



## 7 Step Racial Justice Action Plan

Racial justice and inclusion are critical priorities for the Church of England and our diocese is responding to the call to ensure our parishes, clergy and volunteers represent the diverse communities we serve. As a church, there are steps you can take to stamp out racial discrimination and prejudice. Even just starting with a couple of these steps will move your church community towards racial justice.

### 1. Acknowledge the Racial Injustice Issue

Racial injustice is both systemic and institutional. Whether or not you've experienced it on a personal level, the first step in any racial justice action plan is to acknowledge this fact. There are plenty of resources available which can help explain the current situation in the UK, and in the Church in particular. These resources include:

- [From Lament to Action: Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce Calls for Urgent Changes to Culture of Church of England](#)
- [Black Theology: An Introduction](#)
- [Beyond the Lych gate; a Strategic Diagnostic of Church Culture and Practices that Marginalise and Disenfranchise Black, Asian Minority Ethnic People in the Church of England by Dr. Sanjee Perera](#)
- [Multiply 2022: Race and Culture in the UK Church](#)
- [Guvna B on Racial Justice and the Church](#)

### 2. Take Stock of Where You Stand

One of the hardest steps on the road to racial justice is taking an honest look at ourselves and our churches and seeing what we are currently doing to eradicate injustice.

You may wish to start by considering the racial diversity percentage of your parish. You can then compare this to your church community, as well as your PCC and church leadership team. Is there a disparity between these percentages? If so, it's time to take action!

### 3. Have Honest Conversations About Racial Justice

Part of your role as a church is to facilitate open and honest conversations. In terms of racial justice, it can be a good idea to create a safe space for such conversations, by holding an open forum with respect and understanding that everyone's experiences are different and unique. One person cannot represent a whole community, nor will they want to be singled out as an expert. Make sure everyone's voice is heard and that you allow everyone to go at their own pace. Questions for reflection might include:

- Do you believe racial justice is a priority within your church? If not, why do you think this is?
- How can we reflect God's love more fully, mirroring the early church's inspiring radical love and unity?
- How can you develop a safe environment within your church for everyone, regardless of race, to share their experiences and feelings?
- Are you aware of the issues that impact your GMH/UKME members? These may include white privilege, lack of empathy, microaggressions, mental health and wellbeing
- How can you better engage with racial justice in your church? Suggestions may include intentional representation in your leadership and church rotas, promoting intercultural placements, unconscious bias training, focus outreach, internships, and work experience to attract GMH/UKME candidates and reviewing job descriptions for bias, conversations around race sessions facilitated externally, and collaborating with other minority groups
- What actions can you take within the next year to increase inclusion?
- How can you find out the opinions within your church about racial injustice?

#### **4. Educate Your Parish About Racial Justice**

How much of the historical context do you or your parish know about racial injustice? If you are from a UK majority culture, have you considered what it's like to be a person from GMH/UKME background in the UK today, or the potential damage to their psyche by sustained and systemic racism?

Help your church bridge the knowledge gap by exploring these issues, by holding events, sending out newsletters, or simply sharing information. This could include the resources listed above, or things you come across in your own research.

#### **5. Become Advocates for Racial Equality**

Advocacy is about using your reach and influence to promote a cause. It's also about changing the current structures to set others on the right path. For instance, you could appoint a racial justice champion on your PCC and consider what other structural issues you need to address in your parish, as well as the culture change that needs to follow.

Becoming an advocate for racial equality may also include using your own platforms to explore the issue, such as via social media. You could also encourage your incumbent or lay ministers to preach on the topic of racial equality.

#### **6. Take Practical Action**

One of the final steps towards racial justice in your parish is to take practical action. Create a racial justice plan for your church or parish, thinking about short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals. Your plan should be specific to your needs and consider voices from around the parish.

#### **7. Pray for Racial Justice**

You should encourage sustained individual prayer across your parish on the topic of racial justice, as well as within groups in your church. Perhaps create a list of the various aspects of racial injustice people can pray for on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis.