



Evergreen Notes

August 2020

An Addendum

Volume 19, Issue 8A

To Euro Caucus Churches in our Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches USA

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We, a handful of Euro Caucus church members, with growing awareness of our privilege as white people, have been meeting and working together for a while. We are trying to understand, confront, and undo the effects of white dominance, a system that unconsciously, but persistently, exerts great control over our individual lives, our culture and so many of our congregations. We have worked with – and been inspired and challenged by – our Executive Minister Doug Avilesbernal.

In times like these, when anxiety runs high, racism surfaces in explicit and undeniable ways, affecting public discourse and response to the COVID-19 crisis. In this letter we want to share our thoughts and concerns about how race and racism are meeting the world-wide outbreak of COVID-19, and about how our churches can help address the challenges of this moment across our region.

We notice, and are concerned about, these things: Our nation's President, against the counsel of his advisors, continues to speak of the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus." A Seattle teacher stops class when he hears a white child call an Asian American child "corona." Chinese Americans – reporting that they are yelled at, chased, spat upon, kicked and punched – are afraid to go out in public, to go shopping, or to let their children play outside. Further, news outlets across the country report that black and brown persons suffer infection, hospitalization and even death at much higher rates than whites, and that access to COVID-19 testing depends greatly on who you are, where you live, and how much money you have.

Some in our churches may be less aware of anti-Asian laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and the internment of Japanese American citizens, or the history of racial oppression of black and brown people. But the level of anxiety that shaped those actions and institutions is giving impetus to these new expressions of racism in communities across our nation, and perhaps most strongly in the northwestern United States.

We ask you, as we ask ourselves: Are there Chinese (or other Asian) people in your church? In your neighborhood? How are they engaged, treated, spoken of? Are there Asian, and black and brown, businesses in your community? When they open again, how can you support them?

Dear friends, we hold each other, you, your churches and your neighbors in prayer. May God's compassion, and the courage we draw from it, move us all through these difficult days.

Peace,

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A Third Option: Grant Opportunity Supporting Evergreen Congregations

New - Option #3 - Family Stability

This grant will fund rent and food only. Churches will be asked to follow the guidelines established for the 2nd option with the following exceptions:

- The limit for this category is not to exceed \$7,500 per church
- Monies will only be used to assist families with food and rent
- Rent payments are to be paid only to the landlord or the landlord's official agent
- Food assistance is to be provided by the church purchasing and distributing gift cards from major stores (e.g. Fred Meyer, Albertsons, Safeway, Saars Market Place, Winco, etc.)
- The church is to submit to the Evergreen Executive Minister a monthly accounting of expenses including a confidential code uniquely designating each family or individual, whether rent or food or both, and the amount spent.
- Any monies not spent by December 31, 2020 are to be returned in the form of a check made payable to Evergreen Association of ABC

Be sure your church is represented at the Association Board Zoom Meeting this Saturday, August 8, 2020, 9 AM.

If you plan to attend and have not received an invitation to the meeting, check with your pastor or contact Doug at doug@ea-abc.org