

Peace Lutheran Church

Anti-Racism Toolkit

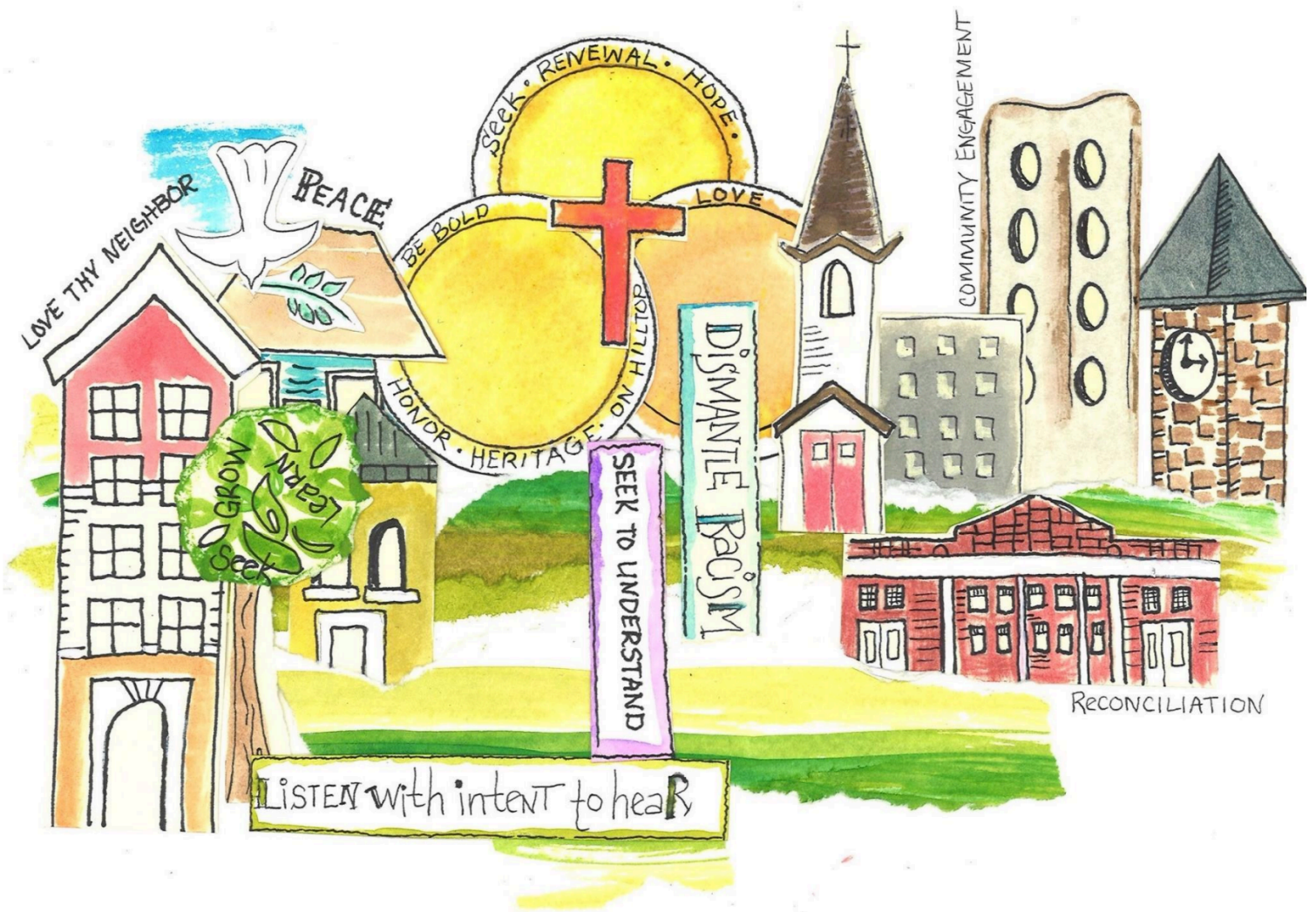


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What is Equity?

