



MATTHEW 25

The Matthew 25 Task Force

English Worshiping Community

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

2021



Linda Lee, Chair

Norman Fong

Diane Go

Clinton Huey

Ivy Yee-Sakamoto

Rev. Donald P. Hammond

OUR CHARGE

Review:

Matthew 25 worshipping community
areas of focus

- Congregational vitality
- Dismantling structural racism
- Eradicate poverty

Reading Matthew 25: 31-46



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History of Matthew 25 Initiative

Matthew 25:31–46 calls all of us to actively **engage in the world around us**, so our **faith comes alive** and we wake up to new possibilities. Convicted by this passage, both the 222nd and 223rd General Assemblies (2016 and 2018) exhorted the PC(USA) to **act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor.**

History of Matthew 25 Initiative in our Presbytery

The Presbytery of San Francisco became a Matthew 25 Presbytery in February 2020 with its commitment to all three areas.

Congregational Vitality

Dismantling Structural Racism

Eradicating Poverty

FOOD PANTRY





TSURU FOR SOLIDARITY

JUNE 1, 1983



1983

Jesse Jackson's visit to promote AAPI and Black community cooperation ⁸



**Solidarity in the Struggle:
From Vincent Chin to George Floyd**



ADVOCACY FOR LAM HONG LE

Mei Lun Yuen Ground Breaking

1979



MEI LUN YUEN APARTMENTS



1982



OUR HEALING JOURNEY

One Faith Community's
Response to Clergy
Sexual Abuse

Cameron House and
the Presbyterian
Church in Chinatown,
San Francisco



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (local and international projects)

Our Recommendation

Two areas, *Congregational Vitality* and *Dismantling Structural Racism* seem to be best matches to our EWC's faith journey, skills, history and service capability.

What is Congregational Vitality?

In the Chat, list a couple of words or phrases that you think of when you hear congregational vitality



What is Congregational Vitality?

It is **NOT:**

Number of members or “butts in the pews”

How many baptisms in a year

Size of our budget or \$\$\$ in the bank

***** It is *a passion for following Jesus* *****

Marks of Congregational Vitality

1.

Commitment to transform members to disciples

2.

Learning to talk about our faith as we put it into action

3.

Looking outward to our community (world)

4.

Empowering members to discover gifts for service

5.

Spirit-inspired worship

6.

Building caring relationships and healthy systems and accountability

Faith in Action: Congregational Vitality

Many questions were raised:

- How to develop an ongoing desire to put our faith into action?
- How are our members and worshippers doing, what are the interests and participation levels? (levels of action: prayer, letter-writing, financial support, direct service, etc.) Discerning what is God calling us to do?
- Are there areas in which the EWC can do more?
- How to celebrate who we are (a predominantly Asian-American worshipping community, welcoming to all; the oldest Asian church in America; a social justice community, etc.)

Respond and Develop Vitality in EWC

Celebrate Our Identity

- Oldest Asian Church in USA, since 1853
- Welcoming all
- A social justice community
- Identify individual talents / abilities for action
- Create opportunities for personal storytelling, sharing and reflection
- How to become a “reforming” church: letting go of past expectations

Faith into Action: Congregational Vitality

More ideas/questions from the Task Force:

- How to engage young adults in the challenge to grow in the faith and involvement with the community?
- What are the focal points for YAs? Some are more engaged in BLM, and combatting anti-Asian hate and they are presented with other opportunities for community engagement.
- What ways can we explore with Cameron House?

Faith into Action: Congregational Vitality

This is a good time for **listening**. The Covid sheltering/online time has been **freeing** for some, a **challenge** for some, **overwhelming** for youth who are learning online.

Listening and discerning will overlap with the Mission Study Team's work.

Congregational Vitality

Two Stories from other PC,USA churches:



Riviera Presbyterian Church in Miami, Florida



Lovejoy United PC in Wood River, Illinois



What is Dismantling Structural Racism all about?

- Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings.
- We are told that there is not enough to go around...



Because of our understanding of what God intends for humanity, we are charged...as in these words from Rev. Pamela Anderson of Parkview Presbyterian Church in Sacramento.

“When you are silent, then you side with the oppressor.



We are speaking up, we are showing up.
We are saying, “not on our watch...”

“The world is too dangerous for anything but love.

I bless your eyes that you may see God in everyone...”



We must stand against, speak against and work against racism. Anti-racist effort is not optional for Christians...

It is an essential part of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.



Many of us have experienced prejudice and bigotry, strong racist slurs and micro-aggressions.



Focusing on changing our own attitudes and that of others is not what we mean when we talk about structural racism.

We are talking about changing economic, legal, and societal structures...laws and policies that have given advantage to whites at the expense of people of other racial groups...This is the harder work...



...dismantling structural racism

A video from the
Presbytery's 21-Day
Challenge:

*The Disturbing
History of the
Suburbs*



Racism is the original sin of the United States...



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Land was stolen from indigenous peoples.



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Laws tore apart families, kept Blacks from being able to get a decent education, build wealth and hold decent jobs.

Chinese Exclusion laws denied our families land, jobs, and rights to health, education, and opportunity.



LatinX refugee families trying to escape danger from countries to the south are denied entry.



