



MFSFA Organizational Racial Audit Report

Introduction

“We seek to create loving communities of kinship precisely to counteract mounting lovelessness, racism, and the cultural disparagement that keeps us apart.”

Greg Boyle, Tattoos of the Heart

What is our Christian response to injustice?

What is the response of Christians to injustice within their own social justice organizations?

These two questions have been the focus of the work of the Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSFA) for the past two years. They are both significant questions for us to explore. Our work is not complete without addressing both questions.

MFSFA has been influenced from its beginning by theologians who were aware of social justice issues. Walter Rauschenbusch was a promising young German Baptist pastor in 1886 who began to seek a way to overcome the causes and conditions of poverty. In 1891, Rauschenbusch toured England for a period of study and reflection. During this time, he argued that Christians must follow Jesus' mission to proclaim a Kingdom of God that would embody justice and mercy as part of the social structure. Only by constructing a social order that would reflect the ethics of the Kingdom of God could Christians live out their mandate to love God and people.

The social gospel movement came to Methodism in the United States in 1892. MFSFA (Called Methodist Federation for Social Service at that time) drafted a Social Creed in 1907 which was adopted in 1908 as the first denominational Social Creed by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.. Since then, this document has often been revised and updated. “The core beliefs were these:

1. [Human personality](#), created in the image of God, is the supreme good in the created universe;
2. Social institutions profoundly affect the development of human personality;
3. Christians are called to seek the perfection of human institutions as part of their Christian vocation to build God’s ‘Kingdom,’ here on earth.” (Jeanne Knepper, “[Thy Kingdom Come](#)”, p. 130)

The current Social Creed of the United Methodist Church specifically states:

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the

rights and dignity of all persons.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

(Excerpt from The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2016; paragraph 166)

Over the years, MFSA has encouraged the denomination to live into our Social Creed and the Biblical mandate of Jesus to love God and love neighbors, to respond to issues of injustice both within The United Methodist Church and within society. The chosen issues have often been issues that affect the lives of those without power and privilege, and while MFSA has worked to be a voice for others, we have found ourselves failing to include those voices in decision-making.

Elevating these voices means speaking the truth to power. Power is alluring and can bring short term satisfaction to those who seek it. However, the deeper meaning of speaking the truth to power is examining reality, accepting the challenges that point to change, and taking action to begin the journey of transformation.

Becoming aware, as MFSA, of the voices that are speaking truth to our power, the board has started to hear these voices and has recognized the harm that we have done as an organization. We have not been effectively addressing issues of race as an organization. We addressed racism in superficial ways, recruiting People of Color to the board but ignoring the embedded white-dominant culture of our organization. This resulted in harmful dynamics that caused most of the People of Color to leave the board. We also started to recognize a pattern of behavior resulting in harm to People of Color during high stress situations like General Conference.

MFSA chooses to remain radically Methodist and to live into the traditional class questions of John Wesley: How have we lived since we were last together? As an organization, we find ourselves asking: How have we failed to live into holiness as a Methodist organization? Examining ourselves as an organization has led us to undertake this Organizational Racial Audit. We need to reach deeper into who we are and how we work to eliminate injustice not only externally in our world but within our own organization. In this audit, MFSA seeks to understand more clearly the patterns of white dominance and seeks to begin transforming our organizational structure and culture to be anti-racist.

Historical Background

The Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA) began as a small independent voluntary religious organization that was associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church. MFSA today is associated with the United Methodist Church.

MFSA was founded to deepen within the church the sense of social obligation and opportunity, to study social problems from the Christian point of view, and to promote social service in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Throughout its history, the organization has spoken and acted to define,

extend, and protect [human rights](#). Although the specific focus of our activity has often changed, the overarching concern for the rights of all people has remained constant.

MFSA has taken stands historically that place it on the boundary of white mainstream Methodism, using its position to push for social change and greater justice within the church and the nation. MFSA worked for social reconstruction and labor rights in the 1910s and 1920s, promoted civil rights and integration in the 1930s and 40s, defended the civil liberties of radicals and communists during the McCarthy era, and sought disarmament and an end to the Cold War in the 1950s.

In 1952, the Methodist Church took a more conservative focus that pushed MFSA into dormancy for several years. MFSA was revived in the 1960s and eventually began to expand outward and develop chapters throughout the United States. While racism was recognized in the United States and around the world and discussed and written about in MFSA publications, organizing around anti-racism was usually treated as secondary to other justice issues.

Some have questioned how effective an organization that has existed since 1907 can be. Though we operate from an admittedly narrow base, MFSA has changed the lives of individuals and the nation. It did this in several ways.

- MFSA inspired people by articulating a clear and compelling vision that could and did stir individuals to commit to seeking justice.
- MFSA bridged between the margins of society and the mainstream of the church.
- MFSA shaped church policy.
- MFSA built a network of interpretation and support that nurtured social activism across the country.

Today, MFSA has begun a journey to specifically examine where we began as a justice organization and where we are now. Some of the most recent priorities of the MFSA included working on issues of peace, poverty, people's rights, and other progressive initiatives. Anti Racism work has always been included in these priorities but became more prominent in 2017. At that time we recognized that there was a difference in working for, instead of with, people being marginalized.

As we step forward on this journey of transformation, we recognize that it will not be smooth. MFSA has taken on this task to ensure that the values that were the founding principles continue to be upheld. MFSA has resolved to become more aware of current issues of human inequalities and injustice. After awareness comes taking action, and this racial audit of the organization is one of the first steps along the journey.

[History Timeline — Methodist Federation for Social Action \(mfsaweb.org\)](https://mfsaweb.org)

Racial Audit Team Development

There are important reasons for the MFSA to undertake this organizational racial audit. In addition to the reasons cited in the introduction above, numerous societal issues point to the urgency of addressing anti-racism work. With an increase in racially motivated hate crimes in the United States, MFSA's response to current events brought a heightened awareness that helped to push us to do the work of learning to dismantle [white supremacy](#). The response of the organization to current events was highly

dependent on a board that at first glance did not include many of those most affected by the acts of injustice and inequity. It was determined, by the board, that an institutional assessment of systemic racism was required.

The process of this Organizational Racial Audit has brought out the historical intentions that are rooted in the beginning of the organization. It has also brought to light the unintended consequences of not adapting to changing demographics and community needs. Asking “why” opens the door to uncertainty. MFSA is committed to going forward into the unknown looking through the lens of social justice and equity.

At the September 2019 board meeting of MFSA, which included the [Program Council](#), a major decision was made to examine antiracism within the organization. Bridget Cabrera, Executive Director, was authorized to vet and recommend an antiracism consulting organization. Her recommendation, Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training, was approved prior to the October 2019 board meeting.



In November 2019, an invitation was sent out to individuals thought to be potential members of the MFSA Racial Audit Team. These invitations went out to people with varying degrees of involvement/knowledge of MFSA. The Racial Audit Team started from the recognition by the MFSA Board of Directors that MFSA is a predominantly white organization and perpetuates white supremacy in its organizational culture. This commitment to courage was developed when the Racial Audit Team was formed after an initial meeting and training February 15-17, 2020 in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Commitment to Courage:

As members of the Racial Audit Team for the Methodist Federation for Social Action,

- We will intentionally work to create a community amongst ourselves embodying our highest ideals of inclusion, diversity, compassion, and courage.
- We will break patterns of white dominance within our group.
- We will take time to get to know one another.
- We will listen to one another.
- We will extend grace and care to each other, including growing in understanding of our differing ways of learning and processing.
- We will be mindful of our varying abilities and bodily needs.
- We will listen with intention.
- We will speak with intention.
- We will sit with discomfort.

