



P
H
A
S
E

1

P
H
A
S
E

2

P
H
A
S
E

3

P
H
A
S
E

4

The Journey of Becoming an Anti-Racist Congregation

Recognizing that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is an Anti-Racist and Pro-Reconciling Church while continually becoming more faithful to our identity, this certification process embraces the language of **journey** rather than completion. Certification is not an endpoint but a covenantal commitment to ongoing spiritual formation, congregational transformation, and public witness.

Each phase represents a deeper expression of discipleship and accountability as congregations grow in their capacity to embody the reconciling ministry of Jesus Christ.

Phase One: Commitment — Joining the Journey

Congregations publicly affirm their desire to become an Anti-Racist and Pro-Reconciling congregation by making a covenantal commitment to engage the certification process. This phase establishes leadership support, congregational readiness, and an intentional posture of learning, humility, and accountability.

Phase Two: Formation — Learning for the Journey

Congregations engage in theological reflection, formal anti-racism education, historical truth-telling, and self-examination. Members deepen their understanding of racism as both a spiritual and systemic reality while cultivating the biblical and theological foundations for reconciliation and justice.

Phase Three: Transformation — Building Relationships for the Journey

Congregations move beyond learning into faithful practice by strengthening relationships across differences, examining congregational policies and culture, partnering with diverse communities, and embodying reconciliation through shared ministry and institutional change.

Phase Four: Immersion — Living the Journey

Congregations fully integrate anti-racism and pro-reconciliation into every aspect of congregational life, including worship, leadership, mission, governance, stewardship, and community engagement. Certification marks not the completion of the journey but a renewed covenant to continue growing, learning, and responding to God's call. This phase concludes with recommitment, recognizing that the journey of becoming is lifelong for both congregations and the Church.

Why Becoming an Anti-Racist Congregation Process (BARC)?

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) acknowledges its identity as a Pro-Reconciling and Anti-Racist Church. We affirm that racism is not only a societal problem—it is a **spiritual and theological dilemma** that separates us from God and from one another. It distorts our shared humanity, particularly as it is woven into institutions meant to protect dignity and provide access to God's abundance—even the institution that is the Church.

Reconciliation Ministry equips the Church to heal and repair the brokenness caused by institutional and systemic racism by proclaiming the truth of the Gospel: that **God's love makes no preference based on racialized identities or nation of origin**. We collaborate and connect our ministry partners to realize God's vision of justice, love, and peace through the **reconciling power of Jesus Christ**—one where all are welcomed, valued, and free.

It is for this reason that **Becoming an Anti-Racist Congregation (BARC)** process was developed. According to the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), "congregations constitute the primary expression of the community of faith within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)." The Design goes on to affirm that through the congregational expression of the Church, that faith is nurtured and Christ's grace is magnified.

Grounded in our confession that **"We rejoice in God, maker of heaven and earth, and in God's covenant of love which binds us to God and one another,"** this certification process/journey invites congregations to live more fully into the covenantal relationships that define our faith.

THE PROCESS

Phase 1 — Commitment: Joining the Journey — An Invitation to Covenant

What does this look like?

A congregation begins the journey by naming its theological and congregational commitment to becoming an anti-racist and pro-reconciling community. This may include adopting a congregational statement, engaging the congregation in conversation about the commitment, identifying leadership responsible for moving the work forward, and publicly affirming that anti-racism is part of the congregation's Christian witness.

Phase I asks: *Are we willing to begin?*

An example of a congregational commitment:

As members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), we are a people of the Table. At the table of the Lord, we welcome all, as Christ has welcomed us. Because we believe that all people are created in God's divine image, we affirm that racism, white supremacy, and systemic oppression are sins that directly oppose God's desire for the human family.

We commit ourselves to the ongoing work of examining our beliefs, practices, relationships, and structures so that our congregation may more fully embody God's reconciling love and become an anti-racist and pro-reconciling community.

A TOOL for your congregation:

[Commitment & Interest Action Card](#)

Use the action card to begin identifying the people, relationships, and organizational connections that will help your congregation move from commitment into action. The existing card already asks congregations to consider what relationships are needed to advance their racial-justice work and provides an opportunity to request connection with a cohort of anti-racist congregations.