Structural racism skews the system against people of color...

- in Employment and the Survival of Businesses in Chinatown
- in Housing and Homelessness
- in Hunger and Food Insecurity
- in Education
- in Policing and Mass Incarceration
- in Immigration and
- in Voting Rights

“And so I bless your heart that it will be open and so set on fire that your love changes everything.”

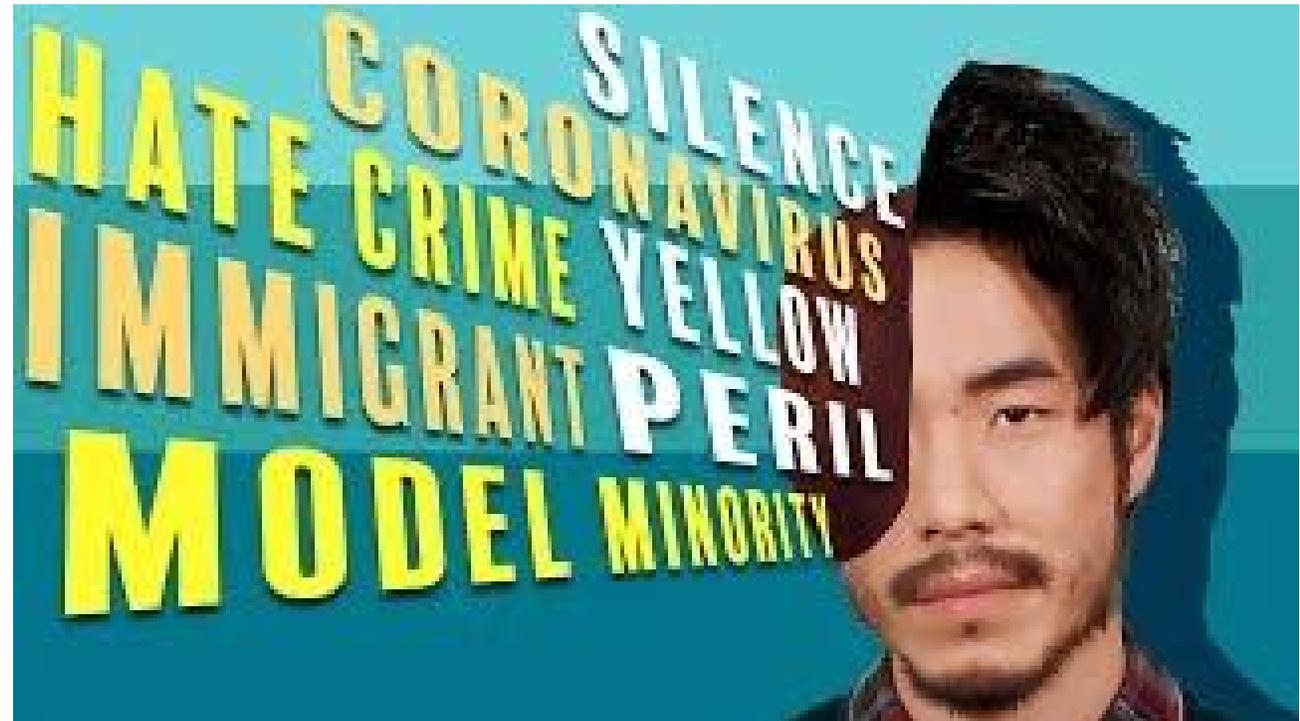
Time to set the fire.



Faith in Action: Dismantling Structural Racism

- Search for & discuss excellent films like Eugene Lee Yang's film, "We Need to Talk About Anti-Asian Hate"

[Google: Eugene Yang Asian hate video](#)



Faith in Action: Dismantling Structural Racism and Congregational Vitality



More explorations and ideas:

- Speak out against anti-Asian violence, dismantling myths about Asians and Asian Americans (Asia is not a monolithic culture, how the 'model minority' myth is a white supremacist tool to divide BIPOC)

Faith in Action: Dismantling Structural Racism and Congregational Vitality

- Promote and support BLM



Faith in Action: Dismantling Structural Racism and Congregational Vitality

- Help EWC to feel engaged in the Asian and Black struggles



Faith in Action: Dismantling Structural Racism and Congregational Vitality

- Addressing Chinatown poverty and SRO's



Faith in Action: Dismantling Structural Racism

A few more ideas:

- We have a primary geographic area, but we also need to look at broader diversity. Recognizing the racial/cultural diversity in the Ping Yuen housing
- Educating ourselves on history of race in USA and especially in Chinatown and Bay Area history, on the struggles of Blacks who make up about 25% of the Ping Yuen housing



Solidarity

June 17, 2021



LOVE SHALL OVERCOME

SOLIDARITY IN THE STRUGGLE

"SOLID IN THE STRUGGLE"

族裔團結 奮鬥 正義 悼念

RAINBOW PUSH Valley/Bay Area Bureau An Initiative of

Conversations



Storytelling is powerful for building understanding and relationships



Person-to-person Sharing





**Are we ready to say
“YES” to Matthew 25?**

What comments, reactions, questions or concerns do we have for the English Commission about becoming a Matthew 25 community?



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