

Wisconsin Conference UMC: Discernment Related to Disaffiliation, 2022

Peace to you, Siblings of Christ,

Leaving a church or a denomination is a spiritual matter that requires honest prayer and reflection. The following process is meant to facilitate individual and community discernment regarding decisions to be made regarding paragraph *The Book of Discipline*, 2553, "leaving the United Methodist denomination due to differences of conscience regarding the marriage and ordination of self-avowed, practicing homosexuals." (Henceforth this document will take a "person's first" approach and refer to persons who identify as LBGTQ, i.e., lesbian, bi-sexual, gay, transexual or queer.)

Preparation

What is discernment? In the words of Charles Spurgeon, "*Discernment is not a matter of simply telling the difference between right and wrong; rather it is telling the difference between right and almost right.*" If a decision is clearcut and easy, it doesn't require discernment. When we attempt to follow Christ as a disciple, however, decisions are often challenging. The paths we are to take are not mapped out nor easy to navigate.

When we enter a discernment process, when we attempt to listen to God's voice and follow, we must plan to get dirty. Like Jacob wrestling with the angel, true discernment requires us to grapple with our hopes and our fears, our highest possibilities and our greatest vulnerabilities. It is not simply an academic activity. It encompasses the practical and the theological, the personal and the corporate, the head and the heart. Discernment leads to change, **and** we are the ones whom God is transforming. Whenever we wrestle with God's call for us, we are changed. And in the end, we discover we are grappling with LOVE.

What is the question? What is at stake?

This process is meant for individuals and congregations who are considering departure from the United Methodist Church based upon paragraph 2553. We are not contemplating what it means to be the Church of Jesus Christ nor what resonates or challenges us about being United Methodist. (Both the larger Christian Church and our denomination have aspects that are sure to challenge us.) We are here to consider our stance regarding the impact that gender identities other than heterosexual have on ordination and the marriage within the United Methodist Church. The decision churches are making regarding this issue will shape their identity—how they see themselves and how others will see them for years to come. It will have practical, relational, and spiritual ramifications that cannot all be predicted. Listening for God's voice, listening with our hearts, our minds is a serious and sacred task. Discernment given this issue will require a vulnerability that is seldom expected of us in our faith

communities. Sexuality is one of the most deeply ingrained aspects of our human identity. It is also one of the most intimate and guarded. Many people have not grown up in families where sexuality was talked about. Even today, in a culture that is filled with “sexual content” in facets of media, the ability to have honest, respectful conversations regarding sexuality continues to be limited. Sexual experiences, whether they celebrate or violate who we are, are often kept secret because they are either sacred or filled with shame. While we won’t be discussing sexual experiences; it only stands to reason that reflecting on the issue of homosexuality, marriage and ordination will not be as easy as discussing whether to repave the church parking lot! If these discussions make you uneasy, you are not alone. That is why deep respect, patience and compassion for ourselves and others will be needed.

Exploring questions as individuals and as community: Preparing a Group

God speaks to and through all of creation. The thoughts, feelings, and experiences of each of God’s children has value and is not to be dismissed. Often it is through the inner work of individuals— sorting through divergent thoughts, feelings, and experiences—and then finding one’s voice that community decisions can thoughtfully be made. Thus, this process seeks to respect and encourage the voice, the truth of each individual —not to attempt to convince others but rather to help clarify and honor one’s own wisdom and journey.

Respect for every voice will only happen if we agree to some ground rules:

- An individual will speak only for him or herself. No generalizations. No sharing of other’s stories or opinions. No follow up arguments. (This is discernment, not debate.)
- Curiosity and unknowing is welcome. “I wonder...” or “I just don’t understand” are appropriate stances and do not require responses or explanations. Discernment is often living the questions; not jumping to the closest answer.
- Participants can respond with appreciation, awe, and honor. (It feels risky to enter these conversations and we are to welcome, not judge one another's thoughts.)
- Everyone, not just a few, are to have and give voice to their vantage point. Even if the vantage point is to sit and reflect in silence, individuals are to claim that space, not be ignored.
- Silence...pauses are often sacred and allow room for the Holy to enter the conversation. Don’t rush to fill the silence.
- Listening is important. Listening for the feelings and the wisdom of the one sharing. Listening without intent of rebuttal, but primarily with intent to honor the other person’s truth and secondly become aware of any “quickening” of our own hearts and minds.
- When one leaves the session, you are not to share what you have heard others say. You may process your feelings and thoughts further, but the sharing of others’ thoughts and feelings fall into the category of gossip. Likely the work of discernment will continue in individuals’ lives after a group gathering has ended.

