL ETHNIC
TORCH

Volume 26, Issue 2, Fall 2016



GROW | TRANSFORM | EMPOWER | LEAD | DEVELOP



THE RACIAL ETHNIC TORCH



A message from the director, **Rhashell D. Hunter**

“Reconciliation” is the changed relationship for the better between persons or groups who formerly were at enmity with each other. As Christians, repentance and reconciliation is an important part of our faith. We are called to demonstrate and proclaim God’s reconciliation and in doing so, we build bridges of reconciliation in our communities. Most of us know people who work for transformative change, seeking to heal relationships between persons and groups and rebuilding trust. We are amazed at these change agents, who bring individuals and groups together and forge agreements that result in peace, equality and justice. Many of us know people in our professional lives, in our churches, and in our families, who have been the key component in pulling individuals and groups together and working together for the common good. Our gratitude abounds for these leaders who are “ministers of reconciliation.”

At a time when the nation and the world seem divided, we are called to act with justice, to create mutual respect between individuals and groups, and to value differences. The call to live as a reconciled and intercultural community is rooted in the Bible. Scripture consistently portrays God as an agent of compassion, reconciliation and peace, encouraging others to recognize the value and worth of human beings, affirm our inherent dignity, and call us to recognize and honor the image of God in one another. God sent Jesus to break down cultural barriers, affirm God’s love for all people, forgive our sin, reconcile us to God and one another, and invite us to new and abundant life.

In the pages that follow, you will read more about ministries of reconciliation. Join with us and pray with us, as we seek to serve God in the world, remembering the words of 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, “And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old order has passed away; now everything is new! All of this is from God, who ransomed us through Christ — and made us ministers of that reconciliation.”

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On the cover: “An elder burns copies of the Doctrine of Discovery at a Nov. 3 ceremony where faith leaders denounced the doctrine and apologized for its consequences. (Photo by Gregg Brekke)

Save the Date

March 13-15, 2017, 2017, The Coordinating Committee for Korean American Presbyteries Annual Consultation and Conference, (Louisville, Ky)

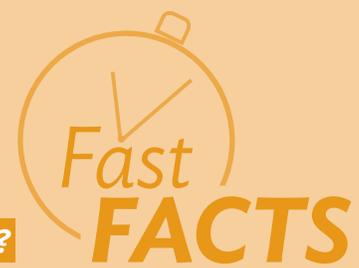
Participants will include executive presbyters, stated clerks, and the moderators of the three non-geographic Korean mid-councils as well as staff from the Office of Korean Emerging Ministries and the Office of the General Assembly. Contact Moongil Cho, at moongil.cho@pcusa.org.

March 5, 2017, Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

On Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday, we are encouraged to live life with an “attitude of gratitude.” Though Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday is March 5, 2017, your congregation or women’s groups may use this resource on any day that you choose. Living life with an “attitude of gratitude” is having a readiness to show appreciation, returning kindnesses, saying thank you, and giving thanks with a grateful heart. Order the resource through Presbyterian Distribution Service, item 27501-17-001, or download from www.pcusa.org/women. Also, available in the November/December issue of Horizons magazine.

March 13-24, 2017, 61st Session, UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), New York, Ny

Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work is the theme for CSW61. A delegation from Presbyterian Women, Inc. and Women’s Leadership Development & Young Women’s Ministries will attend. Some limited scholarships are available.



Did You Know?

❖ **PC(USA) has 1.5 M Members**

The PC(USA) has 1.5M members. This number does not include new worshipping communities’ participants or regular visitors and guests who have not “joined as members” in our congregations and worshipping communities. The PC(USA) is the largest Reformed denomination in the U.S.A.

❖ **Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant Congregations**

Of the 9,642 congregations in the PC(USA), more than 16% are racial ethnic, new immigrant and intercultural congregations.

❖ **New Worshipping Communities**

There are over 330 new worshipping communities in the PC(USA), and approximately 25% of them are comprised of young adults (ages 18-30).

On the front cover of each *Racial Ethnic Torch*, you will see our mantra: *Grow, Transform, Empower, Lead, and Develop*. The core ministry and the purpose of our work in the Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant Intercultural Ministries office is:

- **Church Growth**, with a focus on new worshipping communities
- **Transformation** of existing congregations
- **Social Justice and Empowerment**
- **Intercultural Ministries**
- **Leadership Development**, with a focus on developing racial ethnic, women, and young adult leaders.

Thus, our mantra is: *Grow, Transform, Empower, Lead, and Develop*. The Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant Intercultural Ministries offices *equip, connect, and inspire* racial ethnic and new immigrant worshipping communities and develop and empower racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders. The ministry area does this through training, coaching, resource development, leadership development institutes, networking, and providing grants to congregations, and communities, racial ethnic schools and colleges, and racial ethnic and immigrant members and leaders. In Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries, we engage the church in its mission to become more diverse and inclusive of racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups, and we equip women for leadership in all ministries of the church.



STUDY FINDS

GENDER DISCRIMINATION STILL PERVASIVE WITHIN THE PC(USA)

Women's Advocacy Day Observed at the Presbyterian Center

The day started as most Wednesdays do at the Presbyterian Center, with a 9:00 a.m. worship service. But this service was unique. Staff and guests gathered for a Service of Awareness sponsored jointly by Presbyterian Women and the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries that focused on gender-based violence—intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. Instead of a traditional sermon, worshipers heard stories of fear and isolation belonging to women who had suffered abuse at the hands of men who told them, “I love you.”

The powerful morning worship service was the first event of a day set aside as Women's Advocacy Day at the Presbyterian Center in observance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Employees were also invited to attend a lunchtime “Conversation with Allies” with representatives from the Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Louisville Coalition for the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

CEDAW, adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of

rights for women. It defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end this discrimination.

The findings from the Gender and Leadership in the PC(USA) study were released later in the afternoon. The study was conducted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Services and is part of a larger research project assessing the status of women at all levels of the church.

The research was conducted in partnership with Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries (RE&WM) of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Study on the Status of Women Team, created by the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC). The goals of the study were to learn more about how women participate in leadership within the PC(USA) and gain deeper insight into the varying experiences of men and women in ministry, including similarities and differences in compensation, career trajectories, and decisions to leave ministry.

“It is discouraging that in 2016, we're still discussing gender equity,” said the Rev. Dr. Rhashell Hunter,

Director of RE&WM. “However, the findings of this study show there is still a need for the conversation.”

Hunter called attention to two main findings, that gender discrimination is still pervasive within the PC(USA) and that almost half of the members are not particularly aware of it. The report of the study went on to say that eight out of ten female teaching elders have experienced discrimination, harassment, and/or prejudicial comments due to their gender, and four out of ten feel that they have experienced gender bias in hiring, promotion or selection for an official position within the PC(USA). Among the members of the church at large, 59 percent of women and 52 percent of men agree with the statement that “gender inequality is still a problem in the PC(USA).”

When survey participants were asked what type of leadership role they held, more men than women said they held an official leadership role as opposed to an unofficial role. This difference remains even after excluding the responses of teaching elders. Another question asked, “To what extent are women accepted as leaders in the PC(USA)?” Findings showed that most Presbyterians



report experiencing discrimination, prejudice, or harassment based on their **GENDER**

feel men still have a better chance than women of being called to the position of head pastor.

While the study found widespread gender inequality and discrimination within the denomination, there are rays of hope. The 222nd GA (2016) made history by electing two women, the Rev. Denise Anderson and the Rev. Jan Edmiston as co-moderators, the first all-woman moderatorial ticket.

