

CABC Racism Working Group

Report To Assembly 2008

Convention Appointees:

Rev. John Boyd, Rev. Dr. Harry Gardner (2000 – 2007), Rev. Dr. Malcolm Beckett (2007)
Rev. Tracey Grosse (2001-2004), Rev. Sherrolyn Riley (2004-present), Dr. Frank Guinta,
Dr. Lois Mitchell, Rev. Dr. Lionel Moriah, Rev. Elias Mutale and Rev. Ogueri Ohanaka (Chair)

AUBA Appointees:

Lic. Brian Johnston and Mrs. Doreen Paris

RWG Appointee: Nancy Cameron (scribe)

Purpose:

In response to the challenge of the Baptist World Alliance to make the first decade of the 21st Century one in which to address racism and promote racial justice, the Racism Working Group (RWG) was appointed by Council to give leadership to the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC) as we seek to eradicate the sin of racism within the structures of the CABC and, where possible, in other places within the world where we have influence. The Working Group was to provide leadership for this task and to hold the Council and Assembly accountable for maintaining a commitment to the mandate.

Actions To Date:

Since its inception, the RWG has done much work including the following:

- i) sensitizing members of the Working Group to the issue of racism by providing opportunities for personal stories, and dealing with questions related to racism in personal, community and church experience
- ii) publishing a ground-breaking brochure acknowledging racism in our Convention, and setting out a clear mandate and vision for dismantling racism as it is experienced throughout our Baptist community in Atlantic Canada
- iii) organizing and providing sensitivity training workshops for Convention Council and senior staff
- iv) holding consultative meetings with the appropriate leaders and staff of our two educational institutions (Acadia Divinity College and Atlantic Baptist University), to inform them of the work of the RWG and measure their willingness to address these issues within their institutions
- v) serving as a resource to Associations in highlighting the issues
- vi) suggesting to Council and AUBA Executive that the 2007 Assembly be designed as a Joint Assembly dedicated to the Racism theme.
- vii) developing and coordinating the historic 2007 Joint Assembly of CABC, AUBA, Youth and ABW under the theme **“Unity In Diversity: Celebrating Our Oneness In Christ.”** This was a highly successful Convention Assembly and the best attended to date.

- viii) providing yearly progress reports and updates at all Assembly and AUBA Annual Sessions

Outcomes

- i) Sensitivity Training of some of the major institutions of CABC
 - CABC Council and Senior Staff
 - ABU
 - ADC
 - A Number of Association Events
- ii) a Major Workshop facilitated by Dr. Mayann Francis, and others associated with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
- iii) the production of a definition document which includes a clear theological statement for this Ministry
- iv) appointment of a Regional Minister for the AUBA (Region VII)
- v) increased membership on CABC Boards and Committees of the AUBA membership
- vi) increased AUBA participation in CABC activities:
 - a) two Convention Presidents of African Ancestry in recent years
 - b) first professorship at ADC and hiring of two African staff persons at ABU(a professor and an Athletic Director)
 - c) the establishment of an Equity Award Bursary at ABU
 - d) increased enrollment of AUBA students in both the Divinity College and the Lay Pastors Training Program

Projected Goals:

- i) the continued development of Sensitivity Training Programs within Convention Institutions, Associations and Churches
- ii) the development of a clear and concise Training Resource usable by our Ministry Leadership
- iii) the development of documents and programs that will seek to keep in front of our constituency the continued need of working at eradicating racism within all of our cultures represented in our communities
- iv) a continued encouragement of further equity in the hiring practices of both our CABC Educational Institutions
- v) the development and promotion of web-based resources to equip individuals, churches, Associations and other agencies in understanding and addressing racism
- vi) the development of an Ethnic Ministries Department within CABC which would make available relevant resources to our Associations and churches
- vii) the writing of a new Convention history that more accurately reflects the AUBA presence in the early formative years
- viii) a special Assembly in 2010 to conclude the 10-year mandate and launch the next phase of the RWG with a revised team