We learn and grow in love as we can hear and embrace our differences. Some of those differences may lie within our own hearts. Meaningful peace in community happens not when we all think the same, but only when we can honor the differences of those around us.

Note to Leaders:

- It is natural to feel some anxiety in these settings. It takes work learning to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. Doing one's own work— recognizing and being compassionate with one's own discomfort both as a person and a leader takes work. The goal, as much as possible, is to be a non-anxious presence within the group.
- Listen not only to words and stories, but for feelings and for meaning. Speak to these.
- Respond with questions (What might help you move closer to understanding this?) Use words that help the person know that they have been heard. ('That sounds very important to you,' or, 'you sound feeling name,' or simply, 'thank you.')
- When you do respond, try not to project your opinion, or views onto the speaker. Respond in love and openness.
- In order to create a space without judgment, rather than "right or wrong" assessments of the input, the personal invitation to identify what "**resonates, where resistance is felt, or the need to reflect and questions that arise**" is provided. Each of these words/ phrases intends to describe an internal response to what is being considered. If something resonates or one feels resistance, that does not make the concept right or wrong, but rather it describes the internal struggle.
- Understand there will be untold stories of participants at the table that will be affecting the conversations. Persons who have been sexually abused, struggle with their own sexual identity, have a loved one who has come out as gay or lesbian, or who have bones to pick with other aspects of the UMC, past or present, may present with significant emotional energy. Try not to give them too much power, or too much time processing, but rather acknowledge their feelings—possibly responding with an observation such as, "your comments seem to have some deep roots." Or "I hear ...(name feeling).... In your statements." Do not invite persons to disclose more than they are comfortable with. These persons may merit some private time for pastoral care and dialogue.
- Many of your groups may be large and discussion may be challenging. Plan to break the group into smaller pods of 4-10, so that everyone will have a chance to speak and be heard. This may also help individuals feel safe to share their feelings and thoughts. Ask an emotionally mature person to facilitate the discussion. (Given the prior points and the delicacy of group facilitation, this may have drawbacks.) Therefore, try to regroup every 20-30 minutes or move about the room overseeing groups and reconvene as necessary.

Session I: Counting the cost – practical questions.

The next few weeks of discernment will invite discussion on many levels. We are going to start with the practical. In Luke (14:25-33) Jesus talks about the need to count the cost when considering discipleship. It thus seems appropriate to consider the potential costs and benefits of leaving the UM denomination--to understand what is really at stake here.

Below are some questions that can start this review process; you are likely to have others. Some of these questions may have quick answers. Some questions may require research. Some questions can only be lived into--their outcomes will only be fully known years from now.

There are many questions, so depending on the size of the group, you may want to break into groups of 4-6 and divide up the questions. After 20 minutes shift and take and discuss a new set of questions. Record answers. In the final 20 minutes reconvene as a group and consolidate answers. Note any follow up research that needs to be done and by whom. Note any questions that the group wants to revisit later.

1. What aspect of *The Book of Discipline* language concerning sexuality, or the response of the Wisconsin Annual Conference to those provisions, leads you to consider disaffiliation?
2. What will our congregation lose and what will be gained if we disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church?
3. List what you would miss about being part of the UMC circuit, district and/or annual conference. Are there programs or services provided by the annual conference that would be missed?
4. What would be the personal and financial costs for our congregation to pursue disaffiliation?
5. Where and how would we discern a future pastor if we no longer have a pastor appointed (assigned) to our congregation and now need to identify and recruit our own pastoral leadership?
6. Is our congregation prepared to go without pastoral leadership for a period of time when we enter into a call process?
7. How would our congregation provide for moving expenses, health insurance, pension, death, and other benefits for a pastor?
8. How would property, liability and other church insurance coverages be obtained?
9. How would our relationship to the UM Foundation change?
10. What changes would likely occur/need to occur to membership, vision, and practical ministry should we leave the denomination? (For example, a change in branding.)
11. How would leaving the denomination change the way we are viewed in the community?
12. What other questions do you have regarding the potential effects of disaffiliation on your congregation?

Session II: Why/how the UMC has made the change it has.

