

The Oxford Journal for
Intercultural Mission.

Issue two – Summer 2023



OJIM

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The Oxford Journal for Intercultural Mission is a popular and easy-to-read journal published quarterly by St Paul's, Slough – the designated intercultural mission-resourcing hub in the Diocese of Oxford. Occasionally, a special issue will be published to mark or celebrate an event such as Race Equality Week, Black History Month or South Asian Heritage Month.

The journal will offer a range of reflections on issues impacting the growth of intercultural mission and ministry in the Church of England. These will include UKME (United Kingdom Minority Ethnic) and GMH (Global Majority Heritage) participation, governance structures, ministry discernment and training, racial justice, cultural awareness, preaching and evangelism.

We aim to provide a forum for bloggers, church planters, students, leaders, teachers, and preachers to share experiences, expertise, research, and intercultural mission tools to inspire a movement and growth of intercultural worshipping communities within the Church of England. Find us online at oxford.anglican.org/ojim

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Requirements

Articles

OJIM publishes articles that are 1500–1800 words (including endnotes and bibliography). Usually, the General Editor will invite a contributor to submit an article, giving them the theme for the issue and the deadline for submission. However, prospecting contributors to OJIM should submit articles by email to the General Editor to: EditorOJIM@stpaulsslough.org.uk

OJIM is an easy-to-read journal. Therefore, articles use clear, concise English and consistently adopt UK spelling and punctuation conventions and one type of referencing throughout the article.

To ensure consistency of style in other areas, please contact the General Editor for style guidelines.

Book Reviews

The General Editor selects the books to be reviewed and individuals to do the review. Even so, prospective reviewers may contact the General Editor suggesting a specific book to be reviewed or submitting a book review for consideration.

Disclaimer

The opinions in any article published in this journal are the author's alone and do not necessarily represent the Editors, St Paul's, Slough, or the Diocese of Oxford.

INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR



The Rt Revd Dr Timothy Wambunya leads the intercultural mission-resourcing hub at St Paul's, Slough, in the Diocese of Oxford. Tim was in the first cohort of black ordinands who began training at the Simon of Cyrene Theological Institute in Wandsworth. He was ordained more than 25 years ago and served his curacy in Southall, in a majority Asian congregation. After that, he was incumbent in Islington, North London, with a significant African-Caribbean congregation. He was then a mission partner, serving as the Principal of Carlile College, Nairobi, before being consecrated Bishop in the Anglican Church of Kenya. He holds a PhD in Paremiology.

This issue of *The Oxford Journal for Intercultural Mission* is being published to commemorate two significant anniversaries: the second anniversary of the publication of *From Lament to Action* (the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce report, which called for action on racial justice within the Church of England), and the thirtieth anniversary of the death of Stephen Lawrence.

On 22 April 1993, Stephen Lawrence, an 18-year-old black man studying to become an architect, was brutally murdered in an unprovoked racist attack by a group of white men. This heinous crime, coupled with the subsequent failure of the police to bring the murderers to justice despite community awareness, epitomised the height of injustice in UK society. Today, the name Stephen Lawrence serves as a rallying cry, urging us to strive for racial justice and envision a church and society that values every individual, regardless of ethnicity, culture, or language.

During one of the national events held to commemorate this anniversary, Bishop Christopher, the Bishop of Southwark, acknowledged the distance that society, the police, and the Church of England still

need to traverse to eradicate racism. He stated, 'When Stephen died, many of us hoped it would be a wake-up call for our [church] and society.'

Like Bishop Christopher, many within the Church of England hoped never to witness such tragic, racially motivated violence and injustice again. Unfortunately, these hopes have been dashed.

While no minister within the Church of England has lost their life due to racially motivated physical violence, numerous ministers from UKME/GMH backgrounds endure depression and have come dangerously close to taking their own lives because of racial mistreatment.

Despite significant initiatives aimed at promoting racial justice, the Church of England as an institution remains sluggish and reluctant to address this pervasive issue. Instead of acting urgently and energetically, it often adopts a less proactive approach, failing to acknowledge, confront, and actively counter racism. A significant lack of understanding exists regarding the nature of racism and how it manifests within the

church today. There is a failure to provide explicit examples of racism and strategies to combat it. Consequently, the institutional response to overcoming racism will always fall short, regardless of its good intentions and funding.