- *We will recognize not only the intent of words and actions but also the impact of words and actions.*
- *We will push ourselves and each other to courageously lean into the boundary where discomfort becomes growth and insight.*
- *We will be mindful that our work has a multi-national impact.*
- *We will keep in mind the roles and relationships we have now and have had over the years with MFSA.*
- *We will seek out shared frameworks for understanding racism and white privilege such as Tema Okun on White Supremacy Culture and Robin Diangelo on White Fragility.*
- *We will honor and be faithful to the integrity of stories and experiences shared, and insights learned.*
- *We will share responsibility for the logistical and practical needs of the Racial Audit Team.*
- *We will individually and together claim and own this process and its results. This is our work together.*

The Racial Audit Team today is smaller than originally planned. The reduction in the numbers of the Racial Audit Team was due to the Covid pandemic which eliminated face to face meetings and brought unforeseen stressors to the lives of some members who were unable to continue.

Work on the Racial Audit Team was intended to be completed within a year and included twice monthly meetings. As time progressed this timeline was extended. The final report was presented to the board and Program Council January 30, 2023. It is the combined effort of the development of concepts, tools, surveys, and recommendations derived from the survey results.

Methodology and the Audit Process

The Racial Audit Team chose to work with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training to produce an assessment of how systemic racism is being maintained in MFSA and to develop a set of recommendations for how to interrupt MFSA's complicity in systemic racism. In this audit, the Racial Audit Team looked at both the national MFSA office and the MFSA chapters. When we refer to MFSA we mean MFSA as a whole. Some patterns we name are more present in the national office, and some are more present in chapters. These tools allowed us to look for common themes and patterns from internal to external.

The MFSA Racial Audit Team, assisted by a facilitator from Crossroads, used three assessment tools to determine our level of systemic racism and what recommendations are needed to interrupt this racism. This process involved both people familiar with MFSA and others outside of the organization who have interacted with MFSA in some way in the past.

The first step of the audit process was for the Racial Audit Team and other key stakeholders to build a shared understanding and gain the shared analytical frameworks we needed to intersectionally assess how systemic oppression, particularly racism, is being maintained by MFSA. In February 2020, the Racial Audit Team attended CrossRoad's *Understanding & Analyzing Systemic Racism Workshop* to begin our work together.

Following that workshop, the Racial Audit Team began to meet with a Crossroads consultant to begin the process of auditing MFSA by analyzing specific situations, policies, and practices to uncover examples of

racial inequity and white racial advantage. In our audit process, all meetings took place by video conference call as the Racial Audit Team began its work just as we entered the Covid-19 pandemic. The audit was done using a social science technique called triangulation. Triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from three sources. Each of the tools used in the assessment – the Power Matrix, the Continuum, and the Survey – provided some level of analysis of the ways that racism and systemic oppression are embedded in the culture, structures, program, policies, and identity of MFSA.

The first Crossroads tool, the Power Matrix, provided a way for the Racial Audit Team to analyze how power might be exercised in the institution in ways that perpetuate racial inequity, marginalizing people of color while benefiting white people. This tool allowed us to take a deep look at the reality of what MFSA is and how it functions. The tool helped us to examine individual, institutional, and cultural ways in which white people benefit and people of color are harmed. It also helped us to identify and articulate the ways all of us are socially conditioned to maintain and perpetuate systemic racism and white supremacy culture. From our work with this power analysis, we were able to identify some key areas of concern.

The second Crossroads tool, the “Continuum on Becoming an Anti-racist Multicultural Institution”, provides a basis for locating an organization’s progress through six typical stages of growth:

1. Exclusive, A Segregated Institution
2. Passive, A ‘Club’ Institution
3. Symbolic Change, A Multicultural Institution
4. Identity Change, An Antiracist Institution
5. Structural Change, A transforming Institution
6. Fully Inclusive, A Transformed Institution in a Transformed Society.

The Continuum allowed the Racial Audit Team to get a sense of where MFSA currently is relative to its stated commitments to equity, inclusion, diversity, and antiracist values and culture; in addition, this tool helped assess how levels of the institution are progressing toward anti-racist/anti-oppressive transformation. The continuum provided for vertical and horizontal analysis of MFSA, identifying which stage we are in through all of our institutional functions and purposes. The Racial Audit Team also asked the Board and Program Council of MFSA to respond to the six categories on the continuum. This tool helped us begin to look externally at perceptions of MFSA and how it functions.

The Racial Audit Team interviewed five people who have a long history with MFSA, gathering information on how MFSA has functioned historically from its very beginning in 1907 until today. Those interviewed are connected to the MFSA Program Council and Board. The team interviewed leaders of UMC [racial ethnic caucus groups](#) - Metodistas Unidos Representando la Causa Hispanoamericana ([MARCHA](#)), Black Methodists for Church Renewal ([BMCR](#)), and the Pacific Islanders National Caucus with whom MFSA partners. All racial ethnic caucus groups were invited to attend the focus group though not all were able to participate. We specifically structured the conversation to be a People of Color conversation and included People of Color from our Racial Audit Team.

From the information gathered from the Power Matrix, the Continuum, and the focus groups, the Racial Audit Team created a representative survey around eight specific themes. This work allowed the Racial Audit Team to better understand stakeholder perceptions of how the organization operates and how structural racism manifests within it. Designed by the Racial Audit Team, the survey provided broader

quantitative data to complement the qualitative data gathered from the Matrix and Continuum tools. The survey was sent out to a cross section of people with some familiarity with MFSA. The questions for the survey were developed from the themes that were found through the work done with the Matrix and the Continuum. The survey was sent out to a broad range of people with representation from all racial-ethnic groups corresponding to the same ratio found in The United Methodist Church.

Once the Racial Audit Team analyzed MFSA's ways of being (culture) and doing (operational practices, programs, structures, etc.), we began to identify the deeply rooted values and the institutional practices that hinder MFSA from being racially equitable and effectively living into its commitments to inclusion. The objective of the audit is not to interrupt every single manifestation of systemic racism but to identify the roots that produce these manifestations. This will facilitate the identification and recommendation of intervention strategies that will have a wider impact in enabling the work of equity and inclusion in MFSA.

Using the [SMARTIE](#) methodology, the Racial Audit Team has made recommendations to the MFSA Board for how it should intervene to interrupt its participation in systemic oppression, particularly racism. The Racial Audit Team has also made recommendations for how MFSA should move forward with the implementation and assessment of the recommended interventions.

Racial Audit Themes

Eight themes were identified as the Racial Audit Team worked with the information gathered from the first two tools – the Power Matrix and the Continuum on Becoming an Anti-racist Organization. These themes were then used to create the survey that was sent out to a representative sample of people. One of the purposes of the survey was to test our themes. Some elements of our themes were not sustained in our survey results and other elements were recognized as being very similar.