- The Church is the community of followers of Jesus Christ throughout the world. It is made up of various denominations, forms of worship, creeds and organizational formats. The United Methodist Church is governed by conferences and working to open hearts, minds and doors through active engagement in the world. It was founded on the teachings of John Wesley yet amended through the years. It seeks to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The issue is not discerning who the Christian church or the United Methodist Church should be.
- The issue is whether persons who identify as LGBTQ can be ordained and given the privilege of marriage in the United Methodist Church.

The following is an outline of some of the reasons United Methodist clergy and laity have voted to welcome full participation of persons who identify as LGBTQ into ministry and life within the church. The decision has not come without significant grappling. You are invited to read through this outline, based on the Wesleyan Quadrilateral and discuss your feelings and responses after each section. In using the Quadrilateral, scripture is primary, but consider all four aspects before prematurely ending your consideration.

1. Tradition: Historically the UMC has made adjustments to our doctrine and polity when it has discerned that it is not in alignment with God's will.
 - Examples: Stand against slavery, Rights of women to vote, to be ordained, Civil rights movement
 - The church's tendency is to draw the circle of God's love wider
 - Marriage has been viewed as a sacred commitment based in love and mutual respect.
2. Experience: The learnings we have gained via our own and other's lived experiences have influenced the vote.
 - Knowing the mystery and complexity of living in a sexual body
 - Having friends/family who have "come out" as gay/lesbian/bisexual/queer or transgendered; hearing their stories of being aware of their sexual identity as "different" early in life and their stories of being bullied, judged, and living in fear and shame
 - Knowing gifted pastors dedicated to the Gospel of Jesus Christ who have had to deny a part of their identity, live in secrecy or who have left the denomination.
 - Knowing what the pain of being marginalized and shamed feels like (regardless of gender identity) and having empathy and compassion for others and a desire to create change
3. Reason: Using our best thinking and the world's best understanding of the nature of our world has influenced this decision.
 - Science has proven that gender identity is complex and established prior to birth.
 - Scripture is to be interpreted in a way that takes into consideration cultural setting, historical awareness, and overlying themes. (See below for more detail.)
 - All decisions involve gain and loss. What would the church gain and lose in this decision? How does this align with our core values?

4. Scripture:

- Jesus did not speak of sexuality directly; his message was inclusion of those marginalized (as seen by those chosen to be disciples) and the broadness of God's grace and love
- Scriptures that do speak of sexuality and sexual practices refer only to men. They often fall into passages where the church has already categorized other portions as being a complicated product of the writer's culture.
- The key message of the Scriptures and Jesus is one of respect, love and commitment within relationships.

Within you what **resonates**? What feels true to your beliefs? What do you feel yourself **resisting**? What do you want more time to **reflect** upon? What **questions arise** as you hear this? (Place on a white board to honor our need to live these questions.)

III. Stories to help us see a larger picture

- Review the attachment that lists well known individuals. What do they have in common?

When you look at this list, are there any surprises? How would the world be different if these folks had been marginalized so as not able to contribute to our world? (By the way, all identify as LGBTQ.)

- Video of two individuals sharing their stories of grappling with how their faith and their understanding of persons identifying as LGBTQ has grown and changed.

Discuss: Within you and your story, what **resonates** with what you just heard? What do you feel yourself **resisting**? What do you want more time to **reflect** upon? What **questions arise** as you hear this? Place on a white board to honor our need to live these questions.

Have you known anyone who identifies as gay? How has their identity changed your relationship with them? Why?

How has the legislation regarding whether to welcome or limit the rights of LGBTQ persons in the church affected you personally?

What questions would you have if your pastor was gay or lesbian?

If a gay couple, married with a family, came to your church, how would you want to greet them?

How might the church change? Would it?

How is God speaking to you? What is God inviting?

Appendix 1= For questions of scripture, a note on reading or misreading scripture

Appendix 2=The Trust Clause

Appendix 3=A Glossary of Terms

Appendix 1: Reading and Misreading Calls us Deeper:

Of course, we are a product of what we have learned from scripture primarily, but also experience, tradition, and reason—and culture and family—and more than we can name.

Does it help to take a deep look at some scriptures people have used to maintain exclusion of persons who identify as LGBTIA+ from full inclusion in the church?

Let's start with language. There was no word for homosexuality in any ancient language, including the biblical languages, (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek); nor were there any words for heterosexuality or bisexuality. The ancient world had no conception of sexual identity. Strictly speaking, then, there is nothing in the Bible, including the letters of Paul, about same-sex identity or its expression in loving relationships as we know it today.

Same-sex activity is not a prominent topic in any of the biblical writings from the Hebrew scriptures, our Old Testament. Secondly, Paul never specifically calls on these texts for what they say or imply about same-sex activity.

