**Vocational Questions Concerning the Call to Racial Justice**

These questions are intended for a group of people in predominantly White congregations, discerning both individual and communal callings to a ministry of racial justice.

Please make use of the [scaffolded anti-racism resources](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PrAq4iBNb4nVIcTsLcNlW8zjaQXBLkWayL8EaPlh0bc/preview?fbclid=IwAR2pWMCaMiW8mrgGkzsGBXJd7vg6R-vXteRakTv4nbG90A6COelkzlnRzaM&pru=AAABcp89YIw*bDKb14665Nq845z7Fec1gw) as an aspect of this discernment. Most predominantly White congregations need to do significant inner work on the way to becoming valued allies in the work of racial justice. A bedrock understanding is that you are not called as saviors, but as listeners and courageous companions in the ways of God’s justice for all.

**Sensing a call**

* Why now? What about the present moment has made racial justice an important calling for you personally, and for this congregation?
* What story or image fueled this call in you? What was a turning point for you?
* In your own words, what breaks God’s heart about race relations in this country?
* What breaks *your* heart about race relations in this country?
* Is there an image or metaphor that describes your sense of calling (lighting a fire, following a path, feeling the pull of a wave, tending a garden, etc....)?
* What inner changes are being called forth in you now, in order to respond well to this call?
* What might hold you back or make this calling difficult for you to respond to?

**Your context: Who is calling you forth?**

* As the community of persons with disabilities says, “Nothing about us, without us.” What relationships do you need to make (personally and as a congregation) in order for this work to flourish, with integrity?
* Whose needs are evoking your calling?

**How will this work be grounded in God’s work?**

* How does a concern for racial justice need to enter into your personal or congregational life of prayer and worship, in order to be grounded and sustained in God?
* What changes in your prayer and worship will help to support this calling?
* How do you see God already moving toward racial justice in your community? How might you join that movement?

**What is being called forth from you in order to respond well? What needs more development? This is an area of discernment that would particularly benefit from study of the scaffolded antiracism resources offered on this site.**

* What skills, capacities, resources, interests, curiosities do you have that will be useful in this endeavor?
* What skills, capacities, and resources does the congregation have among its people and its physical/economic resources that could be important to this work?
* What do you need to learn more about, personally and congregationally, to answer this calling well?
* What inward and cultural changes need to occur, individually and communally, to answer this call with integrity?
* At the congregational level, is this a calling of the whole congregation, or of a few? Is it central to the congregation’s identity, or is it one among many callings?
* How will the ministry be communicated to people not at the center of it?
* How will new people be constantly invited into this work and prepared to respond to the calling with skill and confidence?
* How will you engage ongoing learning and skill development, to help ensure that the ministry continues to flourish?

**Perseverance**

* How much of your time and energy (or of the congregation’s time and energy) are you willing to put into this calling?
* Are there people in your family or close friends you need to talk to about the importance of this calling for you?
* Is there a level of engagement that would be too much for you? How will you discern that?
* As the ministry become more difficult or there are times of suffering, where will you go for support?

**Discernment over time**

* What practices will you put in place for ongoing discernment and evaluation of the effectiveness of this ministry, for both individuals and the congregation?
* How will you discern necessary changes or shifts in the ministry?
* What new skills and resources are being called forth from you (individually or congregationally) as you engage this calling?
* How are you different, because you answered this calling?