Considering these circumstances, it is fitting to dedicate this issue to exploring the theme 'Bible, church, and racism', and to delve into subjects that discussions of racism within the Church of England frequently touch upon. We hope these articles will enhance our comprehension of racism, its manifestations, and how it can be combated.

May I encourage you to engage with this issue of the journal? Our contributors will inspire you to champion racial justice and foster global cultural awareness. These two factors are pivotal in cultivating intercultural worshipping communities within the Church of England.

Bishop Tim

THIS QUARTER

Daniel Odhiambo, in his article 'The church is not called to race or colour blindness', challenges the notion of colour blindness in matters of racial diversity and church leadership. Drawing from biblical examples, Daniel argues that racial identity does matter and that the early church serves as an example of embracing diversity in leadership. His thought-provoking piece encourages us to envision church leadership that reflects the diversity of its congregation.

John Root, widely recognised as the father of intercultural mission in the Church of England, contributes three articles. In his first, 'Symptoms of institutional racism in the Church of England', John emphasises the need not just to acknowledge but to thoroughly diagnose the church's institutional racism. He outlines various symptoms, including what he describes as 'wilful apathy' among church authorities. He proposes potential remedies for this deep-seated issue.

In his second article, 'The church can provide an appropriate intercultural worship service', John suggests five possible avenues for creating a church

service that resonates culturally and professionally with diverse congregations.

In his third article, John offers his perspective on the differing attention given to Windrush 75 and Windrush 50. He attributes this to the increasing ethnic diversity and improved harmony witnessed over the past 25 years.

Lara Deen, the Intercultural Ministry Enabler at St Paul's, Slough, contributes additional paragraphs to John's third article. She looks to the future optimistically and hopes that race concerns will diminish as we continue a positive trajectory.

Guy Hewitt, the Church of England's Director of Racial Justice, contributes a powerful piece titled 'Cleansing racism through truth-telling and reconciliation'. Guy delves into the historical context of England, particularly during colonialism, and highlights the church's role in perpetuating domination and a singular Anglo-Saxon imprint on matters of faith and worship. He explores how embracing equality, diversity, and inclusion can lead to new opportunities for intercultural mission and community building within the church.

Isaac Charles Bortey Borquaye, also known as Guvna B, an award-winning Christian artist of Ghanaian heritage, reflects on the thirtieth anniversary of Stephen Lawrence's murder. In this article he acknowledges some progress regarding racial justice in the church and in society, but notes there is still a long way to go to achieve true equality.

Tim Wambunya, the General Editor of the journal, concludes this issue with his article, 'God's heart for all nations: fostering inclusion, bridging divides, growing understanding'. Tim explores the biblical foundation for intercultural mission, emphasising the fundamental principles that guide and inspire individuals, communities, and institutions in this vital work. He underscores the significance of racial justice in intercultural mission and advocates for building bridges and cultivating cultural awareness to foster genuine understanding and inclusion.

Book reviews can be found on page 31.

THE CHURCH IS NOT CALLED TO RACE OR COLOUR BLINDNESS



The Revd Daniel Odhiambo is an Anglican pastor-theologian from Kenya. He currently lives in Amsterdam, where he supports the Church of England Chaplaincy of Amsterdam in the Diocese in Europe. He holds a Master of Arts in Intercultural Theology and a Master of Evangelical Theology from the Theologische Universiteit Kampen and Tyndale Theological Seminary, respectively. Daniel is passionate about intercultural ministry and is academically interested in how the Reformed-Protestant tradition can be contextualised for today's multicultural world. He is married to Javellah, a Rwandese.

Following the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020, the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce published a report titled *From Lament to Action*.¹ The report proposed a suite of changes to deal with what the taskforce identifies as 'institutional racism' in the Church of England. While the report was welcomed by many and lauded particularly for its sense of urgency, it received a fair share of criticism, particularly from ethnic minority members of the Church of England. And even the idea that the Church of England is institutionally racist, a critical working hypothesis of the report, has been challenged by some.²

The most contentious issue within the report, however, was its key point. The report proposed affirmative action – the imposition of quotas to significantly increase ethnic minority representation in all the leadership levels in the Church of England. It recommended, for example, that General Synod co-opts 10 UKME/GMH candidates as members, by

November 2021; that 30% of the next Strategic Leadership Development Programme (SLDP) cohort be from UKME/GMH backgrounds; that shortlists for senior clergy appointments (eg, bishops, archdeacons, cathedral deans and residentiary canons) include at least one UKME/GMH candidate by Sept 2021; that 15% of Bishops' Councils members be from UKME/GMH backgrounds by Sept 2021; and that targets be set for 2030 so that 15% of members of governance teams, at all levels (from PCC to General Synod), be from UKME/GMH backgrounds.