Genesis 19:1-25 is not a story about homosexual behavior in general, and certainly not a story about homosexual acts performed by consenting adults in a committed, loving relationship. It is a story about hospitality, male honor, and violent intent. Had it been carried out, the behavior would in this case, have been same sex rape. We should note that according to the prophets, in Ezekiel 16:49-50, the abominable things attributed to Sodom are pride, gluttony, economic inequality, and indifference to those in need. This was the sin of Sodom.

Clearly, the Levitical rule in Leviticus 18: 22 and 20:13, explicitly and unequivocally condemns male same-sex intercourse. These texts are set within a code that prohibits actions that were regarded as polluting and defiling because they involve the mingling or mixing of kinds that God, from the beginning, ordained to be separate. The rules against having incestuous relationships, sowing two kinds of seed in a field, wearing two kinds of fabrics, and engaging in male same-sex intercourse are all prohibitions of this sort. There is no consideration whether there is consent among adults, victimization, or predation.

The basis for punishment by stoning specifically for adultery is clearly provided in Leviticus (20:10-12) which reads: "If a man commits adultery with another man's wife, even with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and adulteress must be put to death...."

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 calls for stoning a rebellious son at the city gate. In light of the New Testament, we no longer not take our moral compass from the texts that call for stoning in the Hebrew scriptures. In Romans, Paul's sweeping examples of judgment are made on his way toward making the case that no human being will be justified in God's sight, and in Romans 3:23, that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and are now justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

In I Corinthians 5 and 6, Paul discusses various problems of sexual immorality and questions regarding sex and marriage that had been put to him in a letter from Corinth. The specific case of sexual immorality in the church, we should note, involved heterosexual, not homosexual behavior. Paul concludes Christians should not associate with persons guilty of any kind of immorality, sexual or otherwise, in I Cor. 5:9. Paul's instruction to the Corinthians about disciplining errant members of their congregation moves him in Chapter 6:1-11 to comment on the impropriety of Christians taking their disputes to secular judicatories for settlement. Christians have long set this prohibition aside to seek

justice in the courts of their land. Paul's lists of behaviors to avoid are not a teaching on homosexuality as we know it, but an effort to challenge a church towards a holiness from each member that gives credibility to the gospel message.

To summarize, Paul was not using the Hebrew scriptures to teach anything related to sexual identity, or mutually partnered same-sex relationships as we know it today. Jesus said nothing about homosexuality but plenty about religious people in his condemnations of scribes and Pharisees. Paul's comments on same-sex activity appear to be part of a rhetorical strategy for proclaiming every human's need for grace, and how our behavior in Christian community impacts the gospel message.

Perhaps this helps give some context for the consideration of these scriptures.

Appendix 2: The Wesleyan Trust Clause—some background

Wesleyans are covenantal people, and our polity is shaped by the covenantal frame of Luke 10:1-9. We carry no bag, no purse, nothing that keeps us from making relationships of mutual benefit that make the Kingdom known. The locus of our sharing as lay and clergy, householders and itinerants, are where the Kingdom comes near.

The ethic of our covenant is to share for the good of the whole. The three covenants of the UMC are a sharing for the good of the whole mission:

1. apportionment, =financial sharing for the mission
2. appointment, =human gifts shared for the good of the mission

3. trust clause (para. 2501): This dates from the days of John Wesley and the Model Deed, the prototype for the Trust clause. This principle was for more than limiting the pulpits to those approved by John Wesley. The Model Deed which became the Trust Clause was established to: (1) limit the preachers to those approved by John Wesley, (2) establish a freedom of the pulpit to proclaim the gospel despite whatever local objections which may exist, and (3) hold the assets of Preaching Houses in perpetuity so that the assets could always be used for the benefit of the whole mission.

John Wesley's aim was to allow for deep sharing for the good of the whole mission. The Trust Clause has enabled proceeds from preaching houses that were no longer needed to be invested for new ministry elsewhere.

Disaffiliation according to para. 2553 allows for a limited window (ending in 2023) for a limited suspension of the Trust Clause.

Appendix3: Glossary of Terms

This glossary features terms used in the Wisconsin Annual Conference Action Item 25, Bishop's Task Force Vision Statement, and educational materials.

Harm, Marginalized and Grace

Harm: In the context of “do no harm”, harm means repeating the oppression of marginalized people by dominant powers in interpersonal and systemic ways. Harm is systemic damage or injury. The appropriate response to harm is to stop the oppression and repair conditions caused by marginalization. Harm has been done to people of color and the LGBTQIA community (1).

