



## Overview

- Convening Table Members: Lisa Harris-Lee, Paul Higgins, Perry Hopper, Gina Jacobs-Strain, LaRose Karr, James McJunkin, Marie Onwubuariri, Karen Podsiadly, Rodney Ragwan, Kathryn Ray, Lisa Rothenberger, Robin Stoops
- Group met seven times. A website was created for convening table records. The document that follows discusses objectives for next phase, skills needs, and form of the next group that will carry out the work.
- The ARCT recommends that the Board of General Ministries engage with the report to centralize and commit to Anti-racism efforts within the denomination. It was recommended that a special board meeting be called for this purpose.

**As a result of the Establishment Phase of the ABC Anti-Racism Commission, the ABC Anti-Racism Convening Table presents the following as a guiding document for the next phase of the ABC Anti-Racism Commission:**

### **What are the OBJECTIVES of the next phase?**

*This is a task of clarity of desired impact, appropriate purpose, priority of efforts, keeping in mind this is a long journey.*

#### **I. Create a framework for anti-racism work, to include:**

- Clarifying shared language and definitions
  - Expand the understanding of “anti-racism” as the path of empowering all persons of our “multi-diverse” denomination to work together toward an inclusive and engaged body of believers – a path toward us becoming our best selves.
- Other foundations and boundaries of the work (covenants, expectations, etc.)
- Articulate a contemporary and inclusive America Baptist missiology related to race/emerging diversities at this moment and the gifts we have as a denomination to live into this missiology together. This must include the voices and realities of historically marginalized groups as well as the understanding of mission funding. This missiology ought to drive the next steps.

#### **II. “Buckets” to start with. These may need prioritization if not able to do concurrently:**

- Research ABC history
  - What was learned and how we are seeing that learning part of our practices/identity now?
  - What needs to be acknowledged with regard to missteps?
  - What needs to be celebrated?
  - What are the areas of continuous learning? Acknowledging people in our denominational are not all in the same places
  - How does this inform a revised narrative of who ABC is now and is becoming?





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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create/facilitate a clearing house and/or resource bank of what is currently being done across the ABC. This also is an endeavor that can inform the growing narrative of what is already happening and provides a venue of helpful resources for the ongoing work.</li> <li>• Identify baseline education needed for the group(s) that will steward this work going forward.</li> <li>• Building out a learning and change management plan that includes practical stages of implementation and operationalization in stages with assessment tools* for the various levels/parts of the denomination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Include the “WHO” of implementation</li> <li>○ Identifying milestones &amp; application of learning – what behavior will we see to gauge impact?</li> <li>○ Engaging/leveraging the gifts of all the constituency for a shared purpose, recognizing there will soon be no racial majority within the ABC and there is a shifting understanding of race/inclusion (cutting both ways – broadly inclusive <i>and</i> isolating/segregating fear manifested through violence) among younger generations and understanding of <i>how</i> work gets done → contextualized engagement</li> <li>○ The plan in stages should intentionally include how economics, finances, funding models, and resourcing practices shape, undergird, or undermine our stated commitments</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>What would be the SKILLS needed of the person(s) leading the work toward these objectives?</b>  <i>This informs who is needed to steward the work toward progress. Keep in mind distinction might need to be made between “stewards of” the work and “resources to” the work.</i></p>
<p>Leadership presence that understands the gravity of the moment and can inspire participation from various populations of our denomination</p>
<p>Multidirectional Collaboration (various ABC boards, regions, congregations, educational institutions, etc.)</p>
<p>Intermediate-to-expert knowledge-base in cultural competence, DEIJ, cultural humility, anti-racism work, multiculturalism – people interested in the overarching plan, not just interested in promoting their own work</p>
<p>Additional subject areas: ABC history; Baptist missiology; current ABC demographics and trends; ABC polity, complexity of systems and process, and historic and truthful understanding of mission funding and resources</p>
<p>Proven ability for incremental/timely and measurable institutional/congregational systems change</p>
<p>Strategic programming with proven ability to design and measure community/institutional impact</p>
<p>Adult learning approaches for the varied entry points into anti-racism/multi-cultural-justice work, moving toward a truly inclusive denomination</p>
<p>Development of educational program and resources applicable to the various stages of the work and ability to think holistically about the ways of integrating this throughout our denominational systems (seminaries, ordination process, continuing leadership development, etc.)</p>
<p>Ability to translate/help implement/bridge the work at the local church level/discipleship approaches</p>
<p>Able to advocate for communities that are marginalized/underrepresented</p>





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*NOTE: As members are selected, how will demonstration of this skill be known/measured?*

