

Racism HARMs the body of Christ

You are part of the body of Christ. No matter your skin color, you are harmed by racism. If you are white, racism gives you advantages called white privilege.

Make a bracelet to learn how racism and white privilege affect you

Directions

Choose any skin tone bead and string it on your bracelet as you think about whether each of the statements at the right is true or false for you. Your bracelet will have 14 skin tone and one BeadforLife beads (one for each statement). Please take only one BeadforLife so there are enough for everyone.

If you are white, wear your bracelet to help you become aware of the privileges you receive because of your race and the oppressions others face because of their race. Explain to other people what your bracelet means.

If you are a Racial/Ethnic person, wear your bracelet to remind you of your strength as you live well in an unjust society.

Racism can't be overcome until white people become aware of their privileges and decide to equalize opportunities.

Some of these statements may be new concepts for you. This is part of what gives racism its power to harm us as a body of Christ. If you struggle with any of these statements, consider taking advantage of the on-site prayer team here in Columbus or e-mail peace advocate Susan Mark Landis at SusanML@MennoniteUSA.org.

Definitions

Racial/Ethnic is the term chosen by Mennonites who are not white to describe themselves.

Racism is the systemic combination of power and prejudice.

White privilege is the accumulation of unearned benefits that white people receive from society, even though they are usually unaware.

Statements to consider

1. When I consult professionals, I meet role models who look like I do.
2. I was not taught about racial profiling for my own daily physical protection.
3. I can walk into a Mennonite conference and expect most people to look like me and speak my language.
4. I am unaware of the Indigenous People who once inhabited the land where I live.
5. The color of my skin gives me access to power.
6. My experience proves that racism is still a significant obstacle for Racial/Ethnic people in the United States.
7. Church-sponsored service projects usually involve white people "serving" Racial/Ethnic people.
8. My ancestors came to this country by choice.
9. I feel hindered by my race when I try to understand how people of other races experience life.
10. People have never asked me to speak for my entire race.
11. In most of the images I've seen, God and Jesus look like me.
12. I have benefited from intergenerational wealth that was accumulated as a result of genocide, stolen land, slavery and military conquest.
13. The "color" of my race is associated with purity, angels, cleanliness, right answers.
14. People of my race have access to good public schools and the tools needed to be successful in the United States.
15. I find it difficult to create authentic relationships across race lines, but with the grace of God, I am learning. Take a BeadforLife to express the colorful community of races God intends.

Bead notes:

Fast-growing Korean boxwood, a cultivated wood, was used to make the lightweight, non-toxic, natural-color beads.

BeadforLife creates sustainable opportunities for Ugandan women to lift their families out of extreme poverty by connecting people worldwide in a circle of exchange that enriches everyone.