Marginalized: People who have been historically oppressed or brutalized (i.e., assaulted, silenced, dehumanized) emotionally, physically, or culturally; marginalized individuals are on the fringes of society, excluded or isolated; the institutions and norms of society work to further exclude, ignore or silence their voice (1).

Oppression: Exists when one social group, whether knowingly or unconsciously, exploits another social group for its own benefit (2).

Grace: As modeled by Jesus, grace means the offering of actions and responses that allow individuals and communities to more closely reflect God's vision of the world. Grace involves forgiveness, patience and acting to disrupt harm of marginalized people (1).

People of Color, Race, Ethnicity and Culture

People of Color and Minority/Minorities: “People of Color” is often the preferred collective term for referring to nonWhite racial groups in the United States, rather than “minorities.” Racial justice advocates have used the term “people of color” (not to be confused with the pejorative “colored people”) since the late 1970s as an inclusive and unifying framework for addressing racial inequities across different racial groups. While “people of color” can be a politically useful term, it is important whenever possible to identify people by their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience. **Minority/minorities** is a term that has historically referred to nonWhite racial groups, indicating that they were numerically smaller than the dominant White majority. Defining people of color as “minorities” is not recommended because of changing demographics and the ways in which “minority/minorities” reinforces ideas of inferiority and marginalization of a group of people. Defining people by how they self-identify is often preferable and more respectful (3).

Race: A social construct that divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, and ethnic classification, based on the social, economic, and political context of a society at a given period of time (2).

Ethnicity: Is culture with the sociological markers of race and geography (4).

Culture: Is composed of rites, rituals, customs, and habits and is always reinforced with reward and sanction (4).

Sex, Gender and Sexual Orientation

Sex (as assigned at birth or anatomical sex characteristics): Refers to biological characteristics, including internal and external body parts, body chemistry, hormones, and chromosomes (1).

Sexism and Misogyny: **Sexism** is the cultural, institutional, and individual set of beliefs and practices that privilege men, subordinate women, and devalue ways of being that are associated with women (2).

Misogyny is the dislike or hatred of women or girls; includes actions that reinforce sexism by harming

those who oppose an inferior status or prejudice against women or girls, and rewarding those who promote and accept it.

Gender: A social construct used to classify a person as a man, woman, or some other identity; fundamentally different from the sex one is assigned at birth (2).

Gender Identity: A sense of oneself as a woman, man, or neither; refers to how one *feels inside* about who they are, which may or may not correspond with the sex and gender one is assigned at birth (1,2).

Gender Expression: How one expresses or portrays oneself, including dress, hairstyles, language and/or behaviors. Society characterizes these expressions as "masculine," "feminine," or "androgynous." Individuals may embody their gender in multiple ways and use terms beyond these to name their gender expression(s) (1,2).

Agender: Lacking gender, genderless or not caring about gender identity (5).

Bigender: Having two gender identities either simultaneously or switching between the two; exhibiting cultural characteristics of masculine and feminine roles (5).

Cisgender: A gender identity, or performance in a gender role, that society deems to match the person's assigned sex at birth. The prefix cis- means "on this side of" or "not across." A term used to highlight the privilege of people who are not transgender (2).

Genderfluid: Someone who identifies as male, female, and/or nonbinary at different times or circumstances (5).

Genderqueer: Someone who feels that their felt gender does not fit with socially constructed norms for their biological sex; encompasses thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and their gender identity (2,4). The word "queer" used to be used only as a slur to insult people who did not conform to gender norms. However, in recent decades, the word "queer" has been reclaimed and now serves as an umbrella term. For many people, saying, "I'm queer," is the simplest (and least invasive) way to identify as outside the norms of a binary system that does not include everyone (6).

Sexual Orientation: Is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction or non-attraction to other people. Sexual orientation can be fluid and people use a variety of labels to describe their sexual orientation (2). This term can erroneously imply that it's all about sex acts; but orientation actually happens within the heart, e.g., who a person falls in love with, or wants to make a home/family with. Also, distinctions between romantic attraction and sexual attraction exist within orientation (1,6).

Heterosexuality: A sexual orientation in which a person feels physically and emotionally attracted to people of a gender other than their own (2).

LGBTQIA+: An abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual as well as others who no label completely describe (1).

L—Lesbian: a woman who is sexually attracted to women.