Equity gives all people fair access, treatment and opportunities, while simultaneously addressing and dismantling the injustices and barriers that exist for people who are historically and systemically oppressed. Racial equity is when race is no longer a predictor of life outcomes and outcomes for all people are improved.

At Peace Lutheran Church (PLC), we lead our work with racial equity so that all members have a foundational understanding of how racial oppression is intertwined in every system, as well as the ways it intersects with all other forms of oppression.

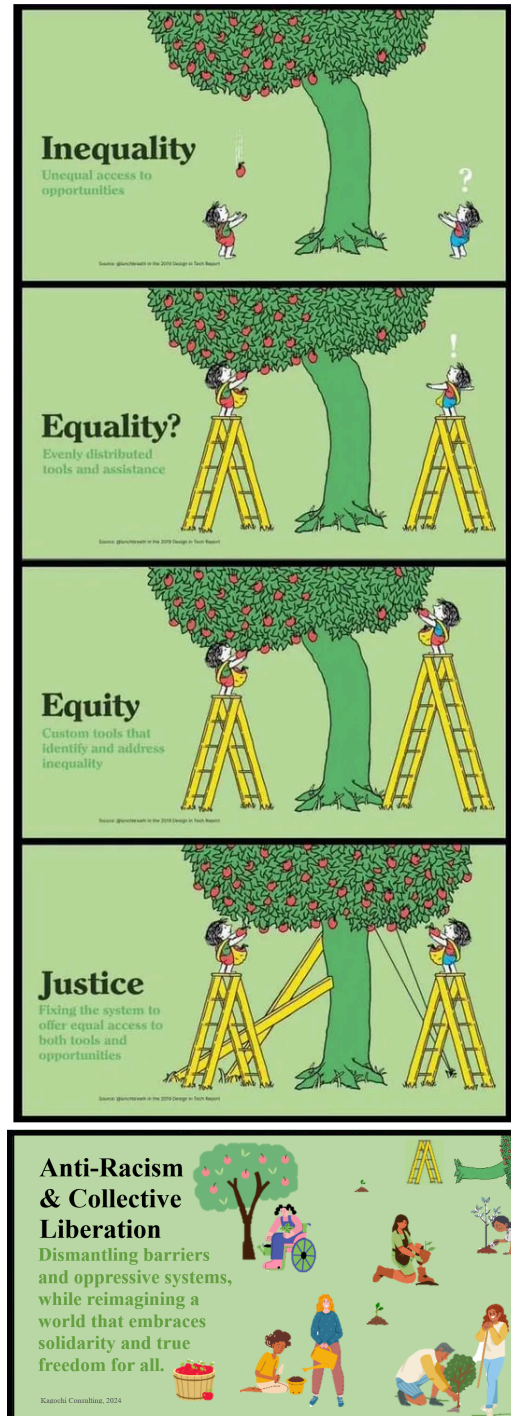
PLC has long sought to be a community that is “reconciled and just” while also being a “diverse community of faith where all are welcome.” As followers of Jesus, we believe that God created all people in God’s image (Genesis 1:27), Jesus breaks down all dividing walls (Ephesians 2:14), and the Holy Spirit connects and unites all people. The whole church looks forward to God’s future when people will be gathered from all cultures and peoples in the reign of God (Revelation 7).*

This church names racism (individual and systemic) as sin. We affirm that the diversity of cultures is a God-given gift, and we seek to extend God’s love to all our neighbors. We believe Jesus calls us to address and dismantle racism in individuals, communities, systems, and structures, joining God in bringing about justice for the oppressed and transformation of all society (Luke 4).*

The equity/justice frame to the right comes close to what we describe and hope to achieve with this anti-racism toolkit. However, it is missing a huge part of this work – dismantling and removing barriers and systems of oppression. Thus the anti-racism workgroup created a 5th image that better encapsulates how equity, anti-racism and liberation are intertwined.

