

## **Relational Meetings on Race\***

### A Conversation Guide

#### **Framing the Conversation**

- The purpose of these conversations is to increase an awareness of racial identity and how such identities impact relationships in personal and public spheres. The working assumption of these intentional conversations is that personal reckoning with race will lead to a public reckoning.
- These conversations will occur among friends and members of Ark and Dove and play a part in our efforts to dismantle racism within ourselves, and then in our community and county.
- Before beginning, be clear that you are having a safe conversation about race that is not about naming and blaming, but listening and learning.
- The conversation is about exploration, and so it should avoid judgments, assumptions, arguments, and jargon (white fragility, systemic racism, etc.).
- The emphasis is on story-telling and feelings. If something said is uncomfortable and offensive, try to pause and understand your feelings, then ask for clarification, indicating how what was said made you feel.

#### **Opening the Conversation**

- Establish a trusting relationship by opening with a prompt:
  - How did you learn about Ark and Dove?
  - Tell me a story about where you grew up.
  - Tell me about a place that you love.
  - Tell me about your family configuration.

#### **Conversation Questions**

- Can you tell me about a time that caused you to consider your racial or ethnic identity?
- What part of your racial or ethnic heritage makes you most proud?
- How does your racial/ethnic identity impact your personal or professional life? How does it factor into your daily decisions?
- Describe the earliest occasion when you became aware of another's racial identity. Were you taught to believe something about another person's race?
- Have you ever been in a situation where your racial or ethnic identity was cause for discomfort?
- Have you ever felt that your racial/ethnic identity made you "different" in a group setting? If so, how did that make you feel? How often do you engage with people of racial/ethnic identities other than your own?
- Have you ever witnessed a person treated unfairly on the basis of their racial/ethnic identity? How did that make you feel? Did you respond in any way?

-How would you describe the racial/ethnic diversity of Ark and Dove? What messages do you hear in the church about race? What have been your responses to those messages?

### **Ending the Conversation**

-Give thanks for the conversation.

-If needed or desired, schedule a follow-up conversation.

-Inquire about someone in the church that each person should speak to next.

\*Drawn from [https://healourcommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/NDORH\\_ConversationGuide\\_2019\\_V6\\_12-10-18-FINAL\\_proofed.pdf](https://healourcommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/NDORH_ConversationGuide_2019_V6_12-10-18-FINAL_proofed.pdf) and Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) teachings.