



Context

This Action Plan was developed by the CLM Elders, in collaboration with CLM's Taskforce for Racial Justice and with full agreement of the CLM Board of Directors. It reflects hundreds of hours of conversations, work, research, and dialogue. The Plan seeks to capture the substance of these conversations as well as all the recommendations that the Taskforce brought to the Elders. To this end, we acknowledge it may appear somewhat 'wordy' in places and may not always 'read well'.

Our current focus is on the outworking of these actions rather than the refining of how they are positioned and presented here.

The Elders

Racial Justice Elders' Action Plan February 2021

1. Teaching and Learning

- Seek to always teach into racial justice using a Biblical framework.
- Within teaching, acknowledge that racism has existed alongside the Church, in the Church and has been perpetuated by the Church.
- Include within teaching something of the historical context which laid the foundation of racial hierarchy in British building empire and systemic racism in the UK today, and its associated overlap with church and missionary endeavour.
- Clearly communicate what day-to-day racism looks like (for many individuals in the church community) and that such painful and negative experiences can be perpetuated within the church.
- Communicate that for all of us, 'we don't know what we don't know'. We commit to a continued journey of listening and learning.
- Unpack along the way, systemic and institutional racism as well as overt racism.
- Unpack aspects of 'white privilege'; in particular the systemic nature of privilege; i.e. the system in the UK is set up in favour of those who are white and causes pain and suffering to those who are not.
- Seek to equip the church as 'kingdom-bringers' and ambassadors on this issue beyond CLM.
- Include within teaching, how to respond to racial injustice in a godly way and the particular dangers of social media.
- Recommend resources relating to racial justice and encourage self-education.
- Plan for a Sunday series with scope for engagement in CLM Life Groups (after diversity training for Life Group leaders).
- Invest in expertise where needed and available.

Other comments on this section

- Begin immediate delivery of some aspects, while plotting a two-year journey of timing and curriculum.
- Use story-telling to educate (both the experiences of racism and the journey of learning).
- Consider additional 'educational' settings outside of 'Sundays' and 'resources'.
- Recognise not all of the above will be able to be delivered 'in-depth' in Sunday Services, although we would aspire for all elements above to be included to some extent to whole congregation.
- Consider using 'key dates or moments' such as Black History Month, to include profiling.

2. Conversation

- Encourage and create 'safe spaces' for ongoing conversations as leaders, staff, teams and congregation – with a backdrop of love and grace, that allows for discussion in a non-judgemental environment.
- Facilitate ongoing conversation between CLM Elders, Directors and Taskforce regarding progress, delivery and actual effectiveness of the Action Plan.
- Consider ways to model and/or teach into 'what healthy conversation looks and sounds like'.
- Ensure there is a clear channel for communication going forward for any concerns about racial justice within CLM, whether that is the Taskforce or an appropriate representative on staff (akin to 'Safeguarding Lead')

Other comments on this section

- Although inevitably qualitative, it will be good to assess whether this subject becomes 'less uncomfortable' to discuss esp. between ethnicities. And if not, why not. The desire is that we can grow as a church so it becomes 'normal' to talk about matters relating to racial justice and diversity, notwithstanding that racial injustice will remain painful to experience.

3. Training

- Deliver biblically-rooted diversity training including unconscious bias awareness, across ministry leaders and staff (including all who are empowered to appoint and recruit leaders or staff).
- Deliver diversity training including 'appropriate conduct and response' across all ministry teams and serving teams (including key elements of cultural awareness and sensitivities).
- Identify certain materials to be read/watched by all CLM Elders and ministry leaders (as a minimum), so that a baseline level of understanding of systemic racism in the UK has been engaged with.

Other comments on this section

- Expectation for 'phase one' training to be delivered by Next Leadership (Dr Kate Coleman) and subsequent 'cascaded' training to be developed, and maybe partially delivered, with their input.
- When designing 'in-house' training, refer to experiences reported to the Taskforce, with the goal of eliminating the same issues occurring again.

4. Leadership Development

- Ensure that there is active encouragement for people of all ethnicities to engage with leadership development at CLM.
- Monitor BAME representation on all levels of Serving and Leading (Leadership Training) and seek to redress any consistent and significant underrepresentation if that were to occur.
- Improve communication about CLM's 'Aligned Leadership Structure' and 'desired leadership qualities' (FACT) so that everyone is clear on what is desired in leadership positions at CLM and of the systems that are in place.
- Work with staff team/ministry leaders to ensure that CLM's Aligned Leadership Structure is consistently outworked within all ministries.
- Make all levels of 'Serving and Leading' open to attend by self-selection so that anyone can benefit.
- Ensure that the Board of Directors oversee a regular (at least annual) audit of staff recruitment process and practice.
- In publicising any vacant staff roles, to communicate that we welcome/desire applicants from all backgrounds as we continue to build a diverse church and staff.

Other comments on this section

- Consider the possibility of specific 'mentoring' programmes (or components within existing initiatives such as CLM's 'Youth Leadership Programme', that seek to address low-confidence or aspirations resulting from systemic racism.
- Recognition that in almost all organisations, today's (senior) leadership will be reflection of yesterday's demographic, which means genuine equality in leadership development will take time to fully work through. That said, we must not only ensure that entry-point training and early-stage leadership are a healthy reflection of 'today's demographic', but moreover that no inappropriate barriers exist to individuals progressing in leadership function and responsibility at *any subsequent level of leadership*.

5. Inclusion and Belonging

- Work with all ministry leaders (specifically including Life Groups, Youth, Children, Students and Sunday services) to review ways to make inclusion and belonging easier, particularly for minority groups or those on the periphery within those ministries.
- Discuss and agree a plan for each ministry area to broaden cultural inclusion and seek to remove any known barriers to belonging and integration.
- Continue to seek to create diverse settings for Christ-centred community wherever practicable (notwithstanding there may be limitations where diversity is limited demographically).
- Develop and implement process for introduction of new songs to CLM that requires all worship leaders to draw from a wider 'pool' of cultural expression than their own personal preference.
- Review feasibility of annual Watchnight Service and either facilitate or explain why not.

Other comments on this section

- We are aware the challenges to inclusion and belonging will be varied - including some ministries where there is room for greater (non-white) diversity of expression, and some ministries that currently have very high majority-black constituencies and the integration of

non-black newcomers is difficult. This is why a 'ministry by ministry' review will be important.

- As an outworking of the first bullet point (ref: Sunday services) we will continue to consider how to incorporate greater cultural and ethnic diversity in terms of illustrations and visiting ministry, without drifting into the pitfalls of tokenism.

6. Mission

- Intentionally seek to partner with/invest into aligned ministries directly addressing issues or symptoms of racial injustice.
- Intentionally partner with/invest into aligned ministries working positively with majority BAME clientele.
- Enquire of all potential missions partners regarding the diversity of their own leadership, staff, volunteers and client group as part of increasing awareness and creating dialogue about racial injustice.
- Seek to profile Missions Partnerships and engagement opportunities at CLM, using a more diverse representation of leaders as we seek to heighten appetite for missional engagement across the whole CLM congregation.
- Equip and inspire CLM congregation to be personally active in bringing racial justice in their spheres of influence.

7. Prayer

- Maintain the priority of prayer for Racial Justice in prayer settings.
- Maintain an awareness that the battle against racial injustice is spiritual as well as practical.
- Seek to model 'how to pray' into racial justice.
- Make room for Corporate Lament when this can be done in person, as a unifying, prayerful response to racial injustice.