These proposals were highly ambitious, and many of those that should have been met have, as yet, not been. Indeed, most critics called them unrealistic acts of virtue signalling and tokenism par excellence. Calvin Robinson rather forcefully contended: 'In any case, quotas are patronising and silly. Where does the church expect to get these extra numbers from unless they plan on recruiting Muslims to become ordained priests?'³

Andrew Tettenborn also criticised the report, asserting that the Church of England had changed its emphasis from preaching the gospel to trying to make itself more representative. What does skin colour have to do with church leadership in the light of passages like Galatians 3:28 – neither Jew nor Greek? He writes:

'In a church's governing body, by all means it is right to ask that all shades of spirituality or theology – liberal and conservative, high church and evangelical, and so on – be able to have their voice heard and be represented. But whatever the position of secular governments, it is not the function of a church to be representative of – or promote the interests of – other secular social groups, whether denominated by politics, social class, or race.'⁴

Though I sympathise with Robinson's criticism, I find Tettenborn's unfair, and I hope to show that from scripture.

Ethnic representation in the early church

The Bible is not race or colour-blind,⁵ but instead celebrates ethnic diversity, and the early church seems to choose leaders from minority ethnic backgrounds deliberately. Before I look at a few of the passages, it is important to say something about Galatians 3:28. It says:

‘There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.’

This passage is used irresponsibly in debates about race and women leaders in the church. What is missed by those who drag this verse into these debates is that the verse is not speaking about church leadership, but rather the blessing of being sons of God and heirs of the Abrahamic promise. This verse does not undo racial diversity (Jew, Gentile), gender difference (male, female) or social status (enslaved person, free). These differences do not somehow disappear because we are Christians. Paul’s point is that no one is discriminated against, based on their race, gender or social status, as far as being Abraham’s offspring and thus heirs according to promise. Everyone is equally an offspring of Abraham and a son of God, regardless of race, gender or social status.

So, here are a few passages from the book of Acts on ethnic representation in church leadership:

Acts 6:1-7 is a significant passage in this debate. The context is that there is a significant racial tension that threatens the spread of the gospel. One racial group feels discriminated against by another: the Christian Hellenistic Jews (who had not come from the mainstream Hebraic culture of the Apostles) began to complain about discrimination in the daily distributions. The scriptures do not tell us whether the complaint was verifiable or whether it was a false accusation. The apostles, however, take it so seriously that for the first time in the book of Acts everything stops and the entire church gathers.

The solution was just as radical. The church leadership structure is modified and a new leadership unit is formed: the diaconate. The diaconate was an important office, working with the delegated power and authority of the apostles, and their significance can be seen from the qualifications required of those to fill this important office. Interestingly, most of the seven men whom the church appointed to the work had Hellenistic names – names that would have sounded foreign to any Christian whose principal language was Aramaic and Hebrew. The solution was

specific and culturally sensitive, as it took authority away from those abusing it (the Hebraic Jews) and intentionally placed it with seven Hellenistic Jews who could best address the issue. In other words, ethnic minorities are placed in appropriate leadership positions to solve racial division and discrimination.

Acts 13:1-3 is another potent passage to consider in this conversation. The setting is Antioch, a massive city with an eclectic mix of cultures and ethnicities. Dan Steel points out that when the city was first built, it was constructed as a divided city – with a literal wall to keep Syrians and Greeks apart. By the time Luke wrote, however, at least 18 different ethnic groups were living within the city’s boundaries. Nevertheless, division remained, and these groups largely kept to their communities. When we hear that it is in Antioch that the believers were first called Christians (Acts 11:26) – that is presumably, at least partly, because they were difficult to categorise. In a place where people kept to themselves, there was a group that did not.⁶

We are then given a list of the names of the five leaders of this church. (Based in a very cosmopolitan city, it was most likely quite an ethnically diverse church.) The names are:⁷

'Barnabas.' He is already a familiar name in the early church. He is identified as early as Acts 4:36-37, where he is described as a Jewish man of Levitical heritage. Geographically, Barnabas was of Cyprian birth. Cyprus is an island country in the Mediterranean Sea. Culturally, Cyprus was annexed to Rome in 58 BC. A Jew living on a Roman-governed island, his background is quite wealthy. He was known among the early church as generous, since he sold his property and gave the money to the apostles (4:37).