### **What FORM(s) would be conducive to reaching the objectives?**

*Form should include format/structure of where the work is lodged, considerations of accountability alongside Baptist polity, partnership engagement, and fair expectations of the person(s) stewarding the work.*

As to HOW this work is carried out, **the Convening Table recommends that BGM:**

- Engage in the important steps in coming to a clearly articulated and authentic commitment to the work of anti-racism within the purpose, priority, persons and practices of BGM and OGS. We recognize this would:
  - Require additional time commitment from Board members
  - Call on the particular skills/experience of existing Board members who can shepherd this next phase (see Skills section)
  - Potentially necessitate education and/or consultation for the Board itself
- Identify other existing resources/entities/persons who can help reach objectives and offer the skills named in the previous two sections.
- Identify what is requested of ABC partners to work alongside BGM in reaching objectives

The Anti-Racism Convening Table additionally notes that any group that shepherds the work for the denomination:

- Must include BGM executive committee member(s)/officer(s) and a Beloved Community Action Group representative in order to maintain engagement/investment and accountability of BGM and OGS and to continually foster Board culture and education.
- Will need staff support for administrative needs and to keep the work well documented and organized (a learning from previous diversity efforts that were not carried through to fullest potential impact) (This may be multiple staff persons).
- Must be intentional and clear about engagement of ABC partners, keeping agreed upon partnership models in mind.
- Must build in accountability for the General Secretary and OGS, such as regular reporting on progress at/with BGM, NEC, NLC, REMC, and Biennial Mission Summit
  - It is important that plan implementation and reporting include how his work is interwoven into our deliberations of mission funding and resourcing (inclusive of United Mission)
- Must engage multiple access points/platforms for disseminating information and resources related to this work, including being woven into the fabric of existing access points/platform
- Examine and utilize the current ABCUSA structure, and utilize its processes for bringing forth people and mission priorities across the denomination can support these efforts.





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### ADDENDUM: This addendum is provided:

1. To ensure that the work of the 2021 Anti-Racism Task Force and the 2022 Anti-Racism Convening Table is available and passed on to future persons who will steward this work.
2. To summarize a connection/progression between the two groups.
  - a. The documented work of the Anti-Racism Task Force is available at <https://www.abc-usa.org/2021/06/abcusa-anti-racism-task-force/>, under the care of the ABCUSA Communications Department.
  - b. The documented work of the Anti-Racism Task Force is available on a password-protected page on [www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org), under the care of the ABCUSA Communication Department. All files from Marie Onwubuariri who convened the group from Feb-Jul 2022 were passed on to General Secretary Jeff Woods at the end of Jul 2022.
  - c. The below chart summarizes how the discussions/recommendations of the Anti-Racism Convening Table aligns with the Anti-Racism Commission Proposal to the BGM, November 2021.
  - d. The final work of the Anti-Racism Convening Table will be presented to the BGM Executive Committee in November, 2022 by Convener, ABCUSA Past President Karen Podsiadly.

### Commission Goals and Activities

Proposal	Convening Table	Notice/Wonder/Star That
A. Develop a Common Framework and Language for work of Anti-Racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shared Language/What does anti-racism work include? (DEI, etc.)</li> <li>- What language can be is helpful, not impeding/distracting</li> </ul>	
B. Core issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ABC history</li> <li>- Need/opportunities for repentance, unlearning, relearning</li> <li>- Identify hindrances for ABC stakeholders to participate</li> <li>- Collating existing work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to do history work to ensure we do not go down the same road with same non-results</li> <li>- Acknowledgement (we acknowledge great need for education in various forms)</li> <li>- The Convening table is currently discussing consideration from NEC/REMC perspectives</li> <li>- Recognize that churches are also on different journeys (different points along a continuum of cross-cultural sensitivity/ability)</li> <li>- "Clearing house" idea / how do we share learning, build synergy, so our overall denominational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning -&gt; Acknowledgement [good place to start] -&gt; Repentance [calls us to introspection, examination, follow-up action] -&gt; transformation [can't have transformation without lol repentance]</li> <li>- In discussion, Marie referenced "Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity" theory and "Intercultural Development Inventory" instrument.</li> <li>- <a href="http://IDRIInstitute.com">IDRIInstitute - IDRIInstitute</a> (DMIS)</li> <li>- <a href="http://InterculturalDevelopmentInventory.com">Intercultural Development Inventory   IDI, LLC (idiinventory.com)</a> (IDI)</li> </ul>





