



ACTIONABLE IDEAS FOR CHURCHES IN SHRINKING THE DIVIDE

SEEK GOD'S GUIDANCE

- Determine God's perspective on the issue of ethnicity
- Ascertain the views within your congregation on ethnic issues to enable you to respond Biblically to their different viewpoints
- Commit to 'stay at the table and in the fray' of shrinking the existing ethnic/racial divide

PREACH ABOUT THE PLEDGE AND THE UNDERLYING ISSUES

- Base message upon the Biblical perspective on the issue of ethnicity
- Declare our common humanness and the truth that we are all a part of one race, the human race
- Acknowledge that racism is, at its core, a spiritual issue
- Emphasize loving across ethnic differences and lines
- Inform your congregation of the clergy's heart as to ethnicity issues
- Admit that human will power and do-good-actions alone are insufficient to fully resolve our ethnicity prejudices and issues by offering a Christ-centered response
- Plan to distribute to your church the cards with The Pledge and its 3 Commitments
- Make godly ethnic relations and prayer a priority within your church

PASTOR-TO-PASTOR RELATIONSHIPS

- Clergy meeting with each other (lunch/coffee) across lines to get to know one another toward building trust, especially clergy of a church is near your own church
- Going out to eat and fellowship as clergy couples of different ethnicities
- Pulpit swaps for pastors
- Pastors meeting, reading and discussing books, e.g., "I Ain't Coming Back" by Dolphus Weary or "Multi-ethnic Conversations" by Mark DeYmaz and Oneya Fennell Okuwobi
- Participate in the General Assemblies and Dialogue Groups of The Pledge Group
- Make intentional and wise staffing decisions for your church

RELATIONSHIP-BASED ACTIONS AMONG CHURCHES ACROSS ETHNIC LINES

- Bathe this endeavor in prayer
- Ask key members of each church of different ethnicities to 'Get to Know One Another Gatherings' and then to work toward the wording of a Joint Statement for the congregations to follow and implement in the season ahead
- Set up discussion groups within your church, especially leaders (of church and business) across ethnic lines
- Establish meaningful Sister Church relationships across ethnic lines

- Involve youth and future generations
- Men's Groups holding joint gatherings
- Women's Groups holding joint gatherings
- Address common problems together, establishing ethnically mixed groups to 'do ministry' locally
- Plan and take mission trips or undertake mission projects together with churches across ethnic lines
- Joint choir or worship team event
- Choir/worship team swaps among churches with or without clergy swaps
- Hold a joint regular worship service at one of the churches; then alternate locales
- Hold a joint service at Thanksgiving or Maundy Thursday or any particular time with other churches of different ethnicities and if meaningful, consider doing so annually
- Neutral site worship service or fellowship
- Congregations of different ethnicities having supper out together and then attending a movie or cultural or athletic event together, possibly with coffee together afterwards to debrief reactions
- Congregational progressive supper between churches of different ethnicities
- Take steps in the community to reflect equality and create a 'level playing field'