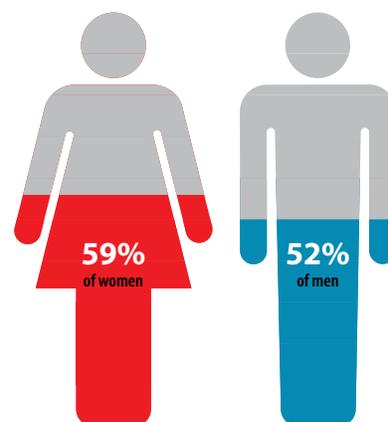
Other signs of improvement in disparities between men and women come from the OGA 2015 Session Annual Statistical Report (SASR). According to data from the SASR, women made up 38 percent of all active teaching elders in the PC(USA) and 29 percent of teaching elders overall, including those who

are retired or inactive.

After analyzing the data from the SASR, Research Services determined that these percentages represent an increase from 10 years earlier, when women represented 29 percent of active teaching elders and 21 percent of teaching elders overall. The findings further conveyed that the rate of increase for women has been fairly steady over the last 10 years and, if the percentage increase in female teaching elders continues at its current rate, the PC(USA) will reach gender parity among male and female active teaching elders in about 11 years (2027.)

To see the full report on Gender and Leadership in the PC(USA) go to (NEED SHORT URL).

HOWEVER, among members only



think gender inequality is still a **PROBLEM** in the PC(USA)



STANDING IN **SOLIDARITY** with Standing Rock

Ways to support those trying to protect their sacred sites and waters

By Mark Koenig and Gail Strange

From across the United States and the world, indigenous peoples and their allies have gathered at the Camp of the Sacred Stones, north of Cannon Ball, North Dakota, near the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe reservation's northern border. Members of the tribe took the initiative in this witness to protect their sacred sites and waters from environmental harm and to affirm tribal sovereignty and Treaty rights.

Water protectors congregated next to a construction site for the Dakota Access Pipeline on as a crew arrived with machinery and materials to begin cutting a work road into the hillside. The flag in the foreground belonged to the American Indian Movement. (Photo by Daniella Zalcman)

The people, known as water protectors, came together in an effort to stop the Dallas-based company Energy Transfer from piping Bakken oilfield crude oil underneath the Missouri River, the main source of drinking water for the tribe. This project is known as the Dakota Access Oil Pipeline (DAPL).

The witness of the water

protectors has touched the conscience of people and nations around the world to stand in solidarity with Standing Rock. Out of our faith, Presbyterians joined them.

Recognizing the call of Jesus to stand with those who seek justice, Presbyterians supported the water protectors in prayer, traveled to Standing Rock and made financial contributions and provided supplies. Presbyterians signed petitions, made phone calls, and wrote letters to public officials and corporate leaders.

Presbyterians grieved as the response by law enforcement escalated. Dave Archambault II, Chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, wrote a letter to U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch in which he noted, "State and local law enforcement have increasingly taken steps to militarize their presence, intimidate participants who are lawfully expressing their views, and to escalate tensions and promote fear."

Currently the project is on hold. The Army has denied an easement for the Dakota Access Pipeline to

cross under Lake Oahe in North Dakota. Most recently Assistant Secretary of the Army Jo-Ellen Darcy issued a letter stating "A more robust analysis of alternatives can be done and should be done ... before an easement is granted for the Dakota Access Pipeline to cross the Missouri River on Corps land." While Standing Rock Sioux Chairman Dave Archambault has encouraged campers to return to their homes until the new administration takes office, some campers remain at the site.

There are several ways to stand in solidarity with the water protectors:

- Organize prayer services
- Provide financial support to the water protectors through the Synod of Lakes and Prairies: Synod of Lakes and Prairies 2115 Cliff Drive Eagan, MN 55122 Make the check payable to: Synod of Lakes and Prairies Note on check: Dakota Access Pipeline Acct #2087.

