

Resolution 207.5

On Equitable Racial Hiring Practices for Diocesan Positions

Resolved, that the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina continue the process to achieve racial equity in the hiring of Diocesan staff. This affirms the work of the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in A130, the Resolution for the Development of Best Practices in Hiring and Developing Organizational Cultural Competencies. Specifically we affirm the “develop(ment) of model hiring, workplace, and Committee/Commission/Board practices that intentionally increase equitable hiring and access to leadership positions for People of Color and that promote healthy work environments within the church; and that each diocese and congregation be encouraged to actively engage in addressing the ways that white supremacy culture has shaped its own structures, policies, and practices and work toward deepening their cultural competency.”

Be it further resolved that the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina contract with a firm with specialty in workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion to perform an outside racial audit of Diocesan hiring processes and policies to be provided to the Diocesan Council, Racial Justice and Reconciliation Committee (RJRC) and 208th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a working group be appointed by the diocesan bishop that seeks the wisdom and leadership of the Communities of Color within our church, professional associations, and external expert advisors as needed. This working group shall oversee the process of equitable racial hiring practices for diocesan positions. This includes, but is not limited to, all Diocesan staff, including bishops, members of the Diocesan Council, Foundation and Trustees, and the Standing Committee attend, at Diocesan expense, equitable hiring training to be provided by the firm that performs the racial audit. A preliminary report to the Racial Justice and Reconciliation Committee and final report after their approval will be presented to the 208th Diocesan Convention.

Be it further resolved that the working group develop transparent procedures, practices, and metrics to achieve racial equity among the Diocesan staff. These resources will be made available to congregations and communities across the diocese for use with committees, vestries, and search committees.

Submitted by the Rev. John Gibson

Comment: Notwithstanding its historical and recent efforts towards racial reconciliation, The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina follows a discriminatory staff hiring practice. Our Diocese talks the talk of racial reconciliation but fails to walk it when hiring Diocesan staff.

Even though Diocesan leaders articulate racial reconciliation and Beloved Community, they have not put commensurate effort into equitable racial staff hiring. People of Color are disproportionately underrepresented and whites overrepresented on the Diocesan staff relative to the demographics for the state of

North Carolina. As of October 7, 2022, the Diocesan staff web page shows three African Americans, 9.4% of the staff, and twenty-nine white persons, 90.6%. In contrast, whites constitute 61.9% and People of Color 38.1% of North Carolina’s population.

Systemic racism is a historic stain on this Diocese. There has never been racial equity on the Diocesan staff. In the 2000's, the Most Rev Michael Curry called for the Diocese to look like this State by 2017. The time is long overdue to achieve Presiding Bishop Curry's vision which is the Dream of God.

This resolution follows the charge of resolution A130 that was passed this summer by the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church. This "Resolution for the Development of Best Practices in Hiring and Developing Organizational Cultural Competencies" calls on the Executive Council "*to develop model hiring, workplace, and Committee/Commission/Board practices that intentionally increase equitable hiring and access to leadership positions for People of Color and that promote healthy work environments within the church.*" A130 encourages dioceses and congregations "to actively engage in addressing the ways that white supremacy culture has shaped its own structures, policies, and practices and work toward deepening their cultural competency, *including, but not limited to ... [s]eeking out external coaching where necessary to help leaders address their own biases and to help examine the culture of the diocese and its leadership*" (Emphasis added).¹

The establishment of an Accountable Structures and Practices subcommittee for the RJRC follows the model of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts' Racial Justice Commission.²

This resolution applauds the efforts made by Bishops Rodman, Hodges-Copple, the Diocesan staff present and past, and the lay persons and clergy of this Diocese who have worked tirelessly that we may be Beloved Community. In the biblical prophetic tradition, it also challenges the entrenched racial bias that too often occludes, frequently, unknowingly, equitable hiring in this country.⁴ It calls the Diocese to achieve Diocesan staff racial equity by 2027. The hope of this resolution, despite the discomfort it may cause, is to create awareness, conversation, and action that we may incarnate the full diversity of the body of Christ.

Thank you for your thoughtful and prayerful consideration.