Improving equity at the church level will allow our community to embrace the kind of justice and fairness that Christ calls us to be stewards of, while institutionalizing concrete and specific strategies that advance our anti-racism work.

*Most of this language is from the Future Directions Commitment and Recommendations document.



Introduction to the Anti-Racism Toolkit

Our commitment to understand, address, and dismantle racism should be integrated into all that we say and do as people seeking to follow Jesus in our community and context. This commitment requires that our church take tangible steps forward. The following Peace Lutheran Church anti-racism toolkit lays out a guide to support the decision making, the faith journeys, the development and implementation of policies, the community engagement, and the overall ministry of the congregation through the lens of racial equity and justice. The aim of this toolkit is to ensure that everyone – no matter their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, location, gender identity, socioeconomic status, etc. – has access to equitable outcomes and benefits within the church and the larger community.*

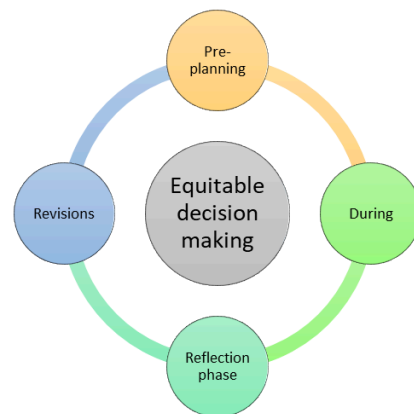
This anti-racism toolkit includes four different equity lenses so that every staff member, every committee member, and every church member can access this toolkit in ways that are meaningful and relevant to them. This toolkit concludes with a template for action planning. The four equity lenses included are:

1. Decision making screen for general church use;
2. Anti-racism guide to support faith education for all ages;
3. Racial equity lens for budgetary and financial decision making; and
4. Recruitment and hiring equity lens.

You can use this tool...

- to create a culturally responsive curriculum for all people;
- during the recruitment and hiring process to decrease bias;
- to collectively address systemic barriers and inequities within the church and the larger community;
- to make informed decisions that increase positive outcomes for all people, especially those who are historically and systemically marginalized;
- to develop equitable policies and practices;
- when building trust and strengthening our relationship with our neighbors;
- to meaningfully create a budget that reduces inequities and is reflective of the church's mission, vision and values;
- and so much more!

These equity lenses are designed to be used at the beginning of your decision making, and are certainly not for one-time use. While it is ideal to start before, we acknowledge that sometimes that's not the case. It's never too late to start including an equity lens into your current process. These equity lenses are tools meant to guide and inform the process so that your outcomes are in alignment with PLC's larger anti-racism framework.



**Most of this language is from the Future Directions Commitment and Recommendations document.*

Using an Equity Lens: a Step-by-Step Guide

The purpose of an equity lens is to be intentional, inclusive, and culturally responsive in individual and church-wide decision making. The four lenses in this toolkit include a series of statements and rating scales that will guide any person or group through their decision-making process. Using an equity lens is both a process and a practice. This means it does take time, collaboration and patience. It requires every person to broaden their perspectives and reimagine the way they approach decisions.

Over time, using an equity lens will become second nature. Below is a step-by-step guide to help get you started.

1. Identify the issue, policy, decision, or program that needs to be addressed before starting the process.
2. Determine whether this process is a collaborative or individual effort. Who do you need to include in this whole process? How will you combat “groupthink?” How will you make sure that every participating perspective is heard?
3. Define your goal(s) and/or desired outcome for applying an equity lens to your decision making/policy/issue/program.
4. Choose an equity lens that is appropriate for this process. The anti-racism decision making screen is an ideal starting point. As a reminder, here are the four different equity lenses you can access based on your specific needs:
 - a. Decision making screen for general church use;
 - b. Anti-racism guide to support faith education for all ages;
 - c. Racial equity lens for budgetary and financial decision making; and
 - d. Recruitment and hiring equity lens.
5. Acknowledge the potential barriers, biases and assumptions you may have as you walk into this process. Think about how these may impact your ability to be open-minded and authentic during this process.
6. Consider using the following rating scale to hold yourself accountable throughout this process and track your progress. Each of the lenses in this toolkit include a series of statements with a rating scale. A score for each statement is determined by your ability to provide evidence, or supporting data, to each of the equity lenses’ statements. A lack of evidence does not automatically mean that no work has been conducted; rather, it can simply mean that the church needs to begin documenting their work.