As the Racial Audit Team reviewed and analyzed the results of the survey, we began to see that some themes could be combined for our final report and recommendations. The following six themes are the findings of the three tools used in our audit process (Power Matrix, Continuum, Survey).

Following each theme are statements that reflect the findings from the entire audit process and are shared with minimal editing as needed for clarification. These statements are taken from written feedback received throughout the audit process from various participants.

Theme 1: MFSA prioritizes white comfort, focusing on “[white saviorism](#)” and being “the good white ones”. This behavior results in [performative allyship](#). It commodifies and renders People of Color invisible.

The Racial Audit Team affirms that the staff and national board of MFSA have taken steps to begin dismantling the white dominant culture of the organization. This work has included the active recruitment of People of Color staff and board members and publicly declaring a desire to become an anti-racist organization. In addition, MFSA has a history of anti-racist advocacy. MFSA has sought and will continue to seek partnerships with People of Color organizations.

At the same time, actions previously taken by MFSA toward anti-racist awareness and potential changes show unawareness of continuous patterns of privilege and paternalism.

MFSA has repeatedly stated a desire for multiculturalism within the institution which resulted in conflating anti-racism with multicultural diversity. We assumed that adding a few People of Color would achieve diversity and move toward anti racism. MFSA invited People of Color participation without supporting People of Color as leaders and with little awareness of the challenges People of Color face in white dominant institutions. This sends a message that People of Color input is not wanted and sets People of Color up to fail, leading to a cycle of exhaustion and departure of People of Color. The MFSA National office and board have had a long history of speaking out against racism and trying to do the right thing including calling out other organizations that are complicit. A few years ago the board decided that they wanted MFSA to adopt anti-racist principles and become an anti-racist organization. One of the first steps was to bring more People of Color onto the board which was done. The board also hired its first Person of Color Executive Director. However, simply changing a few people around and not doing the work of making lasting change by looking at policy, culture, and practice has been harmful. We perpetuate white supremacy and put an undue burden on People of Color by adding People of Color to the board without making other organizational changes to become anti-racist.

MFSA harms, exploits, disempowers, co-opts, and coerces People of Color institutions when the collaborations are initiated at the last minute, when the long-term relationships are not built and sustained.

People of Color responding to the survey reported a lower sense of belonging in MFSA and a lower perception that MFSA acts with intentionality toward People of Color. Question 15 stands out as an example. 64% of People of Color (including all of the People of Color under age 50) agree with the statement, “There is a gap between MFSA’s stated commitment to being anti-racist and actually working to dismantle white supremacy.”

Collapsed Percentages		
15) There is a gap between MFSA’s stated commitment to being anti-racist and actually working to dismantle white supremacy.	Person of Color	White Person
Agree/Strongly Agree	64.00%	48.35%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	36.00%	51.65%

MFSA has been slow to interrupt racism because we value the desire to change hearts over time more than the lives of Black and Brown people. We have not responded to the urgency of anti-racism work. This minimizes the sense that systemic change is needed.

There is a gap between who we say we are and how we operate, or who we’d like to be and what we really do. This comes through in various ways and is a gap especially visible to people under 50 years old.

There’s a surface level of understanding in terms of what anti-racism work is, and what can be done to work toward racial justice. This level of understanding causes confusion that the performative stuff is actually the work. There's a whole lot that white people do not know or understand about how white dominance works to reinforce and replicate itself. MFSA must educate more and more white people about these toxic dynamics. When we have learned, we must keep reminding ourselves to do better and be better. We must stop showing up to “help” people and instead show up to listen, to be in solidarity with them.

The presence of "white saviorism" is a primary way in which MFSA embodies the "club" stage of the Continuum. By framing issues in ways that adversely affect other people/groups and identifying MFSA as resourced and able, MFSA centers the experience of privileged white leadership and renders it invisible to the leaders and members directly affected by the systems of oppression that we purportedly organize against.

While MFSA has a stated desire to be more diverse, prior to this audit MFSA never examined the embedded racism of its processes and procedures. The organization continued to operate in white dominant ways while seeking to be more diverse by recruiting People of Color. People of Color who joined MFSA often brought their ideas and creativity and a desire to help the organization close the gap between what it was declaring and how it was behaving. But our processes and procedures rooted in white comfort did not make room for People of Color to be in leadership. This hindrance resulted in micro aggressions and transactional interactions that led to lack of engagement and eventual departure.

Theme 2: MFSA functions as an organization of and for white progressives, prioritizing white power and control, which results in a lack of investment in and abdication of responsibility to be accountable to People of Color communities.

From our work on the Continuum (see Methodology Section for info on this tool) we have learned the following:

We affirm that the Staff and National Board of MFSA has taken steps to begin dismantling the white dominant culture of the organization. This work has included the active recruitment of POC staff and board members; and publicly declaring a desire to become an anti-racist organization. In addition, MFSA has a history of anti-racist advocacy. MFSA has sought and will continue to seek partnerships with People of Color organizations. There is an expectation of accountability and relationship with regional MFSA chapters.

Even so: MFSA maintains white dominant power and leadership. Change and transformation are approached from a white mentality that there is plenty of time for slow progressive change and is more valuable than quick changes. This serves to prioritize white comfort over the lives of Black and Brown people. MFSA conflates anti-racism with multicultural diversity evidenced by the repeatedly stated desire for multiculturalism within the organization. MFSA invites People of Color participation without investing in support of People of Color leaders and without accepting People of Color challenges to the status quo.

MFSA lets itself off the hook for our own failures and denies our responsibility to change our white dominant culture by comparing ourselves with the United Methodist Church and by perpetuating a scarcity mindset. By focusing on problems that need to be solved, we maintain a cycle of discouragement and paralysis. MFSA focuses on goals and outcomes to the exclusion of the quality of the process. MFSA prioritizes our intent over the impact of our actions.

Actions previously taken by MFSA toward anti-racist awareness and potential changes shows unawareness of continuous patterns of privilege and paternalism. This has been shown in actions that reflect ignorance of intersectionality or approached with tokenism. There has been no intentionality around building capacity for recognizing racism among existing members. Statements are made about issues but little action follows.

Relationships with People of Color organizations, and between chapters and national, are often reduced to transactions. Relationships with Communities of Color are mediated through People of Color on staff and the Board of Directors. The burden of confronting white supremacy and anti-racism work is placed on People of Color. The lack of clarity/unstated expectations/ in our organizational function undermines People of Color leaders and we revert to club behavior.

At best, MFSA has identified racial justice as one issue among many and has not taken an intersectional approach to our work in various issue areas. This means that white perspectives, concerns, and solutions have dominated our discussions about other issue areas. Many of our programs appeal mainly to a white constituency. And some of our programs targeted at multiculturalism may have undercurrents of [colonialism](#) and/or patronization.

MFSA often makes decisions and takes action independent of consultation with People of Color institutions. In many ways MFSA has always worked with those in the [borderlands](#). However, it seems like the strategy has been to bring those on the border into the [center](#). As of late, we have been seeking ways to move the center. The reality is our political power rests on our proximity to the center.