The synod will send a confirmation to the donor that the funds were received and then information about where they were



Over 500 clergy and faith leaders joined Native American activists for the Nov. 3, 2016 Clergy Standing with Standing Rock' near Cannon Ball, North Dakota.

distributed. Please make sure to include your name and address on the check unless already printed on it.

Contacting public officials:

- Call North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple at (701) 328-2200 to demand protections for protestors and an end to hostilities against them.
- Call your Congressional Representative
- Call the White House at (202) 456-1111 or (202) 456-1414. Tell the Department of Justice to rescind the Army Corps of

Engineers' Permit for the Dakota Access Pipeline.

- Call the Army Corps of Engineers and demand a complete environmental assessment: (202) 761-5903.
- Native American Presbyterians continue to monitor the situation and will provide updates on ways to support the effort at Standing Rock, and across the country, to protect water, land, and tribal rights and to maintain harmonious relationships with the earth.



Sara Lisherness, director of Compassion Peace and Justice ministries at the PC(USA), are greeted in the Niobrara Circle ceremony. Also pictured is Rick Ufford-Chase.

DISGRACE CONFERENCE

CHALLENGES PC(USA) TO CONFRONT PRIVILEGE, INJUSTICE

by Gail Strange and Gregg Brekke

More than 400 individuals from throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gathered for the DisGrace conference at the Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina to address the issues of embedded and structural racism in the church and culture with the hopes of moving from disgrace toward solidarity.

The diverse group of conference attendees included PC(USA) Co-Moderator the Rev. Denise Anderson, former Moderators Heath Rada and the Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, executive presbyters, pastors, national church staff and church members. Attendees took a deep dive into conversations to examine the causes of divisions between people and communities, unaddressed discomforts and hidden histories of racism.

The keynote speaker for the event was Melissa Harris-Perry, the newly named editor-at-large for ELLE.com and the Maya Angelou Chair at Wake Forest University. Harris is the executive director of the Pro Humanitate Institute and founding

director of the Anna Julia Cooper Center on gender, race, and politics in the South.

To begin the difficult conversation of race and racism, the conference opened with two sessions, one for whites and one for people of color. A session titled “White Fragility” was led by J. C. Austin, vice president for Christian leadership formation at Auburn Theological Seminary, addressed church leaders’ and congregations’ struggle of how to engage the systemic issues of racial injustice and the strong resistance of many whites to the notion that they are the benefactors of and participants in racially unjust social systems. He asserted this resistance has become so prevalent across this country that it has acquired the name white fragility.

The second session, “Not my People: Exploring the ways internalized racism makes solidarity difficult,” was led by Jessica Vazquez Torres, an anti-racism, anti-oppression and cultural competency workshop leader. This session, exclusively for people of color, not only offered individuals

the opportunity to explore the unique and distinctive ways of internalizing racism, “but also the ways in which overcoming our collective internalization can help us build solidarity across people of color groups; a solidarity that is restorative for people of color and challenges white supremacy.”

“I was impressed with all of the speakers as well as the panelists,” said Vince Patton, Manager of Diversity and Reconciliation for the Presbyterian Mission Agency. “After hearing Melissa Harris Perry’s presentation and Bruce Reyes-Chow, Jessica Vazquez Torres and Denise Anderson in a panel discussion, it occurred to me how radically different we may need to be church.”

Patton continued, saying, “After Melissa Harris Perry’s presentation, Richard DuBose asked her how the PC(USA) should attempt to try to become more racial ethnically diverse given the fact that the PC(USA) was 91 percent white. She turned and asked, ‘Where do you [the PC(USA)] want to go?’ DuBose said, ‘Presbyterians are quiet and white.’ After a couple of minutes, she

replied, 'The whole denomination can join a collective effort that could attract people of color. The PC(USA) could be about more than just the PC(USA). The church can join other spaces.' She implored us to do more by ultimately asking, 'What do you stand for?'"

Patton led a workshop titled "Living Out the Belhar Confession and Becoming a Fully Inclusive Church" as a part of the conference.