'Simeon, who was called Niger.' Not much is known about Simeon, except that the text indicates he was called Niger. This probably indicates his complexion, since *Niger*, in Latin, means black or refers to his geographical origins.

'Lucius of Cyrene.' Cyrene was the capital of the Roman province of Cyrenaica in northern Africa (modern Libya). The city was prosperous, and it was no surprise that merchants would turn up in Antioch.

'Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod, the tetrarch.' Here, Manaen is described as someone brought up with Herod. This could mean that Manaen was either a foster brother of Herod or his childhood friend. Just one chapter earlier, Herod (Agrippa I) passes away. Herod ruled over Jerusalem and was Roman royalty.

This would have several implications for Manaen. First, it would have indicated that, geographically, he was from Jerusalem. Second, it would also have indicated his high place in society. Whether from childhood or a personal relationship, it was no small matter to be considered the friend of a government leader. Third, this would have indicated that Manaen was an older man. Herod Agrippa was born around 20 BC, meaning that Manaen could have been in his mid-60s.

'Saul.' We know Paul to have been a Jewish Pharisee, zealous for the destruction of the church (Acts 8:1-3; Phil. 3:2-6). As was common, he engaged in manual labour to maintain himself and would have been comparatively poor.

The point to be taken from this list of leaders is that they are reasonably diverse – ethnically, in social status, and age. In this group, we find a Jewish man who grew up on a Roman island, two men likely from North Africa, a socially elite man growing up in Jerusalem, and an educated Pharisee who is a Roman citizen. It is an ethnically diverse leadership for an ethnically diverse church in an ethnically diverse city.

There are many other passages one could go to, for example the remarkable list in Romans 15. Still, I will restrict myself to the Book of Acts. Acts 16:1-5 is an important

periscope in Luke's narrative, as the gospel goes to Europe for the first time. Timothy is introduced to us, and his racial identity is critical. He is a biracial child, and it seems that Paul selects him for, among other things, his racial identity, which makes him helpful to his missionary activities. Willie James Wennings imaginatively notes:

'Timothy appears, the mulatto child... there somewhere between Derbe and Lystra was someone who enfolded interracial space in his body... What every people find most unsettling is a body formed between two peoples, their people and that of another people, especially the enemy... Timothy constitutes the in-between. His life represents the shifting plates of identity on which we all stand...'⁸

As those of us who believe in biblical episcopacy know, Timothy was what we now call a bishop. How about a biracial leader in a context where Jew-Gentile relations were always tight? Genius!

Three convictions

Does skin colour or racial identity count in church governance? The answer is not an unqualified yes.

First, it is important to be firmly grounded in the conviction that only the gospel produces this sort of gospel diversity. Said differently,

the gospel creates the racial diversity we see in the New Testament, even among leaders. Dan Steel is helpful here: 'The early Christians defied cultural norms... The church was being built, not on a social agenda, but on the gospel of Jesus Christ.'

This is important because racism is a matter of the heart. More UKME/GMH leaders will not change people's hearts; only the gospel can. Centring on racial diversity easily sidelines the gospel. It is of note that the report even suggests introducing things like 'black theology' into the curriculum for Church of England ordinands. The problem is that 'black theology' does not represent black Christians. Indeed, many black Christians find that theology is entirely foreign to them.

Ian Paul also perceptively notes how the racially diverse lists given in the New Testament are presented factually. There has been no attempt at positive discrimination. This is just the way things were. We thus miss the point when we try to impose racial diversity through worldly methods.

That said, envisioning a racially diverse leadership, representative of the members, is an excellent and godly call. It has been pointed out that the Anti-Racism report seems primarily concerned with high-level leadership positions for UKME/

GMH people, something that will only benefit ambitious people interested in national governance, but not the average lay person. I do not think so. Diverse leadership is good for everyone. Those who know what it is like to be excluded are probably those best suited to lead the church into inclusion and belonging. At least, that is the pattern we see in Acts 6.

If recent years have taught us something, it has been that the West has forgotten about pandemics, war and anything that interferes with its privileged, comfortable life. What better people to lead now than people for whom pandemics and wars are a common experience?