The MFSA board has been white dominant and centered to the point that many People of Color don't find the work of the board pertains to them or find their time to be long tenured with MFSA. White men have habitually interrupted the shared experiences of Black women or questioned their validity, citing greater institutional or historical knowledge. People of Color have not been believed when they share that MFSA has harmed them. White people who have done harm to People of Color have been centered, listened to, and believed when sharing their experiences. Particularly older white men within MFSA interrupt and see themselves as the experts on subjects like policy, strategy, and global church organizing.

MFSA harms People of Color by seeking to recruit more People of Color and more young people so that MFSA can look more diverse and more intergenerational. MFSA does not actually allow them to lead once in those positions and/or does not give them the resources or support to be successful. Through our alliances, we have used People of Color groups to add validity to our work, especially around LGBTQ inclusion. We have not listened to or centered the experiences of People of Color to lead our agenda for the work ahead. People of Color have access as long as they don't threaten a white person's power, authority, or knowledge. People of Color are expected to think and act like white people.

Survey questions 4, 5, and 6 had the largest disparities between People of Color and white respondents. 20% more People of Color disagreed with statement 4) "MFSA is known as a strong partner to People of Color and racial ethnic caucuses in the UMC." The level of disagreement here is particularly high among Black or African American respondents. 26% more People of Color than white agreed with statement 5) "My voice and opinions are not valued in my involvement with MFSA programs." And 21% more disagreed with statement 6) "I am confident that when I attend an MFSA event the leadership will reflect my identity/social location."

Collapsed Percentages		
5) My voice and opinions are not valued in my involvement with MFSA programs.	Person of Color	White Person
Agree/Strongly Agree	32.00%	6.59%

Disagree/Strongly Disagree	68.00%	93.41%
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There are no Black or African American survey respondents under 50 years old. This points toward a deep disconnect between MFSA and young or middle-aged Black people.

The trust and engagement gap between People of Color and MFSA points toward a lack of continuous relationship and real accountability. The high trust among white people reveals the real location of MFSA’s accountability and implicit audience. MFSA focuses on the white-centered UMC as the [center](#) of power we want to influence. MFSA focuses on being seen by the center as people who are right, and People of Color become tools of that focus.

These behaviors have several impacts. People of Color experience burnout, mistrust, and re-traumatization, as they recognize that MFSA has a greater commitment to white comfort than the well-being of People of Color or accountability to communities of color. White people maintain the comfort of denying that MFSA has a problem as well as maintaining power and control. Further, white people are let off the hook.

On the other hand, naming this truth has other impacts. White people experience defensiveness, feeling that the MFSA National Office is meddling in the regional chapters, discomfort (esp regarding white privilege and white supremacy) in asking “what do I have to repent of?” Naming this truth also reveals that relationships with People of Color are transactional. Naming this truth shows some potential for change, but makes clear that it will be a lot of work. People of Color may rightly ask, “Is this something that I want to be part of?” particularly given the little evidence that MFSA is holding itself accountable to People of Color stakeholders.

We recognize that in many contexts, MFSA is a predominantly white organization and it is not wise or healthy to merely try to recruit People of Color to join MFSA. We don’t want to draw People of Color from vital work they are already doing in order to build up our organization.

When MFSA has relationships with People of Color led organizations, they tend to be surface level, transactional, or one-way. These minimal relationships don’t create space for transformative accountability. We are transacting our way through relationships; we’re not co-conspirators with others.

By engaging with People of Color communities, MFSA is showing up and advocating for the concerns of those communities. MFSA wants to own and celebrate that connection. On the other hand, MFSA’s advocacy is motivated not by a desire to be accountable to People of Color, but by how it amplifies MFSA’s power in front of annual conferences and in General Conference. It’s about performance and maintaining control which is not sustainable.

Theme 3: MFSA deflects responsibility by comparing itself to the UMC which leads to complacency at times, and at other times self-righteousness. These attitudes insulate MFSA from the critical self-assessment that would lead to the deconstruction of white dominance.

MFSA lets itself off the hook for our own failures and denies our responsibility to change our white dominant culture by comparing ourselves with The United Methodist Church and by perpetuating a scarcity mindset. We focus on goals and outcomes to the exclusion of quality of process. When we have engaged in justice work it has been within the framework of the United Methodist Church. Our work has

focused on changing the INSTITUTION without engaging the justice work from the leadership of People of Color.

Historical Background:

“MFSA was formed by five bishops in 1907 in response to the industrial revolution and child labor. From 1912 to 1952, MFSA was a quasi-official agency of the UMC in dealing with economic issues and social service. During this time, three bishops served on the board or executive committee.

A right-wing campaign in 1952 came down heavily on MFSA and the organization went dormant. There was no staff and most people stopped their support for MFSA. During this time, (from 1953 to 1960) Mark Chamberlain volunteered to keep the organization going by publishing the Social Questions bulletin in his basement in Gresham, Oregon. Even though it is now an organization that stands outside the structure of the United Methodist Church, its roots were put in place by bishops of the UMC. Women and People of Color leaders were not very involved in MFSA until the 1970s.” (Jeanne Knepper, [“Thy Kingdom Come”](#))

The UMC has been a place of consolidating and stockpiling white power and wealth in our society. MFSA was created out of the Church and benefited from this. Clergy (often white men) tend to be dominant voices, resulting in articulations of purpose and identity that center their experiences and concerns. These patterns are rarely challenged in order to address the assumptions of patriarchy and white supremacy shared by the Church and culture more broadly. MFSA assumes that we are all interested in the same justice issues and therefore, any People of Color participants and supporters should also work on those justice issues identified by the white majority. There is frustration and confusion when this doesn’t happen.

MFSA maintains white comfort and control by participating in symbolic gestures that make MFSA feel good or by casting shame and accountability outside the organization. The survey found that over 50% of respondents (both People of Color and white) agree that MFSA does enough to engage communities of color. The data also shows that age plays a role in people’s responses, particularly for People of Color. Survey respondents from People of Color 71+ tend to see MFSA as showing intentionality toward communities of color while younger respondents do not see this intentionality (at over 66%). White people resist the narrative that MFSA has not demonstrated the intentionality to understand the concerns of People of Color at a higher level across all age groups.

Collapsed Percentages		
9) MFSA has not demonstrated the intentionality necessary to deeply understand the concerns and needs of communities of color.	Person of Color	White Person
Agree/Strongly Agree	44.00%	24.18%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	56.00%	75.82%

Collapsed Percentages	18-30	31-50		51-70		71+	
9) MFSA has not demonstrated the intentionality necessary to deeply understand the concerns and needs of communities of color.	White	Person of Color	White	Person of Color	White	Person of Color	White
Agree/Strongly Agree	0.00%	66.67%	35.71%	50.00%	24.14%	25.00%	21.28%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	100.00%	33.33%	64.29%	50.00%	75.86%	75.00%	78.72%

Advancing legislation and resolutions in the UMC is often the only way MFSA conceives of doing justice, the only way we know how to do it. Focusing on the center/power system of the UMC not only limits our analysis but also hinders our imagination toward a changed world.

The commitment of MFSA to appear better than the UMC has made MFSA so focused on the center it has failed to build relationships and accountability to People of Color. Because of this, People of Color do not see MFSA as an organization that can impact their lives or work on their behalf. Further, the preoccupation with the appearance of virtue has rendered MFSA unable to address white dominance in the denomination.

