



Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training

Dismantling Racism, Building Racial Justice in Institutions

2-Years Engagement with the Presbytery of Southern New England

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Request for Services

The Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, Executive Presbyter, and the Rev. Jenny Peek and Kirk Louis, Co-Chairs of the Anti-Racism and Equity Committee, of the Presbytery of Southern New England asked Crossroads National Program Director Jessica Vazquez Torres to conceive of what a yearlong + engagement that will continue to deepen and expand the antiracism work that began in the Presbytery in 2019.

Purpose and Outcomes

Central to the collaboration between the Presbytery of Southern New England and Crossroads is capacity building. Thus, this proposal seeks the following outcomes:

1. Continue the work of infusing the presbytery with shared theological language and frameworks that facilitate the conversation about and organizing around the Presbytery's antiracism commitments
2. Increase the fitness of strategically identified Presbytery leaders (both leaders of color and white leaders) to animate the work of antiracism in the presbytery
3. Provide thought partnership to Presbytery leadership as they work to build a critical mass within and navigate the terrain that creates a deeper engagement in and commitment to antiracism work in the Presbytery

Scope of Work

Crossroads will provide the following services to the Presbytery of Southern New England beginning in January 2022 to May 2023. Central to this collaboration is preparing the Presbytery to begin and complete a Racism Audit between the fall of 2023 and the end of 2024. This proposal covers the preparation for the audit but not the audit itself.

Leadership Coaching

Proposed Timeframe: January 2022 to December 2023

The aim of leadership coaching sessions is to continue sharpening antiracist leadership skills and practices, offer strategic thought partnership as the Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk navigate the path toward stage 4 in the continuum, and provide feedback that allows these two leaders to learn from their efforts. The agendas for these sessions will be collaboratively constructed to ensure they remain centered in the most relevant issues the leaders are facing.

The sessions will be facilitated by two Crossroads consultants. Beginning in January 2022, Crossroads consultants will gather with the Presbytery leaders every 6 weeks for a total of 13 sessions. Each session will last 90 minutes.

Visioning & Aims Virtual Conversations

Proposed Timeframe: January to March 2022

Building on the insights gleaned by the Antiracism Equity Committee's fall of one-to-one conversations with key presbytery leaders, this daylong retreat seeks to gather key leadership – Roundtable, Antiracism Equity Committee, Presbytery Staff, and any other key stakeholders collectively identified – to discern a shared vision for what an antiracist PSNE might be like and feel like, as well, as establish aims that will inform the Presbytery's antiracism strategy for a yet to be established timeframe.

The proposed format for this element of the contract is two 2-hour zoom between January and March 2022 and two 2-hour zoom conversations between January and March 2023.

These conversations will be facilitated by two Crossroads consultants.

Four weeks ahead of each conversation Crossroads' consultants will meet with select representatives from each group to ensure we are clear on the path ahead.

1.5 Days In-Person Capacity Building Retreat with Presbytery Staff, Antiracism Equity Committee, and Round Table

Proposed Timeframe: June 2022

The aim of this retreat is to strengthen the leadership of the PSNE's Roundtable, Antiracism Equity Committee, and Presbytery Staff to function as collaborators in moving the presbytery from Stage 2 to Stage 3 / Stage 4 in the continuum. While Roundtable and the Antiracism Equity Committee have distinct roles to play in the collaboration - Roundtable holds the strategy while the Antiracism Equity Committee holds the programmatic and organizing work – it is critically important the two entities as well as staff are aligned in grasping and determining how to intervene in: the determining the intersectional barriers to the shared vision, strategizing around barriers, theological articulation, articulating an action plan that accounts for the intersectional realities (gender, class, sexuality, immigrant status, etc.) of the Presbytery. This retreat also seeks to engage participants in energizing and purpose-filled conversations that awaken their imagination and strategic thinking of presbytery leaders. The retreat will be facilitated by two Crossroads staff.

Caveat: It is hard to determine in October 2021 at what stage in the pandemic we will be in March. Crossroads reserves the right to shift this element of the contract to a virtual format. Crossroads also will require the gathering be held in a space where appropriate distance can be maintained between participants that has appropriate ventilation. Crossroads will also require all participants be vaccinated and/or provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test taken 48-hours before the gathering (laboratory administered, not rapid).