The main functions of this rating scale are to determine a starting place and to develop concrete steps to advancing the church’s anti-racism initiative. Depending on how you score for a particular statement, you will have to revisit, determine a course of action, or pivot. This is a normal part of learning more equitable and inclusive decision-making practices.

The final scores will be utilized for brainstorming and determining next steps.

The rating scale is attached below. Upon starting your chosen equity lens, circle your score for each statement based on evidence that has been gathered.

0	Not yet thinking about this.
1	Thinking about this.
2	We are considering this in our work.
3	We have an initial plan underway.
4	We have begun implementing this piece into the work.
5	This is integrated across the church and all the work we do.

7. Continuously reflect and evaluate whether this process is helping you reach your goal(s). If it isn't, consider pivoting. Here are some ways to pivot:
 - a. Select a different equity lens that is more suited to your needs.
 - b. Expand your group to include more diverse voices and perspectives.
 - c. Collect more information, data or context to support the process.
8. Identify what kind of communications plan you will utilize to inform the larger church community and gather feedback about this process and the outcomes stemming from it.
9. Strategize your next steps based on what you uncover after applying the equity lens to your issue, decision, policy, or program. The end of this toolkit includes a template for brainstorming next steps. The template will require decision makers to know their final scores (based on the rating scale) before completing it.

The four equity lenses are outlined in these pages:

- ❖ Decision making screen for general church use.....Pages 7-8
- ❖ Anti-racism guide to support faith education for all ages.....Pages 9-10
- ❖ Racial equity lens for budgetary and financial decision making.....Page 11-12
- ❖ Recruitment and hiring equity lens.....Page 13-15

Peace Lutheran Church Anti-Racism Decision Making Screen

This anti-racism decision making screen is based on the church’s shared values around courage, diversity, community and justice. Each value is attached to specific scripture to help guide the process. This decision making screen is intended for general use – meaning it can be applied toward any decision, policy, or program – by any PLC church member. Utilizing this screen will help ensure that any proposed changes and decisions are aligned with Peace Lutheran Church values.

To accurately rate each statement, you must be able to provide evidence – for example, a detailed document, data points, or even meeting notes. Please refer to the “Using an Equity Lens: a Step-by-Step Guide” on page 5 for further details on how to get started.

COURAGE: <i>“Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” – Joshua 1:9</i>	
1. We (council, staff, etc.) have an understanding of how to model accountability and transparency during this process.	
2. This process, policy and/or decision will create opportunities for the church to enact transformative change.	
3. We are prepared to respond to God’s call with boldness, creativity and honesty.	

DIVERSITY: <i>“For as in one body we have many members, and not all members have the same function so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of one another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us.” – Romans 12:4-6</i>	
4. We have considered the different ways this decision could impact our community, especially historically and systemically marginalized congregants and neighbors, and we are diligently working to reduce negative impact.	
5. Considering factors like race, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, location, etc., we have guidelines to ensure those who are historically and systemically marginalized are not excluded from this whole process.	
6. We have mapped out the ways the decision or work we are considering will welcome, honor and respect all people, especially those who are from historically and systemically marginalized communities.	

COMMUNITY: <i>“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience.” – Colossians 3:12</i>	
7. The people most impacted are meaningfully included in discussions and decisions.	
8. Principles and feelings of belonging and inclusion are at the foundation of this decision and work.	
9. We have specific steps that we (and the larger church) will take to address impacts, including unintended consequences.	