Theme 4: MFSA’s organizational structure and cultural norms are white-centered which prevents it from recognizing and confronting racism. These structures and norms also cause MFSA to burden and undermine People of Color leaders.

Policy statements assume a level of knowledge about institutional operation yet are not easily available or often referred to. Onboarding or orientation is minimal and informal for new leaders, resulting in reliance on established leaders and unspoken patterns of operation. Without intentional board training, recruitment, and onboarding, new board members seem to be unsure of roles, responsibilities, and commitments. It has led to confusion, chaos, and conflict on the board.

In neither [by-laws](#) nor articles of incorporation is the work of dismantling racism specifically named. There are nice sounding ideals about promoting inclusion and solidarity, but then in the bylaws following there is a perpetuation of standard white dominant ways of "doing business" or "doing church" which does not take on dismantling systemic racism.

Efforts toward transparency are being made, but limited avenues of communication make them less effective. Officer positions (chair, treasurer, etc.) are often, but not always, held by white men. Long term leadership by white people seems to drive informal decision making, while formal actions are merely ratification of the informal decisions.

The response to recognizing the white dominance of the organization is often to recruit People of Color to positions on the executive committee. MFSA has been intentional about recruiting People of Color to leadership positions, both staff and volunteer, but these people have usually been folks who "fit the mold" of MFSA's previous leadership structure (defined by white people). New board members are

integrated into the existing culture instead of examining if this is an acceptable culture. MFSA has not changed how we do our meetings together, or how we embody our culture to truly become antiracist.

Racism has been identified as a key factor in the 2010-2015 strategic plan, yet this information has not been acted on in a coherent way with the current board members. By-laws have not been changed to reflect an expanding view of diversity. The chapter handbook is outdated and does not reflect an understanding of the need for diversity. It is hard to know how chapters actually function in relation to diversity and understanding racism due to the relational distance between the chapters and the board of directors.

At best, MFSA has identified racial justice as one issue among many and has not taken an intersectional approach to our work in various issue areas. This means that white perspectives, concerns, and solutions have dominated our discussions. Generally, this means neglecting the ways that People of Color are uniquely impacted by the various injustices we struggle with. At other times it has meant that when racial differences in perspective or impact are raised the coalition becomes divided between "competing" concerns (e.g. concern over conflict between ethnic caucuses and [LGBTQ+](#) advocacy groups, as if LGBTQ+ People of Color were not represented by and active in both).

People don't seem to have a sense of MFSA as a cohesive organization. There is a separation between the national office and chapters. Our constituency has a hard time making sense of our structure. Decision-making is still at times unclear so it is hard to know who is making decisions and on what basis.

We have a lot of well-intentioned people who care a lot and want to make a difference and have similarly progressive and justice-seeking tendencies, but do not know how to harness that good intention into effective impact. We don't know how to measure it or even have this communicated to us because of our disconnection with our chapters and members from the national office and board. We have a lot of organizational and structural work to do.

Theme 5: MFSA's scarcity mindset draws attention away from advocacy for racial justice and toward practical measures that center organizational preservation and limit its sense of what is possible.

The church has been a place of consolidating and stockpiling white power and wealth in our society. MFSA has benefited from this, having been created out of the church as a semi-official agency. MFSA is a highly visible UM organization for justice. Its actions and issues of concern focus on the interests of its predominantly white constituency. MFSA draws attention and resources from across the denomination to these actions and issues.

Leadership in MFSA has been described as recycled. While the same people have held office for years we have been able to move forward without much chaos. New leadership is nominated by existing leadership and elected by affirmation at the annual meeting. New board members are integrated into existing culture instead of examining if this is an acceptable culture.

MFSA is structured (like all non-profits) in a corporate, business style that makes it simple to define what is profitable and what is acceptable. We have to be a financially viable 501(c)3 organization to survive. The requirements for accountability can make focusing on the mission/purpose difficult. The things we invest our time in have to meet certain guidelines. Sometimes, opportunities to work with others or on a non-designated project are hampered by these guidelines.

In many chapters, constituents are almost entirely white, and accountability is expressed in attention to the number on the mailing list and donor rolls. We require regular reports from chapters in order to comply with Federal financial filing requirements. In contrast, we merely "encourage" chapters to participate in anti-racism efforts. This is communicated through the Program Council, but we have not created accountability structures or mandates.

Fundraising and budgeting processes prioritize white comfort. We raise money and use money in the patterns of white dominant culture that function within the organization. MFSA sometimes holds back on taking a strong stand on issues -- fearing too strong a stand may offend some donors. The budget is created by white people and the use of funds mostly benefits white people. We have an expectation that board members will pay their own meeting expenses.

Responding to question #26 "MFSA focuses its work and advocacy to address issues of injustice that impact me and my community," 24% of People of Color disagree, including 50% of Black/African American respondents, compared to 15% of white people.

Collapsed Percentages		
26) MFSA focuses its work and advocacy to address issues of injustice that impact me and my community.	Person of Color	White Person
Agree/Strongly Agree	76.00%	84.62%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	24.00%	15.38%

There is a general feeling of scarcity not only financially but also time, energy, and presence. Our focus on scarcity gets us thinking about money instead of seeing our greatest resources, which are people.

Change and transformation are approached from a white mentality that there is plenty of time for slow progressive change which is seen as more valuable than quick changes. This serves to prioritize white comfort over the lives of black and brown people.

While official statements aspire to justice and transformation, concerns about institutional stability often shape the actions of MFSA as an organization. Without practices of accountability to People of Color, majority-white leadership in the national board and program council (and many chapters) default to norms established by previous leaders rather than responding to the emerging needs of marginalized constituencies.

Theme 6: MFSA members tend to operate out of self-righteousness which results in feeling good about themselves without needing to change, take action, and/or be in an accountable relationship with people of color and people of color communities.

MFSA lets itself off the hook for our failures and denies our responsibility to change our white dominant culture by comparing ourselves with the United Methodist Church. MFSA is a liberal voice within a mainstream denomination and so consider ourselves on the correct side of history.

MFSA understands itself to be an inclusive organization in which all people are welcome to participate. It is aware of various marginalized groups and seeks to help them in their plight. An "us and them" identity persists, in which MFSA is viewed as a resourced, educated, often straight, white, able organization

giving aid to needy causes. MFSA often makes decisions and takes action independent of consultation with People of Color institutions.

Actions previously taken by MFSA toward anti-racist awareness and potential changes show unawareness of continuous patterns of privilege and paternalism. This lack of awareness has been shown in actions that reflect ignorance of intersectionality or are approached with tokenism. There has been no intentionality around building capacity for recognizing racism among existing members. Statements are made about issues but little action follows. Exploitation comes from the tokenizing of People of Color involvement - the need to create diverse-looking teams, events, and groups, when the work of long-term relationship building has not always been done.

Some People of Color have shared they were explicitly asked to leave chapter meetings when they raised up the need to work on racism in the church. The response given to People of Color implies we do not have racism in the church.

MFSA engages in an annual effort to rally to make a statement and join together -- led predominately by white people -- but not any year-long impetus to go beyond the once a year showing. Because it's more a place where people come to agree on their progressiveness, I've also not seen many People of Color present.

