

What we Learned about Race from the Little Rock Congregations Study

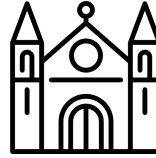
Racial Division is Major Problem

78% of congregation members said the Little Rock has a problem with racial division

88% of clergy said the Little Rock has a problem with racial division

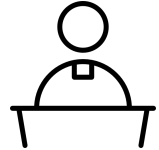
4th race relations was the 4th most important issue in Little Rock

But there is Reason for Hope



Race relations is the number one issue people want to see their place of worship engaged in helping to solve

The vast majority of clergy (64%) believe race relations will get better-- and they are in a position to help make that happen.



We asked African-American Pastors in Little Rock about race, collaboration, and their experiences. This is what we learned:



1

They share a concern over racial divisions.

"...there has to be a deliberate approach to break[ing] down those walls ... especially the traditional Black churches with the traditional White churches."

"unity is a fundamental Christian value ... we are terrible at it ...one of the many black eyes on the public face of Christianity...the way that racial and socioeconomic things separate us."

2

They face challenges with collaboration.

There is a long history of "taking care of our own" rooted in experiences with segregation and discrimination.

Sometimes experiencing exclusion: "if you are not part of that church or someone at that church, you probably are not going to know what they are doing."

3

They are seeking to engage with both the past and the present.

"We recognize that race ... all injustice, was a long-standing kind of scar"

"The focus of the black community ... faith ... pushes us towards ... equality ... economic security ... social concerns"

Key Community Questions



How can we encourage dialogue between clergy and congregants across racial lines?

What communication practices encourage working together towards common goals?

How can we listen and learn from our history while working together for a better future?



Little Rock Congregations Study



Learn More about the Research and our Methods
Visit our website: research.ualr.edu/lrcs
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