JUSTICE: <i>“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” – Micah 6:8</i>	
10. We have come to learn and understand the root causes and factors creating these inequities within the church and the larger community.	
11. This decision, work, program, or policy will promote changes within the church that lessen the impacts of structural racism and other systems of oppression in our community.	
12. We have acknowledged and developed concrete steps to actively challenge and mitigate power imbalances during and after this whole process.	
13. We have a shared understanding of how this work or decision will allow us to advocate for the dignity of all people (i.e. addressing basic needs, empowerment through education, working toward a socially just world, etc.).	

Rating: If any of the statements above received a score of 0, 1, or 2, it is highly recommended to address those gaps as part of next steps action planning. A low score merits a deeper dive into how the church structure can pivot and adapt to ensure a more equitable, accessible and just Peace Lutheran Church community. Utilize the action planning brainstorming template on page 13 as a starting point.

Peace Lutheran Church Faith Formation Anti-Racism Guide


Peace Lutheran Church is a welcoming and inclusive community with many ways to connect and live out our faith together. There are a multitude of opportunities to get involved in the congregation such as spiritual formation, worship and music, education hours, and outreach and community-centered ministries. It is important for the faith formation and education ministries to be culturally responsive, representative of the community, and aligned with church values. The below faith formation anti-racism guide, adapted from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, is a tool to support the development of curriculum, implementation of these programs, and the many caring adults and program participants in our church community.




Faith formation curriculum and educational programs should offer participants topics and materials that contain mirrors, windows and doors: “mirrors that affirm and celebrate their own identities and cultures, windows that help them learn about and understand others, and doorways that present them with opportunities to be agents of change.”* The mirrors, windows and doors guide below can ensure that PLC’s faith formation is aligned with the church’s anti-racism framework.

To accurately rate each statement, you must be able to provide evidence – for example, a detailed document, data points, or even meeting notes. Please refer to the “Using an Equity Lens: a Step-by-Step Guide” on page 5 for further details on how to get started.

MIRRORS	
1. Curriculum and program materials are reflective of the church’s diverse community.	
2. Participants are able to make direct connections from the stories shared to their own personal and cultural experiences.	
3. Curriculum and program materials affirm and celebrate participants’ diverse identities.	

WINDOWS	
4. The curriculum encourages and challenges participants to bear witness to experiences and narratives different from their own.	
5. The educational programs and curriculum center empathy, compassion and critical thinking skills.	

6. The educational programs and curriculum challenge participants to analyze their own worldviews as they learn about the intersection of systems and oppression.	
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DOORS	
7. The educational programs help participants meaningfully engage with the larger communities (i.e. advocacy, activism, etc.)	
8. The educational programs empower participants to challenge inequities and become agents of change.	
9. Participants are able to define the ways they can elevate, advocate for, and center communities that have been historically and systematically oppressed.	

Rating: If any of the statements above received a score of 0, 1, or 2, it is highly recommended to address those gaps as part of next steps action planning. A low score merits a deeper dive into how the church structure can pivot and adapt to ensure a more equitable, accessible and just Peace Lutheran Church community. Utilize the action planning brainstorming template on page 13 as a starting point.



For a more comprehensive study into developing culturally responsive curriculum and educational programs, the anti-racism workgroup recommends: [Uncommon Schools](#)



**From "High-Quality Curriculum Is a Transformation Tool for Equity" (ascd.org)*

PLC Anti-Racism Guide: Budgetary & Finance Decisions

Equity in budgeting is a crucial part of integrating anti-racism principles and values in every facet of church life. Peace Lutheran Church's budget is a reflection of how the church models and centers Christ-like stewardship of our neighbors and community. Using this guide will help church entities, such as the church council, develop budgets and make financial decisions that advance Peace Lutheran Church's commitment to becoming "reconciled and just."

To accurately rate each statement, you must be able to provide evidence – for example, a detailed document, data points, or even meeting notes. Please refer to the "Using an Equity Lens: a Step-by-Step Guide" on page 5 for further details on how to get started.

