



# **Responding Together Across Races**

## **Part I**

Rev. Dr. Eugene Downing, New Hope Baptist Church  
Rev. Anne Scalfaro, Calvary Baptist Church of Denver

**In *A Strange Freedom*, Howard Thurman defines reconciliation as:**

**“the spiritual and moral discipline which makes loving and respectful relationships between people possible – even in the presence of dramatic cultural differences...**

**Reconciliation begins within when the individual’s inner need to be cared for and understood is met in encounter with God....**

**Experiences of meaning which people share are more compelling than the barriers that separate them.”**

# MISSION & VISION OF PARTNERSHIP

As two congregations that share Baptist heritage, New Hope (NHBC) and Calvary (CBC) partner together:

- to build relationships as we seek to be a part of the work of racial reconciliation in Denver
- to engage in our community around an area of shared social justice concern
- to learn from one another through meal fellowships, panel discussions, educational/artistic events, and shared worship experiences

Both congregations are committed to this partnership for the long-haul. We understand that racial reconciliation is hard work and requires trusting relationships that develop over time. Through this partnership, our vision is to help break the silence about racial justice in our country, be a faith-based model of justice for communities within our city, and transform individual lives within our own congregations as we recognize and understand our implicit and explicit biases.

# WHO WE ARE

## *Context of Calvary*



# WHO WE ARE

## *Context of New Hope*



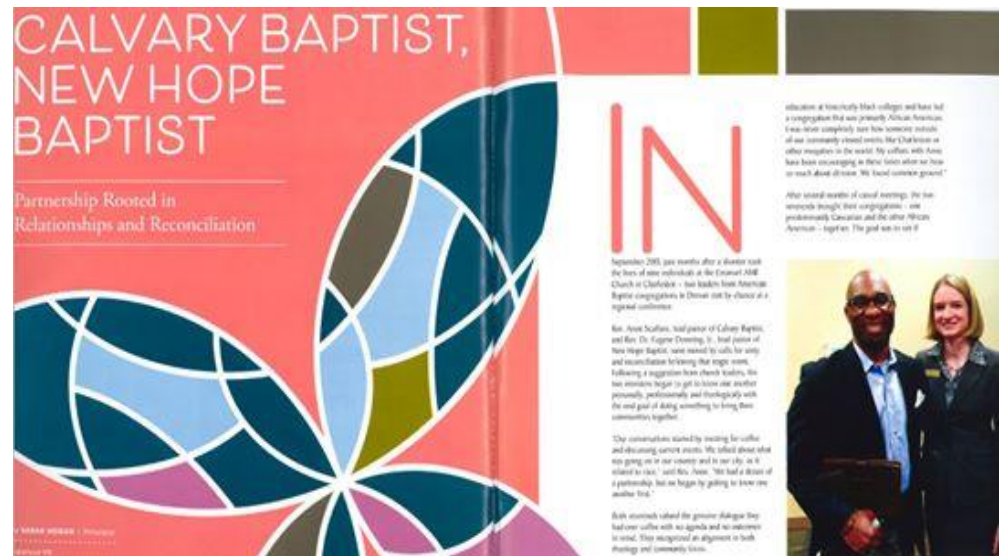
# DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIP

- ABCRM Cross Walking Event →  
Coffee Conversations
- First Congregational Meeting
- Development of Joint Leadership Team
- More Congregational Meetings to Discuss Topics of Community Engagement
- Decision to Focus on Education



# DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIP

- Panel Discussion with Denver Public Schools and then Many More Conversations with DPS
- Stedman Reading Program with Third Graders
- School Partnership & Other Opportunities with DPS
- New Baptist Covenant
- Publicity & Telling Our Story



# DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIP





# MILESTONE IN PARTNERSHIP

*Signed a Covenant of Action with New Baptist Covenant*



# Covenant of Action

*“The Spirit of the Lord Is Upon Us!”*

**We covenant before God and with each other “to announce that this is God’s year to act” (Luke 4:19) in metro-Denver**

- **by building relationships as we seek to be a part of the work of racial reconciliation,**
- **by engaging in our community around an area of shared social justice concern (education, generally; Stedman Elementary School, specifically), and**
- **by learning from one another through meal fellowships, honest conversations, panel discussions, educational/artistic events, and shared worship experiences.**



**NEW BAPTIST  
COVENANT**

# Development of Joint Logo



Calvary Baptist Church  
*Open to all. Closed to none.*



**NEW HOPE**  
BAPTIST CHURCH  
*Inspiring Hope in Christ*

# WHAT WE'VE DONE TOGETHER

## *Congregational Meals & Conversations*



# WHAT WE'VE DONE TOGETHER

*Community Events like Plays & Museums*



# WHAT WE'VE DONE TOGETHER

*Panel Discussions on Education*

*with Local School Districts & Educational Organizations*



# WHAT WE'VE DONE TOGETHER

*Reading Program for 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders at Stedman Elementary*



# WHAT WE'VE DONE TOGETHER

## *Joint Worship Services*

*(Women's Day at New Hope & Good Friday at Calvary)*





# WHAT WE'VE LEARNED AS LEADERS



- Emerging Process with the Spirit
- Alignment is Important
- Mutual Trust is Key
- This is Hard Work
- This is Rewarding Work
- Look for Partners & Supporters
- Embrace Opportunities to Tell the Story

**Q & A**



# **Responding Together Across Races**

## **Part II**

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Rev. Anne Scalfaro, Calvary Baptist Church of Denver

- **I Will Sing a New Song**

- **by Howard Thurman**

- **The old song of my spirit has wearied itself out. It has long ago been learned by my heart; It repeats itself over and over, bringing no added joy to my days or lift to my spirit.**