Last but not least, racial identity is not a leadership trait. A concern with the quota system is that it would demean the UKME/GMH people appointed. Regardless of their qualifications or abilities, they are reduced to one thing: their skin colour or racial heritage. 'You are only in this position because we needed a brown or black person.' Of course, the other danger is that we will have people appointed to positions for which they are not qualified, just to meet quota requirements. 'Tokenism!' Again in Acts 6, although the deacons appointed are from a minority ethnic community, they meet remarkably high qualifications. Godliness, character, and biblical qualifications for overseers

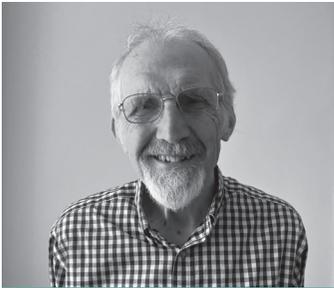
and deacons – these things we should value. They are of first importance and non-negotiable. However, we should not use the excuse of avoiding 'tokenism' to marginalise UKME/GMH people from leadership and ministry. Many UKME/GMH people meet the high gospel qualifications and appointing them could potentially revitalise the Church of England.

Conclusion

Racial identity and colour do matter. We are not called to be race- or colour-blind on racial diversity and leadership questions. The vision of diverse, multicultural, and intercultural leadership is itself something the Bible affirms. It has many gains for the Church of England. It is something for which all Christians should pray and long for. However, it must be recognised that only the gospel can turn this vision into reality, not political gymnastics or imposed superficial quotas (though quotas can be helpful in awakening public consciousness to the injustice that exists). If the Lord would bless the Church of England with biblically qualified bishops, how wonderful that would be.



SYMPTOMS OF INSTITUTIONAL RACISM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



The Revd John Root is the father of Intercultural Mission in the Church of England. For 31 years he was vicar in Alperton, near Wembley, where the church started two Asian-language congregations. Before that, he was Vice-Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. He ministered in Harlesden and a church plant on a housing estate in Hackney. He is now involved in retirement ministry in Tottenham. John does a weekly blog, *Out of Many, One People: thoughts on the church in a multi-ethnic society, on faith and race* (accessed at johnroot@substack.com). His wife, Sheila, is from Malaysia, of Malayalee background. Their son is a co-founder of an IT start-up company.

In February 2020, the Archbishop of Canterbury said the Church of England was 'institutionally racist', but with little amplification. Stated so baldly, the term is no more helpful than telling a doctor, 'I am sick'. The doctor needs to hear the symptoms of your sickness and then move on to give a *diagnosis* and then, hopefully, work with you to suggest a *cure*.

The term first achieved widespread use in the Macpherson report into the death of Stephen Lawrence, which identified a specific list of factors where the police failed to respond adequately to the murder of a young black man: a casual, lethargic response immediately following the murder; the assumption that it was probably two-sided youth violence; a lack of empathy in its approach to the victim's family. All were undergirded by a 'culture' marked by prejudice against black people.

So, what specifically are the symptoms of institutional racism in the Church of England that warrant such an allegation?

Three preliminary points

Firstly, the term does not indicate overt, conscious intent – although the Metropolitan Police's initial aggrieved response to Macpherson seemed to take it this way. The concept refers to the actual results of an institution's work, not what it intends. So, undoubtedly, people in the Church of England have behaved in racist ways. For example, those appalling examples of clergy positively discouraging black people from attending in the early days of immigration, but that is not the institution itself acting in racist ways. The controversial black academic Ibram X. Kendi speaks of racism as the property of *policies*, not *people*.

Secondly, the fact that ethnic minorities are not equal participants, especially in senior leadership, in an institution such as the Church of England, does not indicate institutional racism – although it may cause us to consider the question. Ethnic groups can have very different characteristics, so an assumption that there

should be identical outcomes is misplaced. The practice of comparing percentages of participation or leadership can only indicate differences, not explain them.

The third point is that the factors behind institutional racism can be compared to a wedge of cheese. At one end are *thick* patterns of activity, which are easily identifiable; at the other end of the wedge are *thin*, elusive patterns, which may be impossible for institutions to eliminate.