When asked about the ways white privilege was addressed at the conference, Chip Hardwick, Director of Theology, Worship and Formation, for the PMA said, "White privilege was a central theme throughout the conference. One particularly powerful moment came when Dr. Anthea Butler said that she was weary of having to explain to white people why our actions often hurt people of color. Not only does society give lots of advantages to white people that people of color do not receive, we whites often then expect people of color to relive the pain the lack of advantages cause them by explaining to us where we have gone wrong. While my colleagues at the PMA have explained this to me before, it hit me over the head like a lightning bolt this time around."

Hardwick said a challenge posed by Butler was asking white attendees why they would continue to attend a church that hasn't mentioned the Black Lives Matters movement over the past two years. The importance of addressing structural racism, she said, lies with whites choosing to engage the movement rather than ignore it because they feel it doesn't affect them.

"The call of the Gospel, however, is to open our eyes to the destructive power of structural racism and to work against it," Hardwick said. "I spoke with one white man of retirement age who had never thought this through before



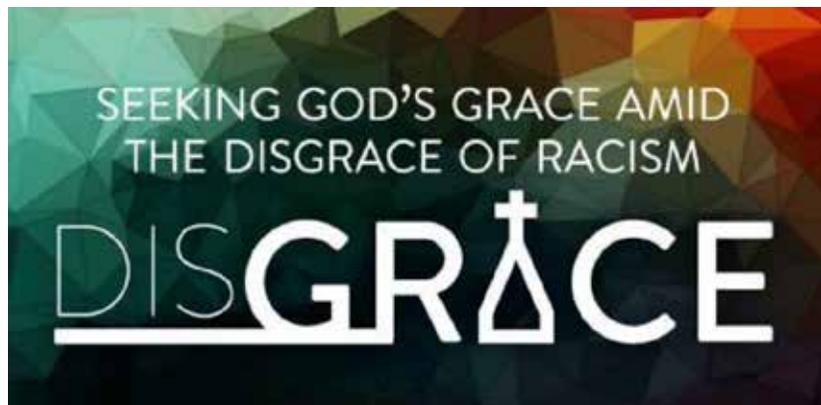
Tell-A-Vision Films

Melissa Harris-Perry, the newly named editor-at-large for ELLE.com and the Maya Angelou hair at Wake Forest University was the keynote speaker for the DisGrace Conference held at Montreat Conference Center.

attending the conference; he spent most of our conversation processing what he could do to make progress against this type of racism, where everyone is nice and is a good person, and yet the structures of society devalue people of color."

What will it take for the church to change this trend? Hardwick believes it rests in a majority of the church addressing the disgrace of racism to hear how it can be more inclusive and learn new ways of being.

"The call to action that is important to me is for me to do the hard work of understanding white privilege better, and then using the opportunities I have to help explain the advantages we receive, simply from being white, that other people of color do not receive," he said. "Rather than expecting people of color to carry this freight for me, and thereby burdening them again, I want to learn how to be the best ally I can be."





DIVERSITY AND RACIAL RECONCILIATION TEAM SET TO BECOME MORE DIVERSE

By Vince Patton

Race is a social construct that continues to divide us as a people in the world. It is also an issue that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must confront in order to live out its call to be a more diverse and inclusive church. A Diversity and Racial Reconciliation Team has been commissioned to help the PC(USA) live out its commitment to racial reconciliation and racial justice. Tony De La Rosa, interim Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the organization's Leadership Cabinet approved goals for the group for 2017-2018. Members of the team include staff from the Presbyterian Mission Agency with responsibility for ministries and programs that address race and reconciliation. Staff members from the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation with expertise in matters regarding race and ethnicity also serve on the team.