Your NEXT STEP:

Gather your congregation's leadership and begin a conversation: What would it mean for us to publicly commit ourselves to becoming an anti-racist congregation?

Phase Two: Formation — Learning for the Journey

What does this look like?

Congregations engage in reflection that is undergirded by what we know and believe about God. They participate in formal anti-racism education, historical truth-telling, and self-examination. Members deepen their understanding of racism as both a spiritual and systemic reality while cultivating the biblical and theological foundations for reconciliation and justice.

Phase 2 asks: ***What do we need to learn and unlearn?***

A TOOL for your congregation:

Something To Read; To Watch; To Listen To; To Follow/Connect Resources for Congregational Learning:

See this list from the Upper Midwest Region and First Christian Church Minneapolis:

<https://fccminneapolis.org/resources/resources-issues-of-racial-inequality-and-white-supremacy/>

Your NEXT STEP:

Have the staff and leadership of the church go through an anti-racism training together (in person or virtual). As well, conduct a book study for the church to do together.

Discern the voices of color the church needs to be learning from and connecting with. Request and ½ day to full day education workshop from Reconciliation Ministry or Your Region. Complete this request form: www.reconciliationministry.org/training

Phase Three: Transformation — Building Relationships for the Journey

What does this look like?

Congregations move beyond learning into faithful practice by strengthening relationships across differences, examining congregational policies and culture, partnering with diverse communities, and embodying reconciliation through shared ministry and institutional change.

Phase 3 asks: *How are our relationships and practices changing?*

A TOOL for your congregation:

St. Andrews Christian Church's Local Racial Justice Partners and Activities:

https://760703eae30ffb32f40d-55c3f7b62f2ebab174c8182b1861afda.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/r/0e13631340_1642789881_racism-in-kansas-city-flyer-wupdate.pdf

Your NEXT STEP(S):

Connect/join with local organization committed to anti-racism to see what local efforts are being done to further this work.

Form a relationship that is on-going with a church of color (on-going begins to create trust).

Discern what boards/organizations the church needs to support, be active with, or learn more about to be a more invested church in the local efforts of anti-racism.

Phase Four: Immersion — Living the Journey

What does this look like?

Congregations fully integrate anti-racism and pro-reconciliation into every aspect of congregational life, including worship, leadership, mission, governance, stewardship, and community engagement.

Certification marks not the completion of the journey but a renewed covenant to continue growing, learning, and responding to God's call. This phase concludes with recommitment, recognizing that the journey of becoming is lifelong for both congregations and the Church.

Phase 4 asks: *How is this becoming a way of life—and how will we continue the journey?*

A TOOL for your congregation:

<https://www.fccorange.com/sermons> – “**Committed to Non-Violence**” (Sermon preached March 26, 2026) and/or “Confronting Racism” (Sermon from November 6, 2023.)

Demonstrate your commitment to an anti-racist identity in your sermons, group study, and worship planning. Listen here the sermon from Pastor Dayna Kinkade, [First Christian Church Orange, CA](#)

Your NEXT STEP(S):

Provide mentoring and wisdom to congregations entering the journey.

Consider ways for the church to embed anti-racism work in the DNA of the church's life that is beyond an event or program and becomes part of the church's regular expression of itself.

Commit to at least one anti-racism issue the church can support on a regular basis.



Phase 3 - Relationship Building for the Journey

Connect/join with local organization committed to anti-racism to see what local efforts are being done to further this work.

Participate in an anti-racist demonstration or effort for change in the local community.

Form a relationship that is on-going with a church of color (on-going begins to create trust).

Discern what boards/organizations the church needs to support, be active with, or learn more about to be a more invested church in the local efforts of anti-racism.

Form White Caucus groups to keep the dialogue and efforts of anti-racism consistent within the membership of the church.



Phase 4 -Immersion/Re-Commitment

Commit to on-going participation in local/national rallies/demonstrations to support people of color and the work of anti-racism.

Commit to a regular regimen of education on anti-racism

Be open to a person of color in the hiring process for the church staff.

Consider ways for the church to embed anti-racism work in the DNA of the church's life that is beyond an event or program and becomes part of the church's regular expression of itself.

Commit to at least one anti-racism issue the church can support on a regular basis

Ensure that the work of anti-racism is expanded to leadership by church members and beyond staff.