1. The people most impacted by financial decisions are meaningfully included in the planning and the development of a church budget.	
2. There are multiple and diverse opportunities to seek feedback from the congregation in the development of the budget and other financial decisions.	
3. The budget proposal advances Peace Lutheran Church's anti-racism goals and initiatives.	
4. Equitable resource allocation is considered and applied during budget development. This means that resources and funding for community-based programs that address inequities are prioritized in the budget.	
5. Alternative funding processes and opportunities, such as a participatory budgeting process, to meaningfully engage the larger community regarding programs that directly impact them are strongly considered.	
6. The proposed budget ensures sufficient resources and meaningful funding exist to advance and implement the church's anti-racism initiative.	
7. We have considered the different ways this decision could impact our community, especially historically and systemically marginalized congregants and neighbors, and we are diligently working to reduce negative impact.	
8. We have taken steps to ensure that the proposed budget decision does not cause disproportionate harm to any groups or perpetuate racial inequities.	

9. The annual budget report outlines how resources have been allocated to reduce specific disparities.	
10. Peace Lutheran Church mindfully vets funding sources (i.e. granters) to ensure alignment of anti-racism values.	

Rating: If any of the statements above received a score of 0, 1, or 2, it is highly recommended to address those gaps as part of next steps action planning. A low score merits a deeper dive into how the church structure can pivot and adapt to ensure a more equitable, accessible and just Peace Lutheran Church community. Utilize the action planning brainstorming template on page 13 as a starting point.





Peace Lutheran Church Recruitment & Hiring Equity Lens





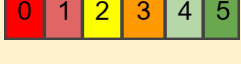

For a truly inclusive workplace environment, Peace Lutheran Church must thoughtfully and intentionally curate a hiring process from beginning to end. The purpose of this lens is to help staff members understand and examine the ways recruitment and hiring practices can serve as barriers for BIPOC candidates. At the same time, it is important for potential candidates to understand the church’s story, vision, mission and spirit during this process. This guide is meant to help both parties understand how their values are in alignment with each other.


To accurately rate each statement, you must be able to provide evidence – for example, a detailed document, data points, or even meeting notes. Please refer to the “Using an Equity Lens: a Step-by-Step Guide” on page 5 for further details on how to get started.






JOB DESCRIPTION	
1. The job description is reviewed (with current staff member input, if possible) and updated before it is posted publicly.	
2. The PLC anti-racism commitment and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement are articulated in the description. <i>Anti-racism statement: Peace Lutheran Church is committed to understanding, addressing, and dismantling racism inside ourselves, our Hilltop community, and our congregation as a fundamental way in which we live out our Christian faith and seek to love our neighbors. This is a commitment of our congregation as a whole and of the individual members of our worshiping community. This is a faith journey of learning, accountability, and grace.</i>	
3. The format/template used for the job description is consistent with other written job descriptions within the church.	
4. Compensation/salary for the role is clearly stated and visible.	
5. The job description has a general job requirement that states: “must be willing to lean into and engage in topics related to cultural humility, anti-racism, and systems of oppression.”	
6. The job description explicitly details at least two, role-specific responsibilities that help advance PLC’s anti-racism commitment.	
7. The job description does not contain unnecessary barriers and biases such as: need for a driver’s license if driving is not a responsibility; college degrees if experience can be substituted; or having a specific faith or religious affiliation.	