G—Gay: a man who is sexually attracted to men.

B—Bisexual: a person who is sexually attracted to both men and woman.

T—Transgender: Someone whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.

Q—Queer or Questioning: someone whose identity does not conform to dominant norms.

I—Intersex: Someone born with physical anatomy that does not fit the male/female gender binary.

A—Asexual: Someone who does not experience sexual attraction.

+ (Plus)—No labels can fully describe all people.

About Phobias

Phobia: In mental and emotional wellness, a phobia is a pronounced and persistent fear that is excessive in proportion to the actual threat or danger the situation presents. Historically, this term has been used inaccurately to refer to systems of oppression. Some professionals are intentionally moving away from using terms such as "transphobic," and "homophobic," because this language could inaccurately describe systems of oppression as irrational fears, and could be disrespectful to the experiences of some people (2).

Homophobia (also Heterosexism): Discrimination against all sexual orientations other than heterosexual; image of God is restricted to heterosexual persons (7). The assumption that all people are or should be heterosexual. **Heterosexism** excludes the needs, concerns, and life experiences of LGBTQIA people and gives advantages to heterosexual people. Heterosexism is often a subtle form of oppression, which reinforces realities of silence and exclusion experienced by marginalized people (2).

Transphobia (also Cissexism/Genderism): Is the belief that there are, and should be, only two genders and that one's gender or most aspects of it is inevitably tied to the assigned sex at birth. In a genderist/cissexist construct, cisgender people are the dominant group and trans / gender non-conforming people are the oppressed/target group (2).

Xenophobia: A culturally based fear of outsiders. Xenophobia has often been associated with the hostile reception given to those who immigrate into societies and communities (8).

About Racism, Antiracism and Systemic Racism

Racism: A marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities (9); the systemic exertion of power by one group over another based on race (3); racism is expressed as white supremacy (5), a form of racism centered upon the belief that White people are superior to people of other racial backgrounds and that Whites should politically, economically, and socially dominate nonWhites (3).

Racist policy: Any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups (9).

Antiracist policy: Any measure that produces or sustains racial equity between racial groups (9).

Policy: Written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people. There is no such thing as a nonracist or race-neutral policy. Every policy in every institution in every community in every nation is producing or sustaining either racial inequity or equity between racial groups. Policies are either racist or antiracist (9).

Antiracist idea: Any idea that suggests the racial groups are equals in all their apparent differences (9).

Racist Idea: Any idea that suggests one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way. Racist ideas argue that the inferiorities and superiorities of racial groups explain racial inequities in society (9).

Systemic Racism (also known as Institutional Racism, and Structural Racism): Refers specifically to a form of racism embedded within institutional policies and practices that create different outcomes for different racial groups. While the policy or practice does not mention any racial group, the outcomes create advantages for Whites and oppress and disadvantage groups classified as nonWhite (10). Also, these terms describe "racist policies" (9). "Racist policy" is a more tangible and exacting term, and is more likely to be immediately understood by people, including its victims. Also, "racist policy" says exactly what the problem is and where the problem is (9).

Racist and Antiracist: Racist is someone who supports a racist policy through their actions or inaction or expression of a racist idea; whereas an **antiracist** is someone who supports antiracist policy through their actions or expression of an antiracist idea (9).

Intersectionality

Intersectionality: The places and ways in a person’s life in which different parts of their identities connect and overlap to create who they fully are and potentially how they behave and experience the world. In the context of social justice, intersectionality focuses on our social identities such as race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, citizenship, nationality, age and other characteristics (11). The term was coined by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980s to describe the ways multiple systems of oppression interact in the lives of marginalized people and allows us to analyze social problems more fully, shape more effective interventions, and promote more inclusive advocacy amongst communities (2).

Equity, Inclusion and Justice

Equity: Means fairness and justice and focuses on outcomes that are most appropriate for a given group, recognizing different challenges, needs, and histories. Equity is not equality, or “same treatment,” which does not take differing needs or disparate outcomes into account. Systemic equity involves a robust system and dynamic process consciously designed to create, support and sustain social justice (3).

Inclusion: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people (10).

Racial justice: The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice is not only the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures (12).

Social Justice: Access to resources that enhance one’s chances of getting what one needs or influencing others in order to lead a safe, productive, fulfilling life (8).

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“To love, my brothers and sisters, does not mean we have to agree.
 But maybe agreeing to love is the greatest agreement. And the only
 one that ultimately matters, because it makes a future possible.”
 —Michael B. Curry