

This year The Race Relations Commission has been actively involved in trying to improve Race Relations or should I say help the races to understand each other. In January we were involved in the 2nd Annual Race for Reconciliation Race where hundreds of people representing different Races from all across the Midsouth came together at Autozone Park for a Unity Race on Martin Luther King Holiday. It was a glorious occasion and brought leaders from all over the city together. There are plans to expand beyond the City of Memphis. The Race Relations Commission is now discussing plans to start up new chapters of PCCNA in other cities. We are currently discussing the Dallas, Texas area, Tampa, Florida and Jackson, Tennessee.

In May we added two new members to our Commission, one representing the Hispanic Community, Pastor Pedro Hernandez and another Pastor Chris Conlee a white pastor who has a multicultural ministry. Our hope is that they will help us expand our efforts in Race Relations issues. The Race Relations Commission left the Mission Alignment Conference in February with new inspiration to help make an impact in Race Relations. We left feeling Empowered and felt the opportunity was given to us to take greater steps in our efforts to improve Race Relations. We still believe that we have challenges before us that really need to be addressed and we have more understanding on how we can accomplish our goal as we focus on what is misaligned and what steps we can take to fix the problems of Racial inequality.

We believe one of the reasons we have so many problems with Racial Issues is because we truly don't understand each other. As a result in May we hosted our first Faith Listening Forum. We had a panel of 10; 1 white female, 1 black female, 2 Hispanic men, 3 black men and 3 white men, who are leaders from across the City of Memphis and whose only task as a Panel Member was to share their own experiences in life that shaped their beliefs. There was no Debating between panel members and the audience was there to listen to their stories. There was no interaction from the audience. The Forum event was conceived because I believe the biggest problem in Race Relations is we don't take time to listen to each others story. We comment and debate over another individuals beliefs and actions without understanding why they believe and act the way they do. The Forum was a great success with over 90 percent of the participants in the audience rating it a 5 on a 1-5 rating scale and nothing less than a 4. Furthermore everyone said they would definitely attend again and invite someone else. With the success of the forum and the rating being so high plans for future Forums are definitely in the works.

Later this month we will be collaborating with another ministry to host the Faith Family Reunion Picnic where thousands of people from all Races will come together for fellowship and worship and of course food and fun. The Race Relations Commission is determined to do all it can to help establish better Race Relations and see and feel the atmosphere for change is definitely on the horizon.

Thank you.  
Aaron Campbell