Survey responses to questions about MFSA's accountability to Communities of Color reflect the quality of the relationship MFSA has with various racial ethnic caucuses. See the race/ethnicity breakdown of responses to Question 30, which addresses the caucuses directly, "MFSA programs incorporate feedback and suggestions from members of racial ethnic caucuses."

30) MFSA programs incorporate feedback and suggestions from members of racial ethnic caucuses.	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Multi-racial	Native American	White
A - Strongly Agree	20.00%		25.00%	16.67%	25.00%	9.89%
B - Agree	60.00%	33.33%	75.00%	50.00%	25.00%	71.43%
C - Disagree	20.00%	66.67%		16.67%	25.00%	15.38%
D - Strongly Disagree				16.67%	25.00%	3.30%

Among People of Color, there is a small percentage of strong agreement among all People of Color groups except for Black or African American where there is no strong agreement at all. It is interesting to note that each group except for Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) regularly attend and are active in Love Your Neighbor Coalition (LYNC). All Hispanic Latino responses agree with the statement. Also, note that we do have a board member who is active within Methodists Representing the Cause of Hispanic/Latinx Americans (MARCHA).

MFSA sees itself as the liberal prophetic voice that calls the wider United Methodist denomination to accountability. We have been less quick to turn the lens of accountability inwards to address the ways that we uphold and replicate systemic racism. MFSA has focused on trying to change the minds of people who don't think the way we do, rather than engaging in self-criticism or evaluation and reflection.

Avoiding critical self-reflection binds MFSA into an “us and them” model and undermines our social justice witness because we are not doing our own work and cannot show up authentically.

MFSA has relied heavily on the Love Your Neighbor Coalition to facilitate our relationships with People of Color Communities and we have not intentionally cultivated our own relationships directly. It is only recently that relationships have begun to happen through collaborations on webinars.

MFSA has decreasing relevance to middle aged and younger generations. This shows up across race, gender, sexuality, and disability. This is not a trend we had anticipated and must be noted, without distracting us from a focus on anti-racism.

You can access the [raw data from the survey here](#)

Recommendations

These recommendations are not a checklist to be checked off and forgotten but a transformational shift in MFSA's ways of being. This report is not the conclusion of MFSA's transformation. It is a roadmap to move us toward transformation. While our audit was focused on white supremacy and racism, we recognize that systems do not exist in a vacuum; therefore, we are also working to dismantle hetero-patriarchy, colonialism, ableism, and all systems of oppression. Our commitment is an intersectional commitment.

The entire recommendation list is transparent in terms of what is intended, and the reporting process from it is open so there will always be a way for anyone to engage and interact with it. This will include webinars on what we are learning, conversations on our learnings in board and program council meetings, as well as among chapters. MFSA will continue to provide open access and transparency throughout the process from beginning to end. This will be achieved by practices that include releasing meeting notes, agendas, and sharing documents where people can share their feedback on what they've learned or ways in which they could anticipate implementing some of the suggestions. So in other words, how we go through this process is what allows for it to be a shared process.

All these recommendations are grounded in the commitment that this racial audit work will move MFSA towards the work of dismantling white supremacy within the organization. As we carry out this internal work, we will continue to confront white supremacy in the wider denomination with greater integrity and effectiveness.

This is an imperfect roadmap. It includes timeframes and also allows for the flexibility that is needed to change the culture at its root. This process requires slow, intentional work, and consistency. [Here is a recommended timeline resource.](#)

Map a way of being...

The first two recommendation areas are centered around a relational organizing model and education and should be seen as foundations from which the other three recommendation areas (governance, programming, and relationships) emerge. It is anticipated that work on a relational organizing model and education will inform and guide how we live into recommendations around governance, programming and relationships. Board and Chapter leadership participation and attendance at Program Council meetings are pivotal to nurturing anti-racist cultural change throughout MFSA.



Recommendation 1 - Relational Organizing Model

MFSA will create a Racial Audit Implementation Team that is a diverse group of board and program council members to help lead the work of implementing the audit recommendations.

Part 1A - Relational Organizing Model

What will MFSA do?

MFSA will immediately adopt and begin to develop an alternative relational organizing model that...

- moves away from...
 - white male dominated targets
 - the binary view of who is with us and who is against us
 - transactional relationships
- and towards...
 - authentic, accountable, and equitable relationships.

How will MFSA achieve this?

MFSA will achieve this by experimenting with the Board and Program Council in regard to practices around...

- meetings
- consensus building, and
- decision making

that are...

- anti-racist
- anti-colonial, and...
- rooted in authentic, accountable, and equitable relationships.

Resources

MFSA will read and draw inspiration and insight from the following works to achieve this goal. The list below are some suggested resources and is not intended to be the only resources used or a prescribed list:

- adrienne marie brown - *Emergent Strategy*
- Grace Lee Boggs
- [Chaniqua Walker-Barnes](#)
- Allied Media
- Detroit organizing models that have been developed by women of color
- Ally vs Co-conspirator <https://vimeo.com/502300589?ref=em-share>
- Jennifer Harvey
 - <https://jenniferharvey.org/>
 - <https://jenniferharvey.org/other-publications/>
- <https://www.liberatingstructures.com/>
- On Decoloniality: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1myAGNjzhsE>
- Practices for facilitation and consensus building: <https://www.akpress.org/holding-change.html>

Recommended order of work

1. The Board and Program Council will read adrienne marie brown's books *Emergent Strategy* and *Holding Change*. In these books brown identifies, among other things...
 - four universal tools - Trust the People, Principles, Protocols, and Consensus
 - facilitation tools for...
 - adaptation
 - nonlinear/iterative
 - fractal
 - transformative justice
 - creating more possibility
2. From these readings, the Board and Program Council will identify necessary and specific tools that they will test and implement in their work together through the end of 2023 and beyond.
3. MFSA will explore the practices of [appreciative inquiry](#) to see how this might inform how change happens within the organization and how MFSA can influence change outside the organization.
 - <https://www.liberatingstructures.com/5-appreciative-interviews-ai/>

Part 1B - How we Evaluate/Self reflect/Assess, Give Feedback, and Cultivate Accountability

What will MFSA do?

MFSA will develop a culture of self evaluation/assessment, feedback, and accountability that is implemented throughout all areas of the organization.

How will MFSA achieve this?

- MFSA will develop and implement specific practices of self and group evaluation as well as giving and receiving feedback used either before, during, or after meetings (online, in-person, and hybrid) at specific times during the year. These practices will lean into curiosity and discomfort, understanding that we don't learn and grow if we only stay within our comfort zones and that the greatest and fastest growth occurs when we challenge ourselves to grow.