Strategic Coaching (2022-2023)

Roundtable

Once Roundtable's 12-hours of capacity building are completed, the table will have access to 18-hours of strategic coaching and support from two Crossroads' consultants. These hours can be used for evaluative conversation, thought partnership, feedback, and strategic design. These sessions can be pre-scheduled at regular intervals or scheduled as needed with 3-weeks' notice.

Antiracism & Equity Committee

The conveners of the Antiracism & Equity Committee will have access to 18 hours of strategic support - evaluative conversation, thought partnership, feedback of design and program ideas, and strategic coaching – delivered by a Crossroads consultant.

Additionally, two Crossroads consultants will provide 8-hours of direct capacity building to the Antiracism & Equity Committee.

Presbytery-Wide Capacity Building

Proposed Timeframe: June 2022

Given the need to continue to widen the pool of leaders to engage in this work, Crossroads will facilitate three learning series aimed introducing shared language and shared frameworks. The series will be conducted in collaboration with the Presbyteries Antiracism & Equity Committee.

Series 1: What is antiracism and what does it require of us?

Dates of Training: 6 – 8pm ET on Zoom
October 5th, October 19th, November 2nd, November 16th

The aim of this series is to engage and bring along the wider membership of the presbytery. It will be comprised of four-2 hours webinars (15 minutes of centering, 75 minutes of content, 30 minutes of Q&A). Two Crossroads consultants will organize each session around a question:

- What is antiracism and what theological values does it require of Christians?
- Why having a complex framework of racism and how is it linked to white supremacy is crucial to antiracism work?
- Why must antiracism work be intersectional?
- How racism and white supremacy generate covert barriers to antiracism work?

We will collaborate with the Presbytery to offer language interpenetration. This series can be recorded and leased by the Presbytery for up to a year.

Series 2: Becoming a White Co-Conspirator

(Proposed Timeframe: January to May 2023)

Facilitated by two white Crossroads consultants with support from Antiracism & Equity Committee members, the aim of this series to engage and challenge a strategically identified cohort of 25-white leaders (made up of at least 40% cisgender men and 40% cisgender women) to engage in a 9-month community of practice. The objectives of this cohort are:

- Engaging participants in a joyful community of resistance where all are challenged and energized for the sacred for repairing community
- Cultivating individual and collective stakes in dismantling white supremacy and racism
- Exploring the intersections of race and gender, class, sexuality, and ability paying particular attention to the ways these impact the ways white people engage antiracism work
- Building capacity for white individuals to “own” the work of antiracism in the Presbytery theologically
- Engaging practices that enable them as white people to exercise their leadership in this work in accountability to people of color

The series will be comprised of:

- Five - 2 hours learning and exploration sessions to be held monthly
- Four – 2 hours check-in sessions facilitated by a Crossroads consultant and a member of the Antiracism & Equity Committee

Participation in series 1 is a pre-requisite to be considered for this cohort.

Series 3: Building a People of Color Community of Solidarity

(Proposed Timeframe: January to May 2023)

Facilitated by two Crossroads’ consultants who are people of color with support from Antiracism & Equity Committee members, the aim of this series is to engage, cultivate, and nurture a cadre of 20 to 25 strategically selected leaders of color to conspire and collaborate with the Presbytery’s Antiracism & Equity Committee and Roundtable leadership in moving forward the work of antiracist transformation. The objectives of this cohort are:

- Engaging participants in a joyful community of resistance where all are challenged and energized for the sacred for repairing community
- Cultivating individual and collective stake in dismantling white supremacy and racism within the presbytery
- Exploring the intersections of race and gender, class, sexuality, and legal status paying particular attention to the ways these impact the ways people of color engage antiracism work
- Building capacity of people of color to “own” the work of antiracism in the Presbytery theologically
- Engaging practices that enable people of color to exercise their leadership powerfully and in solidarity with each other

The series will be comprised of:

- Five – 2-hours learning and exploration sessions to be held monthly
- Four – 2 hours check-in sessions facilitated by a Crossroads consultant and a member of the Antiracism & Equity Committee

Participation in series 1 is a pre-requisite to be considered for this cohort.

Financial Implications

The total fee for the services outlined above is \$43,240.