

Religion and Race Ministry Leader

Updated November 2016

Result Expected

An effective leader will lead the congregation in efforts to value all God's people and build a vision of the kingdom of God that includes people of every race and culture. An effective ministry will increase congregational understanding that a vital Christian faith values diversity, equity, and inclusiveness.

Spiritual Gifts and Qualifications Helpful for the Job

1. This ministry leader benefits from having one or more of these spiritual gifts: prophecy, teaching, exhortation (encouragement), leadership, compassion, wisdom, discernment, administration, and helping.
2. This leader should show evidence of passion for learning about and appreciating other cultures.
3. Useful skills for this position are the ability to listen to and communicate with people from diverse cultures, a commitment to racial equity and inclusiveness, and an understanding of the privileges of the dominant culture.
4. The leader benefits from the ability to work with others and from having skills for addressing challenges that stem from systemic barriers that keep the church from being the body of Christ (such as racism, tribalism, xenophobia, etc.).

Responsibilities of the Position

- This leader will work to keep the church council and the congregation aware of the church's commitment to racial/ethnic diversity, equity, and inclusiveness. The leader will present and recommend various opportunities for learning, including intercultural competency training, confronting racism, and helping the church find opportunities for worship, fellowship, and service with individuals, groups, and congregations with racial/ethnic diversity.
- This leader will link with organizations, people, and resources in and beyond the congregation across lines of difference.
- This ministry leader will make efforts to encourage people of all ages to commit to expanding their own intercultural knowledge and education in the congregation, in their workplaces, and in daily living.
- This ministry leader will become trained in intercultural competency and will work with the congregation to claim racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity as core values of the congregation.
- This ministry leader will lead the congregation in celebrations of worship and fellowship to highlight the common humanity of all people in events, to acknowledge the systemic inequities and sin of racism, to observe World Communion Sunday, and to recognize the faith contributions of people of all races and cultures.

Getting Started

1. Learn about the lives of people in your community and issues affecting the daily lives of all people in your community.
2. Soon after you are elected, convene a meeting of interested people to evaluate, share hopes and concerns, and plan for your work. Share the ministry with others by delegating projects to people in the church or community who have passion for racial justice and ministry across cultures.
3. Help the congregation understand that a vital Christian faith values inclusiveness, diversity, and equity. Collaborate with other congregations and community groups. Seek to identify gaps in your congregation and community where your congregation can lead the way in making a positive difference.
4. Help your congregation address issues of globalization, economic disparity, food deserts, and other challenges to God's diverse people. Consider biblical stories that increase understanding of responding as Christian disciples.

People and Agencies That Can Help

- General Commission on Religion and Race, 100 Maryland Ave NE, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20002; 202-547-2271; www.gcorr.org.
- People in your congregation, the community, and other congregations who share your interest in religion and race; district and conference leaders.
- InfoServ, the information service for the church, provides current information about United Methodist resources, programs, and staff services. Email: infoserv@umcom.org; Website: infoserv.umc.org.

Web and Print Resources

- *Africana Worship Book, Years A, B, and C* edited by Valerie Bridgeman Davis (Discipleship Resources)
- Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), 470-428-2251; www.bmcrcumc.org
- *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016)
- *The Bush Was Blazing But Not Consumed: Developing a Multicultural Community Through Dialogue and Liturgy* by Eric Law (Chalice Press, 1996)
- *Dancing with Words: Storytelling as Legacy, Culture, and Faith* by Ray Buckley (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2004)
- *Freestyle: Reflections on Faith, Family, Justice, and Pop Culture* by Michael W. Waters (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2013)
- *Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation, 2017-2020: Advocates for Inclusiveness* (Cokesbury, 2016)
- *I Was a Stranger and You Took Me In: Immigration and the Christian Community* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2009)
- *Inclusion: Making Room for Grace* by Eric Law (Chalice Press, 2000)
- *Interpreter*, www.interpretermagazine.org
- Kaleidoscope Institute, www.kscopeinstitute.org
- *Many Faces, One Church: A Manual for Cross-Racial and Cross-Cultural Ministry* by Glory Dharmaraj, Jacob Dharmaraj, and Ernest S. Lyght (Abingdon Press, 2006)
- Methodistas Asociados Representando la Causa de los Hispano-Americanos (MARCHA), www.marchaumc.org
- National Federation of Asian American United Methodists; www.nfaaum.org; Email, nfaaum@gmail.com
- Native American International Caucus, <https://www.facebook.com/NAICUMC/>
- *Ten Honorable Ways to Learn About Another Culture (2016)*, www.gcorr.org/10-honorable-ways-to-learn-about-another-culture

- [*The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community*](#) by Eric Law (Chalice Press, 1993)
- [*The Word as the Crossings: Living the Good News in a Multicontextual Community*](#) by Eric Law (Chalice Press, 2003)

<http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/religion-and-race-ministry-leader>