'Invisible' minorities

'Who are we when we are seen but not spotlighted, when we are humble but not invisible, when we matter but not so much that the mattering drives us mad?' lamented Patricia J. Williams in her essays based on her superb 1997 Reith Lectures, *'Seeing a Colour-Blind Future: The Paradox of Race'*.¹ When the Church of England has been talking to itself, black people have been invisible. A survey of our literature indicates that this is so.

A History of the Church of England, 1945-1980

by Paul Welsby (OUP, 1984) covered the period when England very definitely became a multi-ethnic society. Parishes had long been working at the challenges that were being raised. The Church of England was developing instruments to respond. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsay, had already been the chairman of the National Council of Commonwealth Immigrants, the first national body to address the burgeoning challenge of ethnic diversity. But none of this is mentioned in Welsby's book. He describes (sympathetically, I think) the offence many English bishops felt when Bishop Lakdasa de Mel, Metropolitan of India, Burma, and Ceylon, scorned their patronising readiness to condescend to schemes of unity overseas but to resist them at home. However, the significant multi-ethnic developments that happened within England during this period are deemed of no significance for the life and ministry of the Church of England.

More serious is such obliviousness in more recent books, which consciously adopt 'progressive' approaches to the church's life in a rapidly changing context.

Mission-shaped church, a report to the 2004 Synod, took a close look at culture yet, scandalously, did not recognise the diversity and growth of Britain's minority

ethnic populations as among the significant social trends of the past 30 years! Nor did it consider the church's specific ministry to minority ethnic groups.

Beyond Common Worship: Anglican identity and liturgical diversity

by Mark Earey (SCM Press, 2013) explored how commonality can remain within Anglican worship, as churches change and emerge in an increasingly fluid society, but without referencing how we might respond to the exponential increase in national diversity that a multi-ethnic society generates. I try to rectify this in my *Worship in a Multi-Ethnic Society*, Grove Booklet W236.

Church for Every Context by Michael Moynagh (SCM Press, 2012). Surely this title arouses the hope that serious thought will be given to the church's ministry to people from ethnic minorities? However, despite its 490 pages, one searches its index in vain for such words as 'race', 'ethnicity', 'black', 'Asian', or even 'African'. The title should be 'Church for Every White Context'. Overall, church planting literature suggests we are more concerned about ministry to surfers than Somalis.

To return to Patricia J. Williams: she wrote that how black people are viewed exhibits 'a dynamic... that ricochets between hypervisibility and oblivion'.² Today, bursting out of oblivion, Black

Lives Matter has created a 'hypervisibility' that will not disappear soon. But neither state is conducive to wise strategies for effective ministry. It seems that while ethnic minorities are in the church's mind periodically, they are rarely in the church's heart.

Inert authorities in the Church of England

'Wilful apathy' was the phrase used to me by an American priest in the 1970s to describe the Church of England's response to a multi-racial society. Since then, we have had *Faith in the City: a call to action for church and nation*; the setting up of the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC), and the periodic bouts of accusation and apology that have followed their reports; and attempts (which need long-term evaluation) to increase the numbers of minority ethnic clergy and then senior leaders, but few initiatives to train and equip all leaders or the wider church.

In an interesting article in the *Church Times*, Pat Ashworth described the thoughtful initiatives to develop rural ministry in England. Although I would guess there are more clergy that have a close familiarity with rural society than with multi-ethnic society, we have not been anywhere near as fruitful in responding to the latter context. (Nevertheless, it is

encouraging that, under the influence of the Bishop of Burnley and others, initiatives are being taken to develop effective estates ministry; a specific challenge that tended to get buried under the broader question of working-class ministry in *Faith in the City*.)

In particular, the *Church Times* article spotlighted several potentially transferable initiatives in rural ministry that contrast with our failing creativity and inertia when it comes to cross-cultural ministry.

1. An institute for intercultural mission

A couple I know moved from two multi-ethnic parishes in west London to a joint parish ministry in the Yorkshire Dales. An informal condition of their appointment was that they attended a course at the Arthur Rank Centre for rural ministry, which – good to report – they found helpful. No such support would have been available had they been moving in the opposite direction. The TV series ‘Rev’ showed Adam Smallbone as a decent, well-meaning, likeable fish out of water, having moved from a country parish to the inner city. However, there was no institution capable of helping Adam orient himself to his new context. Dioceses such as London run one-day courses on ‘diversity’, but the types of diversity considered are far too disparate to equip people for specific, cross-cultural encounters. The Arthur

Rank Centre’s strapline of ‘confident rural ministry’ cries out for a cross-cultural counterpart.