Recommended order of work

- MFSA will adopt a process observation model that will allow process observers to monitor and evaluate our progress in making deeper changes in culture and practice throughout the organization. Feedback from process observers will enable us to assess our progress in living into our anti-racist/anti-colonialist values and assist us in developing the discipline of self and group evaluation and feedback.
 - Process observers will help us identify...
 - Where did we slide into white supremacist values and ways of engaging?
 - Where did we interrupt those? Why? How?
 - What practices/behaviors do we need to commit to interrupting given this?
 - What do we need to cultivate?
 - See also, "Listen with Love" *Emergent Strategy* p. 216
- To continue to deepen our engagement and learning MFSA leaders at all levels of the organization will commit to annual self and organizational evaluation processes:
 - Self Evaluation Question Ideas:

- How have I personally engaged in anti-racist, anti-colonial, authentic, accountable, and equitable relationship building?
- How have I shared power?
- How did I block anti-racist, anti-colonial, authentic, accountable, and equitable relationship building from happening?
- How have I hoarded or taken power away from others?
- Organizational Evaluation
 - Board Eval/Feedback
 - Program Council Eval/Feedback
 - Chapter Eval/Feedback
 - Process Observers Eval/Feedback
 - Additional Resources
 - [Accessibility Audit](#)
 - [Dismantling Ableism Resource List \(Ableism\)](#)
 - [Dismantling Ableism Glossary](#)
 - [Dismantling Ableism Language Guide](#)
 - <https://aarweb.org/AARMBR/AARMBR/Resources-/Certificate-in-Inclusive-Pedagogy.aspx>
 - Decoloniality <https://youtu.be/1myAGNjzhsE>
- [Accountability Council](#)/Group
 - Aim to build an Accountability or Advisory Council/Group from People of Color within and beyond MFSA with whom we have built an honest and reciprocal relationship. This council/group will help MFSA nurture a culture of self evaluation/assessment, feedback, and accountability in our work to dismantle white supremacy within MFSA.

Recommendation 2 - Education

What will MFSA do?

MFSA will continue to educate ourselves on

- white supremacy, colonialism, cis-hetero-patriarchy, and [capitalism](#)

and find ways of...

- practicing liberation and
- interrupting and dismantling these systems of oppression

How will MFSA achieve this?

MFSA will develop a critical collective intersectional systemic analysis and lens in order to more readily recognize and interrupt patterns of white supremacy culture at all levels of the organization. We will engage people in ways that build capacity, create shared language, and introduce people to foundational concepts and frameworks of anti-racism so that we can move towards having movement wide and denominational wide conversations that address the root core issues of white supremacy and systemic racism so that we can make real systemic change.

Recommended order of work

- Engage people in ways that build capacity, create shared language, and introduce people to foundational concepts and frameworks of anti-racism
 - MFSA will intentionally conduct a movement-wide and organization-wide engagement with the Audit Report through public communal learning and public accountability
 - Release the Organizational Audit and conduct a movement wide webinar to present the Audit Team Report
 - Publicly engage with the audit report including but not limited to the following methods:
 - Articles
 - Videos
 - Newsletter, social media, website, etc.
 - Conversations on all levels of the organization (Board, Program Council, Chapters, Movement wide)
 - Publicly share regular progress reports which include key learnings to our movement, [Inter-Ethnic Strategy Development Group \(IESDG\)/Racial Ethnic Caucus Groups](#)
 - Cultivate a shared language and power analysis as we continue to develop a [framework](#) through collaborative work between Board and Program Council, integrating learning from chapters, workshops, and the emerging Accountability Council.
 - Examine white-supremacy **values** so that we can identify and interrupt actions rooted in white-supremacy values through process observation and self-reflection and evaluation.
 - Engage in intentional anti-racism training and continuous conversations/reflection at a broader chapter/membership/movement level. MFSA will work intentionally to address the ways that white leaders and members both actively and passively maintain white dominance. Equip and train them with tools and practices to actively and collectively interrupt how whiteness maintains itself.
 - Using the following methods:
 - Webinars
 - Articles
 - Curricula
 - Drawing from resources including but not limited to:
 - NEXT Church <https://nextchurch.net/antiracism-work/>
 - <https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info>
 - Facing Race Conference
- Develop a intersectional systemic analysis and lens in order to more readily recognize and interrupt patterns of white supremacy culture at all levels of the organization.
 - The Board of Directors in collaboration with the Program Council will work with Joerg Rieger (<https://www.ioergrieger.com>) and the Wendland-Cook Program in Religion and Justice (www.religionandjustice.org) to engage in strategic learnings and conversations that will set the overall programmatic and educational focus for the next few years together
 - Deepen and widen our collective intersectional systemic analysis/lens and commitments, by participating in conferences and events such as:
 - Attend Facing Race Conference “Facing Race: A National Conference is presented by Race Forward, a national non-profit working to advance racial justice in our policies, institutions, and culture. A unique collaborative space for racial justice movement making, Facing Race is the largest multiracial, inter-generational

gathering for organizers, educators, creatives, and other leaders.”
(<https://facingrace.raceforward.org/>)

- 2022 Board members will attend as able
 - 2023 all Board members will attend
 - 2024 all Board and Program Council members will attend
 - 2025 all Board/Program Council members will attend and invite chapter members to attend
- Other events and opportunities that meet these criteria

Recommendation 3 Relationships

What will MFSA do?

MFSA will cultivate reciprocal, supportive, and accountable relationships with people of color-led communities within the UMC and beyond. These relationships are the foundation for sustained, shared work for intersectional justice.

How will MFSA achieve this?

MFSA Board, Program Council, and Chapter leaders will intentionally connect with, educate themselves on, and actively support the work of the racial and ethnic caucuses at the Annual Conference level and national level. MFSA will also establish and/or deepen relationships with People of Color-led organizations beyond the UMC. MFSA will bear the weight of this relationship building, seeking to minimize the additional work for People of Color-led organizations.

Recommended order of work

- Reach out to Racial-Ethnic Caucus leadership to express MFSA’s desire to identify ways that we can cultivate reciprocal, supportive, and accountable relationships with them. This might include:
 - Attend IESDG meetings as a listener to hear what they are doing and ways we can support and be more accountable
 - Identify specific projects IESDG groups are working on and determine ways in which MFSA can meaningfully support and amplify those projects. This should be done locally, at the Annual Conference level, and nationally
 - Hold regular meetings (2-4 times per year) with MFSA Board and Program Council and representatives from Racial-Ethnic Caucuses, GCORR, and/or the Accountability Council to cultivate reciprocal, supportive, and accountable relationships (Some additional ideas for connection below)
 - Invite Racial-Ethnic Caucus groups to have at least one person who is in leadership in a Racial Ethnic Caucus group on the Program Council.
 - Invite the chair of the IESDG to become an Ex-officio member of the Program Council or accountability council
- Within the next 2 to 3 years continue steps toward cultivating accountable relationships between chapters and their local People of Color organizations.
 - The Program Council will model “practices of experimentation that center values of anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and mutual liberation” (see Recommendation 1a).
 - Chapter leadership will share practices modeled at Program Council within their local settings.

- Extend IESDG/Racial-Ethnic caucus group relationship beyond the national level into chapters.

Recommendation 4 Programing

What will MFSA do?

MFSA will increase investment in reciprocal, supportive, and accountable partnerships with organizations of and for People of Color. The relationships and understanding that are generated in this work will strengthen legislative advocacy in its season.

How will MFSA achieve this?

Moving away from white saviorism and toward reciprocal, supportive, and accountable partnerships, MFSA will seek opportunities to collaborate in program creation and legislation. MFSA will actively support the programs and legislation of partner organizations.