The 222nd General Assembly adopted the Belhar Confession as the

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s latest confession and a revised anti-racism policy. In addition, the General Assembly directed a number of other actions addressing race and ethnicity including the following:

- 1) A churchwide strategy for addressing race that involves the General Assembly, mid councils, congregations, educational institutions, related agencies and ecumenical partners.
- 2) The direction to appoint a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to conduct a churchwide listening campaign to hear voices of people long silenced on institutional racism and oppression within our church.
- 3) Revised affirmative action goals for the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly.
- 4) Encourage congregations and mid councils of the PC(USA) to address the plight of African American males through programs and challenge each

presbytery to raise at least \$30,000 to address the worsening plight of the African American male (Presbyteries are encouraged to direct the receipts of the Peace and Global Witness Offering that they retain to local ministries and programs that address the plight of African American males).

- 5) That the PC(USA) issue an apology to U.S. citizens of Native American ancestry for decades of discrimination, pain and suffering that the church's involvement in the Indian boarding school system caused.

The team will meet approximately once a month highlighting work from their respective ministries, seeking ways they can collaborate on projects and events throughout 2017-2018. It is hoped that collectively the team will be able to accomplish more together than the individuals could alone, helping the PC(USA) live out its call to be more diverse and inclusive.



Members of the Diversity and Racial Reconciliation Team include:

Michelle Bartel, Coordinator of Seminary Relations

Molly Casteel, Manager of Inclusion and Representation, Office of the General Assembly

Laura Cheifetz, Vice President of Church Relations and Public Relations and Editor/These Days, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

Rob Fohr, Director, Faith-Based Investing and Corporate Engagement

Courtney Hoekstra, Associate for Advocacy Committee Support

Carl Horton, Coordinator of Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

Alonzo Johnson, Coordinator of Self-Development of People

Mark Koenig, Coordinator for Leader Development, Racial Justice and Network Support

Susan Krehbiel, Catalyst for Refugees and Asylum, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Vince Patton, Manager of Diversity and Racial Reconciliation, and Convener

Sterling Morse, Coordinator of African American Intercultural Congregational Support

Gail Strange, Director, Church and Mid Council Communications

Teresa Waggener, Manager of Immigration Services, Office of the General Assembly

PC(USA) PASTOR RECEIVES HIGH HONORS FROM KOREAN GOVERNMENT

Choi awarded Foreign Minister's Award for service
with Korean community in Atlanta

by Gail Strange

For the past seven years, the Rev. Byeongho Choi, pastor of the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Marietta, Georgia, has served as the board chairperson for the Asian American Resource Center in Atlanta. However, Choi's efforts in the Korean community of

Atlanta go back much further.

For more than 20 years, he has invited Korean adoptee families to his church to educate them in Korean language and culture. Since 2002, as a board member and later as the board chairperson of the Asian American Resource Center,

Choi led the agency in helping Korean immigrants with improving their proficiency in English and subsidizing apartment rents.

After being selected as the President of the Korean Church Council of Greater Atlanta in 2009, Choi, in a joint effort with the Korean American Association of Greater Atlanta (KAAGA), founded the Family Center to serve low-income Koreans and Korean Americans.

Under Choi's leadership the center has helped hundreds of Asian Americans in the Atlanta area who have fallen on hard times. Through fund raising efforts from the Bethany congregation and the Asian community at large, Choi and the Asian American Resource Center offer such life impacting services as free housing for single moms with children for one year; teaching English as a second language; job training, helping refugees, especially North Korean refugees get settled in the U.S.; and assisting those in need of food and financial aid.

Choi's efforts have not gone unnoticed. This past November, the Korean pastor received The Foreign



Byeongho Choi, pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church received The Foreign Minister's Award from the Korean government for his outstanding service in the Korean community of Atlanta.



Bethany Presbyterian Church in Marietta, GA, where the Rev. Dr. Byeongho Choi, is pastor.

Minister's Award from the Korean government for his outstanding service in the Korean community of Atlanta.