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	culture/narrative is transformed?	
<p>C. Denominational Assessment/Transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop strategy/plan for every aspect of denom (hiring, economics, governance, missiology, polity, core values, collaboration of anti-racism work)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We have acknowledged the work is so large and still trying to distill what is the work we can do together; how can we at least impact our own selves (let alone society at large)</li> <li>- We touched on missiology, partnership, impact of church in society (or vice versa), processing and applying beyond statements, acknowledgement of different journeys and different points on similar journeys; anti-racism work impact on discipleship/evangelism)</li> <li>- What are effective models when an org wants to bring change upon itself (vs. external advocacy work)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parsing out any one of these areas is huge in itself: such as...</li> <li>- Economics – socially responsible investing, where we have conferences; what kind of orgs do we engage (vetting)?</li> <li>- Hiring – how, who, from where</li> <li>- What are orgs willing to do to invest in this work—staff time? Dollars to implement recommendations?</li> <li>- Wondering: Because these are so large, can one “low hanging fruit” goal of a commission be to create/provide a checklist of anti-racism-lens questions that can be considered when going through assessment or decision making for any one of these areas? In addition, how can this checklist be also be used in measuring impact? And if impact if self-reported back to the commission, can a goal down the road be developing recommended practices for any one of these areas.</li> </ul>
<p>D. Advocacy as expressions of ABC commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reparations, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identified three potential tracks (narrative, advocacy, activities/education)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Star That: The ability to lean heavily on those who are deep in this work will be helpful going forward; allow on One example of potential partner shared by Lisa: <a href="https://francescocolaborative.org/">https://francescocolaborative.org/</a> Felipe Witchger, a co-founder</li> </ul>
<p>E. Capacity building for the work (staffing, funding, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted unjust practice of adding responsibilities on staff without readjustment of work/compensation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarify staff leadership/support for commission</li> <li>- Organizations have had in the past Diversity officers; maybe now part of Human capital management/HR</li> <li>- Orgs have used outside consultants</li> </ul>

Continuing the alignment: - focused on the following chart in Meeting 5.





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### Establishment Phase

Proposal	Convening Table	Notice/Wonder/Star That
Envision bringing together all partners, not just for convening but also valued as necessary partner in key decision-making junctures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted lack of relational capacity</li> <li>- Reality-check on organizational bandwidth</li> <li>- Autonomy – what can “a group” actually impact?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notice all of NEC &amp; REMC present; missing other partners (though not yet invited)</li> <li>- What are examples of key decision-making junctures? Budget cuts?</li> <li>- What is meant by “juncture” – could this mean decision points?</li> <li>- In our structure, more like topics can be discussed collaborative vs. decision-making that necessarily impacts everyone</li> <li>- However partnership is built into a new group, there needs to be intentionality to relationship (and recognition that relationships are not a given)</li> </ul>
Proposed AGS for Anti-Racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wonderings about current staff bandwidth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budget is a consideration</li> <li>- Helpful to have someone assigned to forward the work; I wonder if this model, which is often used in other institutions have been successful in bringing change (seek Karen P. input/perspective)</li> <li>- One made a reference to previous time when partners had Affirm. Action Officers</li> <li>- No current staff assignments within ABC that we know of (though some variations are in the works)</li> <li>- Are there models of effective volunteer-carried initiatives? (One member shared items from her experience of an effective model, which includes: Clear leader (1 or 2 people the most) who is passionate and knowledgeable; able to frame conversation and invite people in; there is a clear scope/timeline (6-8 mn vs. years) for the group.</li> </ul>
Training (transition team, new commission members, OGS staff, BGM rep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stay mindful of different educational needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BGM Beloved Community Action Group identified training needs on engaging in difficult issues</li> </ul>





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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OGS anti-racism training component in leadership team meetings</li> <li>- Mission Table</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<p>Short Term Goals/measurements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parameters for convening and decision-making</li> <li>- Funding needs and strategies</li> <li>- What do we need to consider to fulfill core purposes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who is this group accountable to?</li> <li>- Appeal to larger denom for funding? OGHS?</li> <li>- How would we do recruitment – appeal to Region input? What skills do we need?</li> <li>- Potential group work subgroups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o ABC historical research/learnings</li> <li>o Shared framework/language</li> <li>o Various educational paths</li> <li>o What can we learn from other denominations &amp; faith entities (i.e. New Baptist Covenant)?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Helpful to have a clear narrative of how we talk about/name/commit to the work of anti-racism as a denomination? Not only in press releases, but what is the “CALL” to the larger community for all of us to engage/own/ participate in?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quarterly reports submitted to BGM Executive Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marie submitted a March/June report to BGM Exec. Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What would be the reporting expectations and of a commission?</li> </ul>