

WHITE PRIVILEGE AND ENDING RACISM FOCUS GROUP

Tuesday, June 25, 2019

600-7:00pm

Co-chairs: Sandy Yost

Recorder: Gerrie Grandpre

Attendees:

Dorothy Pashuta, Jean Uzupis, Donna Cronauer, Margie Kundar, Mary Frances Grasinger, Sarah Crotty, Fran Omodio, Diane Cauley, Sharon Costello, May Cay Burke-Hamill, Sandy Yost, Gerrie Grandpre

Opened with prayer led by Sarah Crotty

Sharings:

- Since hearing Dr. John Welch's presentation, I now realize: "once you see, you cannot not see."
- Judges on "America's Got Talent" seem to be more sensitive to people who have overcome disabilities of any kind.
- In a recent conversation with a black pastor, I was struck with his statement that a book written by an African-American person is initially expected to be "whine...whine...whine." But one written by a white person is initially expected to be good.
- In daily work with an African-American, I am aware of his tremendous fear of police just because he is African-American.
- When I see a black person pulled over by a policeman, I fear there will be a shooting.
- Being part of these groups helps me recognize my privilege. As a learner, I recently realized that I can't presume the way I hear something is the way a person of color would hear it the same way.
- In my increased opportunities for listening when I am in mixed groups, I am trying to be more attentive to what I hear.
- Simply attending an event to support the African-American community is not what will convert me for the long haul. It's about my realization and conversion.

Chapter Assembly Planning:

- Friday, Oct. 18, 2019 – Day of retreat and reflection
 - Morning session led by Sheila Collins who works with an organization she formed called Interplay that focuses on grief as a life transition. Sheila uses right brain activities to deal with grief. She herself has lost two children! Her intent is that engaging in grief allows one to free up energy for the future.
 - Afternoon session will be a reflection process on the morning input done by the prayer committee.
- Saturday, Oct. 19, 2019 – Focus group input

- We are hoping to secure the presenter for a synthesized Federation workshop on “Cultural Diversity and Conflict Management.”
 - The culture of vocation group, along with two or three volunteers from this racism focus group will plan the meeting. It is hoped that volunteers emerge who are not co-chairs. To date, Diane Cauley has agreed to attend. Sandy will reach out to several others who may be available for that August meeting but unable to attend this meeting.
- Sunday, Oct. 20, 1029
 - CRG process
 - Updates on congregational business
 - Processing the three days

Educational Process

- Mary Cay presented option for reaching out to the Macedonia Baptist Church in Homewood where her former student is active. Some discussion followed related to the purpose of doing this. This led to realizing we need to “get our act together” before involving others, however anyone is free to champion an interest that may help us all to grow. Several in the group are open to meeting this woman as our work is relational work. Courageous conversations and perhaps fish bowl conversations may occur down the road.
- Recommended readings:
 - Nothing Ever Dies by Nguyen
 - And the Sun Does Rise
- Sandy provided the following bibliography. She has purchased some books already and will loan them for a one month time limited period. Members can contact Sandy for copies.
 - Racism Without Racists - Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva
 - White Fragility – Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism by Robin DiAngelo
 - Tears We Cannot Stop – A Sermon to White America by Michael Eric Dyson
 - White Awake by Daniel Hill
 - Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria: by Beverly Daniel Tatum
 - The Color of Compromise – The Truth About the American Church’s Complicity in Racism by Jemar Tisby
 - America’s Original Sin - Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America by Jim Wallace

Next Meeting: Thursday, Sept. 12, 2019 at 6:00 pm in the Large Conference Room in Baden.