

Attendance Rolls coming soon!

**Special Called Presbytery Assembly – March 1-2, 2024
In Person at Wellshire Presbyterian Church, Denver, CO
Theme - Shade Trees**

Special Called Assembly Rationale from January 23, 2024 Omnibus.

Special Called Presbytery Assembly March 1-2, 2024 for the purposes of anti-racism training with Shade Trees.

Background: Denver Presbytery voted and affirmed that Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and belonging was the primary focus for Assemblies for 2024. The Visionary Leadership Commission affirmed that we would be focusing on the focus of Matthew 25 of Dismantling Structural Racism. As we embrace the intention of strengthening our relationships and deepening our conversations on race and racism, the Visionary Leadership Commission believes the essential business of the presbytery is to create a fundamental baseline for healthy dialogue. With this called assembly, we will begin the uncover, recovery, and discovery process through the professional facilitation of Shade Trees. Participation will fulfill the newly GA-required anti-racism training for every Minister of Word and Sacrament.

March 1, 2024

Call to Order and Establishment of a Quorum: The meeting came to order at 4:00PM. by Moderator Pat Queen. A quorum was established by gretchen Sausville.

Opening Prayer | Dee Cooper

Introducing Shade Trees | Dee Cooper

Dee introduced Rev. Dr. Greg Ellison and his Shade Trees team to the Assembly.

Shade Trees part 1.

Ecosystem

A community of organisms whose livelihood is intricately linked to the wellness of their connected neighbors.

UNCOVER | Excavation of what is unseen or unspoken

- We were greeted and in turn, greeted one another with the words “it is good to see you.” A vital part of community building ,inclusion, and belonging is that people are seen and heard.
- We reviewed fears that keep us from seeing others or being seen by others, and distract us from engaging in authentic connections in difficult conversations.
- We explored the deep uncovering by reflecting on the dirt of our world, in our historical lives, in our perceptions and origins.

- We shared with each other what people see of us, our public roles and what we know about ourselves that very few see. We celebrated what God sees in us. Through sharing these particularly vulnerable places, we opened our hearts to seeing one another and how we cultivate empathy and connection with one another.
- We experienced a deepening capacity to trust one another in our sharing of ourselves.
- We explored how words have power and together we created definitions for racism at each of our 17 tables.

Recess | Pat Queen

Pat declared at 7:00PM the Special Called Assembly was in recess until 9:00AM Saturday March 2, 2024.

March 2, 2024

Reconvene | Pat Queen

Pat reconvened the Special Called Assembly at 9:00AM. A Quorum was re-established by gretchen Sausville

Shade Trees part 2.

RECOVER | space to revisit and revive

- A small task force worked through lunch to create a shared definition that was celebrated as an affirmation of the whole.....Racism is a set of perpetuated behaviors that systemically devalues, excludes, traumatizes, and dehumanizes people of one group to maintain the power, privilege and wealth of another group.
- We explored the vibrancy and qualities of water and its impact within ourselves and in our world and how our baptismal vows impact our anti racism work.

Break for Lunch at noon.

Shade Trees part 3.

DISCOVERY | the trees of life

- We explored what seeds we can plant to impact our work not just for us but for generations upon generations in order to bring lasting change.
- We drew and shared our tree of life stories, and realized that to tell a counter story (against racism) we have to know our own story first.
- We explored, listened, discussed, and shared what specific things God is calling each of us to realize that we need to break free from the sin of racism and embrace the call of becoming.

- We witnessed and experienced the profound impact of watching someone be invisible and the harm that can be caused, and the shift to being seen.
- We celebrated that we can bring change in 3 feet of our personhood, and to not get overwhelmed in the journey ahead we go together.

Closing Summary | Dee Cooper

Dee shared about where we go from here and what can be next in our work with Anti-Racism and being a Matthew 25 Presbytery. Participants in the two days program fulfilled the Book of Order anti-racism training requirement.

Adjournment and Benediction | Pat Queen

Pat made a motion to adjourn and Dee Cooper gave the benediction at 4:00PM

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. gretchen N. Sausville, Stated Clerk