Such an institution could contribute to initial training, provide in-service training, and be a focus for accumulating a body of shared and developing experience in such ministry. Part of the original brief for CMEAC was to share good practice. However, in contrast to its concern to forward minority ethnic leaders, that responsibility has lain dormant. Anne Morisy, a leading thinker on urban ministry, has said the parish where I was vicar should have had ‘beacon status’, but there are no mechanisms in the church whereby positive experience can be retained and passed on, or initiatives assessed and learned from.

2. Urban and cross-cultural pathways

A couple from our church was getting married in the West Country. It so happened that friends lived nearby, and we went to see them after the wedding. It so happened that their son-in-law was visiting them. It so happened that he had a friend who had deferred ordination for a year so that he could work in a multi-ethnic parish. It so happened we needed such a curate, and thankfully the bishop allowed us to receive this ordinand from another diocese.

As a result, the curate was instrumental in setting up a multi-ethnic youth group,

helping start a Hindi/Urdu service, and strengthening our ministry to Tamil people. It was also beneficial for the development of his future cross-cultural ministry. One response to this story is to praise God for his providential over-arching care for his people. Another (not contradictory) response is to say that no serious, professional organisation should be so careless and haphazard in deploying its human resources.

The *Church Times* article referred to the Sarum Centre’s Rural Ministry Pathway, identifying, preparing, and placing people with a vocation for rural ministry. Since *Faith in the City* (1985), we have been aware of the challenge for the church of urban and cross-cultural ministry. Yet, there is still no national plan to call, train, place, and support people for such ministries. Some urban parishes, like some rural parishes, are not that different from the national norm; but others include minority ethnic sub-cultures upon which the church has virtually no impact, and nor will it until it is intentional about training and commissioning ministers specifically for such ministry.

At selection, we identify and seek to prepare ordinands who are seen as able to make a profound contribution to academic life. It is good that we now also focus on training ‘pioneer’ ministers. However, we

need to give much more specific attention to developing people who are called to minister to particular ethnic minorities.

3. Training in racial and cultural awareness

As well as specific pathways for those with a calling to cross-cultural ministry, there is a real need in the church for all its ministers to be aware of the issues of race in our society, and confident in relating to people of other cultures and backgrounds. This should be happening informally, as our training institutions become more ethnically mixed. (It is significant that the best book in this area, Malcolm Patten's *Leading a Multi-Cultural Church*, grew initially from his friendship with a black student at college.) Yet it is alarming how often minority ethnic students on courses speak of their peers' unconcern to learn from their experiences and backgrounds.

There needs to be more formal input into the curriculum. Even training in 'racial awareness' has now dropped off the syllabus; while more specific subjects that arise for ministers – in pastoral care, evangelism, and congregational formation – have *never* been there. In 2004, Les Isaac OBE, the founder of Street Pastors, wrote that for two of their three years of college training, students should be placed in multi-ethnic communities. That such an experienced minister should make this strong claim underlines his assessment that there is a considerable gap in cross-cultural experience that needs to be bridged if the church is to be at home in a multi-ethnic society. While my own attempts to persuade colleges to feature such issues have come to very little, the explosion of Black Lives Matter into public consciousness has made them rush to catch up.

Conclusion

Patricia J. Williams used the word 'ricochet' to describe black people's jarring experience of alternating between oblivion and hypervisibility. Perhaps this exists in tandem with white authorities ricocheting between paralysis, that's undergirded by guilt, and a desperate sense that something must be done. What has been absent is the creation of considered, specific, and regularly evaluated responses to new and challenging contexts. Ultimately, grace from God and between each other will liberate us to take the initiative with confidence and humility.



CLEANSING RACISM THROUGH TRUTH-TELLING AND RECONCILIATION



The Revd Guy Hewitt spent most of his career in the public sector in London, the Caribbean and internationally. He served as a High Commissioner for Barbados in Britain and a UN Permanent Representative. An ordained priest, he made a vocational change in 2018 to become a pastor in Florida, returning to London in 2022 and assuming the role of Inaugural Director of Racial Justice in the Church of England.

'Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.' (Matt. 9:17)

I firmly believe that intercultural mission and interethnic congregations are the new wine the church needs to enhance its liturgy and worship and build its mission and community.