In 2001, the Korean government legislated October 5th as the World Korean Day. Since then, Koreans and Korean immigrants from around the world celebrate this day to foster better relationships and to share Korean culture and identity. Recognizing individuals and organizations for their outstanding service and advocacy for the rights and welfare of the Korean community has been a part of the annual celebration since the beginning.

Last year was the 10th anniversary of the celebration. Any Korean or an individual of Korean descent can recommend an individual or an organization for The Foreign Minister's Award. Choi was recommended by the

KAAGA and was one of only 40 candidates from around the world selected by the Korean government to receive the award.

Choi was born and raised in a Korean Presbyterian family and trained in Presbyterian mission schools and at the Presbyterian seminary established by PC(USA) missionaries. He graduated merchant marine college and worked as a merchant vessel navigations officer. Choi established "ship church" and led worship services and Bible studies for sailors on every vessel he staffed for four years. He also founded the Korean Seamen's Mission organization in Busan, Korea and devoted himself to serving sailors.

Choi received a Masters of Divinity from San Francisco Theological Seminary and a Masters of Theology concentrating on cross-cultural education from

Princeton Seminary.

Since his ordination in the Presbytery of San Francisco, he served Korean American churches for three years as an associate pastor and 21 years as a senior pastor. Not only has Choi actively engaged in the Korean community, he's passionate about multi-cultural ministry—opening his church for other racial ethnic groups. He now hosts and supports English and Spanish speaking congregations as well as Portuguese and Asian American second-generation congregations.

Choi currently serves as Associate Stated Clerk of Atlantic Korean American Presbytery, Vice Moderator of National Caucus of the Korean Presbyterian Churches and as a 1001 New Worshiping Community Coach.



Coaches trained to meet congregations' culturally **SPECIFIC NEEDS**

by Gail Strange

The day following an unprecedented election of this nation's 45th president, many were left wondering about the state of cultural diversity and immigrants in the U.S. To help the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) move past cultural differences, 22 coaches from across the country met in Louisville, the next day for Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant coaches training. In this time of uncertainty, what is certain is that these coaches came inspired to serve God's church.

The gathering of African, African American, Hispanic/Latino-a, Korean, Asian, Middle Eastern, Native American, and Portuguese-language coaches discussed how to address the culture- and language-specific needs of the racial ethnic and new immigrant congregations and leaders whom they will coach. The coaches will work in collaboration with mid council leaders and Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries staff to support the growth, sustainability, and transformation of new and existing racial ethnic, bilingual, and intercultural worshiping communities.

The majority of new worshiping communities are racial ethnic or new immigrant. The population of new worshiping communities is much

more diverse than the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a whole.

Fifty-three percent of individuals who regularly participate in a new worshiping community are racial ethnic as compared to only eight percent of those who are members of a chartered PC(USA) congregation.

The Rev. Dr. Rhashell Hunter, director of the Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, greeted the racial ethnic and new immigrant coaches, encouraging them to consider the changing landscape of the church. She shared Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries' goal to create an awareness of institutional racism in the church, and create an environment where Presbyterians of different races and ethnicities, new immigrants to this country and women in congregations, mid councils and other groups can serve fully in ministry and leadership.

"I spoke with a colleague today who said that the church is better when it works against the culture, as opposed to serving the culture or the 'hegemony,' as theological Walter Brueggemann calls it, Hunter said. "One thing we do know is that we are called to serve the church, to speak out against racial injustice, and to spread the good news of Jesus

Christ in many languages and in many cultures."

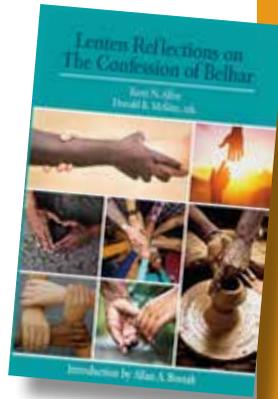
"Racial ethnic and new immigrant pastors and leaders often find themselves working in isolation, without people around them who understand the racial and cultural challenges they face," suggested Sterling Morse, Coordinator for African American Intercultural Congregational Support. "These coaches can walk with church leaders and provide perspective and hope. The idea of a coach in the field to journey along with these church leaders can provide healing for them," said Morse.