Recommended order of work

- Actively support programs of organizations of and for People of Color
 - Elevate awareness about partner organization programs through MFSA communications
 - Join programming as participants
 - Sponsor events
- Partner with People of Color-led organizations to create programs
 - Join a current/potential partner in creating an education/advocacy event/program. (e.g. <https://www.mfsaweb.org/stealing-the-earth>)
 - The goal of one per year for national and for each chapter, starting in 2024
 - When approaching potential partners, come with the attitude of working alongside them rather than assuming the lead or passively supporting them. Identify co-convenors from each organization who will lead the project together.
 - Be mindful of each organization's audiences and resources, and be proactive in bringing your best to the shared work.
- The relationships and understanding that are generated in this work will strengthen legislative advocacy in its season.
 - Join and actively advocate for legislative efforts of People of Color-led organizations
 - Craft legislation that dismantles systems upheld by white supremacy ideology such as, but not limited to, colonialism, cis-heteropatriarchy, and capitalism
 - Recognize and amplify People of Color as leaders in each stage of the legislative process
 - Identifying priorities
 - Writing proposals
 - Advocating for legislation
 - Advocate for People of Color candidates for elected and appointed positions

Recommendation 5 Governance

What will MFSA do?

Reform the organizational structure and cultural norms of MFSA so that it will support people of color leaders and recognize, confront, and interrupt white supremacy and racism.

How will MFSA achieve this?

MFSA will increase intentionality in its recruitment and onboarding, with a specific focus on the experience of people of color and commitments to anti-racism. MFSA will revise organizational documents to interrupt and dismantle white supremacy.

Recommended order of work

- To nurture closer communication and relationship throughout MFSA, require board members and each chapter to actively participate in Program Council meetings as part of their requirement to be an active chapter. Cannot have more than two unexcused absences to be considered active
- MFSA will increase intentionality in its recruitment and onboarding with a specific focus on the experience of people of color and on commitments to anti-racism.
 - Prospective members of the Board of Directors should
 - Intentionally commit to anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and intersectionality
 - Have capacities for critical thinking, a depth of intersectional analysis of systems of oppression, and live with their commitments to racial justice with integrity
 - Be asked questions that might reveal their commitments, for example:
 - How does the gospel speak to the need to dismantle white supremacy?
 - How does it align with your sense of call and vocation?
 - What kinds of actions are we called to take collectively and individually?
 - Ensure new members, especially people of color, feel empowered to fully participate (welcomed, encouraged to dissent, share honest feedback, etc.)
 - Intentionally create and nurture community in the Program Council and Board that adapts and shifts as new members are welcomed
 - Create and uphold a shared Covenant that we will then use in individual self evaluations and group evaluations
 - Create a comprehensive onboarding process for new Board and Program Council members (examples below)
 - Purpose of this body
 - Responsibility of members
 - Familiarity with organizational documents
 - Assign a mentor
- Review and update MFSA Organizational documents (Chapter Handbook, Bylaws, Strategic plan, etc.) to interrupt and dismantle white supremacy within MFSA using what we learned to develop a relational organizing model (values, balance of power, practices, etc.)
 - Use a methodology of decision making that reflects our values and accountabilities. Decisions should be collaborative and consultative.
 - Integrate feedback from process observers (identified in Recommendation 1b)
 - Review and update MFSA Regional Community/Affiliate Handbook or Covenant

- Encourage the use of effective Anti-racist practices learned from the relational organizing model
 - Examples
 - a. Develop Intersectional Anti-racist Decision making questions/practices
- Annually review the bylaws to interrupt and dismantle white supremacy within MFSA using what we learned in developing a relational organizing model
 - Structure the PC to have real decision making, accountability, and connection

Appendix Implementation Recommendations Timeline

This is a recommended working timeline that can and will be adjusted as needed.

Timeline of Recommendations	Relational Organizing Model:		Education:		Relationships:	Programming:	Governance:
	How we Organize	How we evaluate/Develop culture of self reflection and feedback	Internal	Movement Wide			
2022 Q4			Staff and board members attend as able Facing Race November 17-19, 2022 https://facingrace.raceforward.org/		Reach out to Racial-Ethnic Caucus leadership to express MFSA's desire to identify ways that we can cultivate reciprocal, supportive, and accountable relationships with them.		
2023 Q1	MFSA will create a Racial Audit Implementation Team that is a diverse group of board and program council	23Q1-Q3 Accountability	23Q1-Q2 Board of Directors in collaboration with the Program Council will work with Joerg Rieger (https://www.joe	Release the Organizational Audit and conduct movement wide webinar to present the Audit Team Report			Require board members and each chapter to actively participate in Program Council meetings as part of their requirement to

	members to help lead the work of implementing the audit recommendations.	Council/Group	rgrieger.com) and the Wendland-Cook Program in Religion and Justice (www.religionandjustice.org) to engage in strategic learnings and conversations			be an active chapter.
2023 Q2	Board and Program Council will read adrienne marie brown's book Emergent Strategies	23Q2-24Q2 Evaluation Adopt a process observation model		MESA will intentionally conduct a movement wide and organizational wide engagement with the Audit report though public communal learning and		Actively support programs of organizations of and for People of Color

				public accountability			
2023 Q3			Cultivate a shared language and power analysis as we continue to develop a framework through collaborative work between Board and Program Council, integrating learning from chapters, workshops, and the emerging Accountability Council.	Engage in intentional anti-racism training and continuous conversations/reflection at a broader chapter/membership/movement level.		Partner with People of Color-led organizations to create programs	Increase intentionality in its recruitment and onboarding with a specific focus on the experience of people of color and on commitments to anti-racism
2023 Q4	Board and Program Council will identify necessary and specific tools that they will test and implement in	Q4 Self Evaluation and Organizational Evaluation	Staff and all board members attend Facing Race https://facingrace.raceforward.org/				23Q4-25Q1 Review and update MFSA Organizational documents to interrupt and dismantle white supremacy within MFSA using what we learned

	their work together through the end of 2023 and beyond.						developing a relational organizing model
2024 Q1	MFSA will explore the practices of appreciative inquiry	Q1 Engage in Evaluations and make adjustments	Engage in intentional anti-racism training and continuous conversations/reflection at a broader chapter/membership/movement level		Continue steps toward cultivating accountable relationships between chapters and their local People of Color organizations.	The relationships and understanding that are generated in this work will strengthen legislative advocacy in its season.	
2024 Q2							
2024 Q3							
2024 Q4		Self Evaluation and Organizational Evaluation	Staff, board members, and Program Council members attend Facing Race https://facingrace.raceforward.org/				
2025 Q1	Engage with a new	Q1 Engage in Evaluations					

	resource (Reading, Practice, etc.)	and make adjustments					
2025 Q2							
2025 Q3							
2025 Q4		Self Evaluation and Organizational Evaluation	All Board/Program Council members will attend and invite chapter members to attend https://facingrace.raceforward.org/				
2026 Q1		Q1 Engage in Evaluations and make adjustments					
2026 Q2							
2026 Q3							
2026 Q4		Self Evaluation and	All Board/Program Council				

		Organizational Evaluation	members will attend and invite chapter members to attend https://facingrace.raceforward.org/				
2027 Q1		Q1 Engage in Evaluations and make adjustments					
2027 Q2							
2027 Q3							
2027 Q4		Self Evaluation and Organizational Evaluation					