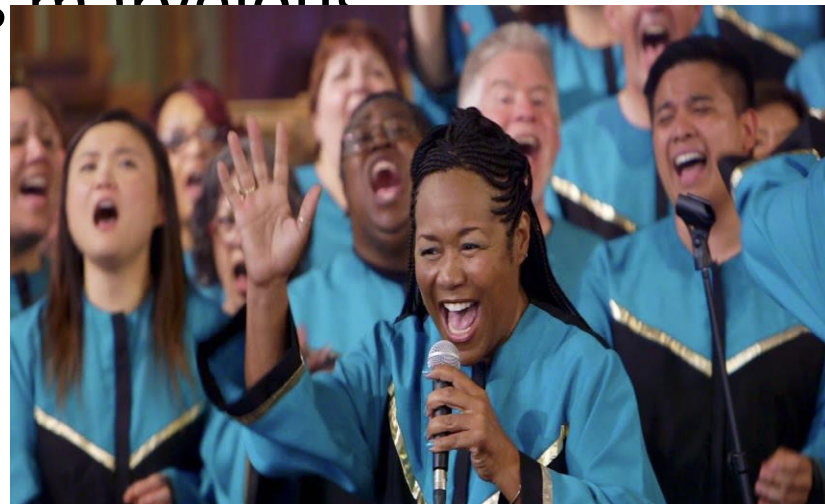
- **I will sing a new song.**

- **I must learn the new song for the new needs. I must fashion new words born of all the new growth of my life – of my mind – of my spirit. I must prepare for new melodies that have never been mine before, that all that is within me may lift my voice unto God. Therefore, I shall rejoice with each new day and delight my spirit in each fresh unfolding. I will sing, this day, a new song unto the Lord.**



## Begin Today with a Self Assessment:

- **Do we really want to sing a new song?**
- Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all people.
- Psalm 96:1



# Individual Work Comes First

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- Group Discussion:
- What is one thing you realize is required of you to engage the work of racial reconciliation which isn't quite complete or that you have yet to act on?
- Name one thing in your life experience which can help you meet that requirement?



# Pastoral Leadership / Congregational Work

Group Discussion:

Before beginning a partnership...ask yourself:

Euro-Americans - What intentional work has your church done to address white supremacy and racial justice in preaching, worship, ministries, and the community? What gaps are there that need to be addressed?

BIPOC - Engaging in reconciliation work requires a sense of dignity separate & apart from that given by majority culture, how is your congregation establishing that?



- Luke 4:16-20
- <sup>16</sup> He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:
  - <sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, <sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
- <sup>20</sup> Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. <sup>21</sup> He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”
- What are examples of Luke 4:18 & 19 in the last 3 years? In what ways does your church speak to these examples?



# Naming/Acknowledging Barriers

**What barriers do you have to this work or do you foresee in your congregations in regard to partnering across races?**

*Be vulnerable here (be honest) – no room in this work for ego/pride*

- **Individual Reflection** – 3-4 minutes – list personal barriers you experience and barriers you foresee within your own congregation/context
- **Small Group Reflection** – share with people next to you
- **Large Group Discussion** – name/voice barriers aloud

As people share in the large group, we invite anyone to offer learnings from your own context or experience to help encourage one another

# Key Questions for Beginning a Partnership

- **Who do you already know in your community that you could reach out to for a conversation to explore a partnership?**
- List several names of pastors/leaders/organizations – it may take several conversations to find the right partner
- **What will this work require of me and my church?**
- Be specific: think through your time as a pastor/leader, your current ministry priorities, congregational education, preaching, cultivation of lay leadership (list names of specific leaders you're thinking of), long-term partnership (not just events or another mission partner – but what does it really mean to partner with another church for the long haul?)
- **What are the opportunities in our community?**
- Again, be specific – what organizations or leaders do you know who could speak to issues in your community that need cross-racial presence/participation, engagement?
- **What will you do when you get discouraged or make a misstep? Who will encourage you? Who will hold you accountable? Be specific.**



- In *This Here Flesh*, Cole Arthur Riley writes, “When woublers, finally becoming exhausted of their dominion, dismantle their delusion of heroism or victimhood and begin to tell the truth of their offense, a sacred rest becomes available to them...Truth telling is critical to repair. But confession alone which tends to serve the confessor more than the oppressed will never be enough.”

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- “Reconciliation is so elusive because few ever occupy a state of sincere remorse. If we are to be reconciled, the offender must become disturbed by the state of soul – a contrition that births apology not for the sake of its own forgiveness but to honor the dignity that was once at risk.”



Late in 1943 Dr. Alfred G. Fisk, a Presbyterian clergyman and professor of philosophy in San Francisco, met with a few persons of various races and faiths who were deeply concerned with the absence of bridges of understanding among the varied races, cultures, and faiths presented in American society. Their desire to found an interracial fellowship led them to Dr. Howard Thurman, who left his position as of Dean of the Chapel at Howard University to join Dr. Fisk in a team ministry.

The formal inaugural service for The Church for The Fellowship of All Peoples took place on October 8, 1944 at the First Unitarian Church in San Francisco. Among those participating in this inaugural service were: Dr. Ezra Van Nuys of the San Francisco Presbytery; Dr. John Leffler of the San Francisco Council of Churches; Rabbi Eliot Bernstein of the Northern California Board of Rabbis and Cantors; Dr. Buell Gallagher co-pastor of the South Berkeley Community Church; Bishop Edward Parson of the Episcopal Diocese of California; Dr. C.F. Dutton of the First Unitarian Church; Joseph James of the San Francisco NAACP; and Ira C. Lee, Director of the Chinese YMCA.

breathing deeply in  
and out

**Q & A**