With the increasing growth of racial ethnic and new immigrant worshiping communities in the PC(USA), the 221st General Assembly (2014) directed the Presbyterian Mission Agency to create a network of racial ethnic and new immigrant coaches trained to address the culturally specific needs of racial ethnic and new immigrant congregations. To date a network of approximately 40 coaches are available to offer assistance to mid councils in providing encouragement, support, and guidance to racial ethnic and new immigrant pastors, commissioned ruling elders, and congregations.

Featured Resources

Belhar Confession/Racial Reconciliation Resources

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adopted the Confession of Belhar as its latest confession at its 222nd General Assembly in June 2016. The Belhar Confession was originally adopted by the church in South Africa in 1986 in response to apartheid. It originated as a powerful statement of faith condemning racism and the separation of races in the church. The confession calls the PC(USA) to reconciliation, unity and justice and rejects systems and ideologies that are counter to the gospel.



Learn more about the Belhar Confession, the PC(USA)'s newest confession with these resources for study and reflection.

The Belhar Confession (available in English, Korean and Spanish)

pcusa.org/resource/belhar-confession/

Belhar Confession Study Guide.

pcusa.org/resource/belhar-confession-study-guide/

The Confession of Belhar: Participant's Book (Being Reformed – Faith Seeking Understanding), Cynthia Holder Rich (Congregational Ministries Publishing).
pcusastore.com

The Confession of Belhar: Leader's Guide (Being Reformed – Faith Seeking Understanding), Cynthia Holder Rich (Congregational Ministries Publishing).
pcusastore.com

Race and Reconciliation: Workbook – Confessions of 1967 and Belhar (Being Reformed – Faith Seeking Understanding), Clifton Kirkpatrick (Congregational Ministries Publishing)
pcusastore.com

30 Days with the Belhar Confession (Presbyterian Peacemaking Program).

<http://store.pcusa.org/2435816004>

“Lenten Reflections on the Confession of Belhar,” edited by Kerri Allen and Don McKim. Available at pcusastore.com.

Who We are

Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries (RE&WM)

Racial Ethnic & New Immigrant Intercultural Ministries

African American Intercultural Congregational Support
including

African Intercultural Ministries

Asian Intercultural Congregational Support

Hispanic/Latino—a Intercultural Congregational Support,
including

Portuguese–Language Intercultural

Congregational Support

Korean Intercultural Congregational Support

Middle Eastern Intercultural Ministries

Native American Intercultural Congregational Support

Racial Ethnic Leadership Development

Racial Justice and Network Support (a shared office with Compassion, Peace and Justice)

Mission Program Grants

Racial Ethnic Leadership Development & Recruitment

Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges

Women's Leadership Development and Justice Ministries

Gender and Racial Justice

Women's Leadership Development & Young Women's Ministries

In covenant relationship with Presbyterian Women, Inc.

The Racial Ethnic Torch

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Gail L. Strange, associate publisher

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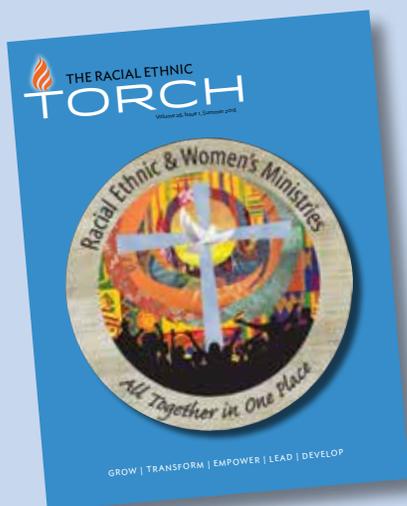
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