

A Word from the Anti-Racism Task Force

BY PASTOR PATRICIA L. HUNTER

The Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF) was created through the work of the Long Range Planning Committee. In 2021 we met twice a month to advance the work of Seattle First Baptist Church becoming an anti-racist congregation. We will formally end our work as a task force when the new governance structure is adopted. The work of the ARTF will continue in 2022 under the new bylaws. We will most likely be called a committee instead of a task force. The name of the committee has not yet been finalized.

We invite those interested in racial justice, equity, and inclusion to consider being part of the new racial justice committee. The intentional work of being a more welcoming congregation to communities of color began in 2021 but must continue for years to come. Racism in America has been around over 400 years. The work of becoming an antiracist congregation will take a few more years to be realized.

The ARTF is very proud of our accomplishments in 2021. We gave birth to Brave Space under the leadership of Karen Carlos. This is a safe space for white people to talk about the work they need to do to become antiracist.

Also, the SFBC Black Indigenous and other People of Color group began meeting monthly for fellowship and support. The Rev. Jennifer Ikoma-Motzo returned to SFBC in June to help facilitate this group as well as the ARTF. The ARTF supported and encouraged SFBC's effort in hiring a consultant to lead workshops on antiracism. We are pleased that Rev. Doug Avilesbernal has agreed to be our consultant for 2022 as we walk the journey of becoming an antiracist congregation.

Lastly, the ARTF developed a dispute resolution process that can be used when racist acts or comments are made. The purpose of the resolution process is to support the person(s) harmed and to provide a path to resolution and perhaps restoration through open conversations.

These are just the highlights of the work of the ARTF for 2021. We held many conversations and reviewed several documents of other task forces with an eye toward being more racially inclusive and sensitive to BIPOC in our congregation.

We are well on our way toward being a more equitable congregation. Some members of our task force are stepping off at the end of the year. This makes room for new voices as we continue this work. Please consider working with us. Those joining the new racial justice committee will receive training from Rev. Avilesbernal on sensitivities and skills needed to do our work. You may talk to any of the members of the Anti-Racism Task Force for more information. The real work of Christmas is just beginning,

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Dr. Jennifer Chin
Pastor Patricia L. Hunter
Sandra Jones*

*Eric Watness
Lupe Carlos (former ARTF
member)
Rev. Doug Avilesbernal*

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