<p><i>Please note that the following is acceptable to include: "Person of faith in God compatible with the values of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Peace Lutheran Church's Anti-Racism policy."</i></p>	
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RECRUITMENT AND POSTING	
<p>8. We have created a customized outreach plan, especially one directed towards communities of color, to balance the disproportionate impact of traditional forms of outreach.</p>	
<p>9. The hiring team has access to a list of local and diverse cultural organizations and places of learning in the community to ensure a broad range of opportunities for recruitment and posting.</p>	
<p>10. The hiring team has a shared understanding and focus on creating a diverse applicant pool <i>before</i> the position closes, and a plan if the applicant pool lacks diversity (i.e. deadline extensions).</p>	
<p>11. The timeline for the entire hiring process stretches over a reasonable time period (i.e. does not expect applicants to wait months before receiving any updates or news).</p>	

INTERVIEWING	
<p>12. The interview panel is diverse and reflective of the community.</p>	
<p>13. The interview panel has a comprehensive understanding of equity and implicit bias, and knows what they can appropriately and legally ask during the interview process (a full list can be found in the City of Tacoma document attached at the end).</p>	
<p>14. The candidates receive a copy of the interview questions within 24 hours of the scheduled interview.</p>	
<p>15. The criteria used to evaluate the applicants are measurable, consistent, job-related and necessary to make a determination.</p>	
<p>16. The interview questions have been thoroughly reviewed through an equity lens and standardized across all applicant interviews.</p>	
<p>17. Interview questions allow the applicants to demonstrate their thought processes and comprehension regarding a specific area.</p>	

For example, the applicant is able to make connections between people experiencing homelessness and systemic oppression.	
18. Some of the interview questions probe an applicant’s knowledge and experience with equity, antiracism and cultural competency.	

GENERAL HIRING	
19. We have set a block of time to hold interviews for all reviewed and accepted applicants.	
20. Each applicant receives the exact same information about the position and the church, and is greeted and introduced in the same consistent manner.	
21. Reference checks include at least one question about the applicant’s ability to work with multiracial and multicultural community members, with an ask for specific examples.	
22. The hiring team utilizes the “ ban the box ” strategy to be more inclusive. (Background checks can be performed after the selection has been made).	
23. The hired candidate will receive an offer of employment that details their job responsibilities, salary and benefits, work schedule, and other relevant and essential information so that the candidate can make an informed decision.	

Rating: If any of the statements above received a score of 0, 1, or 2, it is highly recommended to address those gaps as part of next steps action planning. A low score merits a deeper dive into how the church structure can pivot and adapt to ensure a more equitable, accessible and just Peace Lutheran Church community. Utilize the action planning brainstorming template on page 13 as a starting point.

For a more comprehensive guide into developing equitable hiring practices, the anti-racism workgroup recommends the [City of Tacoma’s handbook for recruitment and hiring](#).

Recommended Next Steps & Action Planning

Here are suggested pathways for creating an action plan based on the results of the anti-racism and equity lens process.*

1. Write down the decision, policy, program, or issue that was assessed, as well as the equity lens chosen for this process.

2. Review the equity lens used for this process and write down below at least two of the statements with the lowest scores (statements with a score of 0, 1, or 2). With your committee or group, identify at least two actions you could undertake to address the gaps uncovered during this process.

a. Statement 1: _____

Action item: _____

Action item: _____

b. Statement 2: _____

Action item: _____

Action item: _____

c. Statement 3: _____

Action item: _____

Action item: _____

3. Use what you have brainstormed above to guide your decision-making process and produce outcomes that are equitable, values-centered, and fair.

**Adapted from the Protocol for Culturally Responsive Organizations document.*

EXAMPLE

1. Write down the decision, policy, program, or issue that was assessed, as well as the equity lens chosen for this process.

There was a proposal to start a young adult community group to address the gap in church support for those between the ages of 18 and 25 years of age.

The equity lens used: faith formation anti-racism guide

2. Review the equity lens used for this process and write down below at least two of the statements with the lowest scores (statements with a score of 0, 1, or 2). With your committee or group, identify at least two actions you could undertake to address the gaps uncovered during this process.

- a. Statement 1: *The educational programs help participants meaningfully engage with the larger communities (i.e. advocacy, activism, etc.). Score - 1*

Action item: *Provide two semi-structured conversations with young adult members to learn what community or global issues are important to them*

Action item: *Based on what is shared, invite a local activist or grassroots organization to present to the young adult members*