I believe that the Church of England is at an inflexion point on social issues, moving from word to deed, from lament to action and, touched by the better angels of our nature, is now better able to realise our Five Marks of Mission,¹ which include transforming unjust structures and giving full meaning to our vision of being more diverse and fully representing the communities we serve.

The matter of equality, diversity and inclusion is particularly crucial for our faith today, for while religious feeling,

according to census data, is waning among white Britons, 72% of black Britons define themselves as Christian (half a million more than in 2011), and 60% of non-British white residents consider themselves Christian (a million more since the last census).

Racism and colonialism

Racism was not always the natural state of affairs between white and black people. When Europeans first visited Africa, they encountered empires and cities as advanced as their own. However, with the 'discovery' of the 'New World', exploiting these new colonial possessions required a workforce neither the Europeans nor the decimated Native American populations could supply.

Therefore, the roots of modern Western racism are located in greed and a Eurocentric narcissism that gave them a sense of dominion over the Earth and all its resources. Through pseudoscience, social theory, and a colonised version of Christianity, Europeans and their North

American cousins dichotomised humanity into the 'civilised' and the 'savages'.

Armed with reasoned justification and technological advances, they plundered the African continent and enslaved its inhabitants to toil in the Americas. 'Whiteness', rooted in the histories of colonialism and slavery, is linked to power, property, and control, and the concomitant right to marginalise and subjugate.

The rationale underpinning the British Empire, as coined by David Livingstone, was 'liberation' through 'the three Cs: commerce, Christianity, and civilisation'. This so-called 'liberation' would lead to oppression and underdevelopment in many parts of Commonwealth Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Gulf, and the Pacific.

Religion and multiculturalism

Colonialism was multifaceted and had a cultural power dimension that has often been ignored, or lost, within the broader narratives of conquest, capitalism, and

modernisation. Colonialism's cultural manifestations – its unspoken values, hidden assumptions, and the way dominated populations were negatively portrayed – legitimised racial and cultural stereotypes, crucial to the exercise of power.

The objectification of ethnocultural differences seems to be reflected in current local notions of 'invasions' by refugees and of 'illegal' asylum seekers, perpetuating the racial and ethnocultural animus that was an essential ingredient of colonialism.

King Charles III proclaimed that the UK's diversity is its greatest strength, but we recognise that this latent power has yet to be realised, as our kingdom is disunited ethnically. Why do I say this? As I have travelled across the UK, I have met black and brown people who consider themselves Irish, Welsh, and Scots, but I am yet to meet a black or brown English man or woman. In the recent population census, someone in England who described themselves as 'Black, Black British, Caribbean or African' could only state that their ethnic group is also 'Caribbean, African or other Black'. There was no option to be Black and English. Here, we are 'othered' and deemed 'British'; in this part of the Kingdom, ethnicity and nationality are inextricably bound together.

Religion and race

There was no more significant corruption of the gospel than the odious commingling of religion, politics, and wealth accumulation with the institutionalisation of transatlantic slavery. This great crime against humanity, which enriched nations and individuals alike, providing the financial and organisational means to develop our modern world, was constructed legally and justified scripturally (Gen. 9:18-27, Eph. 6:5-7), politically, and socially.

The forensic audit undertaken by the Church Commissioners into historical links to transatlantic slavery revealed that a significant part of the church's asset base was derived from slavery, with much of the profits from this heinously immoral trade in African souls directed towards paying English clergy. The UCL *Legacies of British Slavery* project² revealed that nearly a hundred Church of England clergymen were involved in compensation claims when slavery was abolished.

The censored 'Slave' Bible of 1808, published for enslaved people (included in the Lambeth Palace Library exhibition *Enslavement: Voices from the Archives* – part of the church's truth-telling and reconciliation over its historical links to the transatlantic slave trade), spoke to me across the expanse of many centuries,

challenging me to put all possible distance between our generation and those who perverted the gospel and used the cross not to liberate but to enslave.

This missionary-redacted version of the Bible contained only 10% of the Old Testament and 50% of the New Testament. All references to freedom and escape from slavery were removed, including the Book of Exodus, which chronicles the Hebrew journey out of Egyptian slavery. Put another way; there are 1,189 chapters in a standard Bible. This version contains only 232.

Contextualising mission and multiculturalism

Cultural awareness should be at the epicentre of our mission and ministry, informed by our Lord Jesus Christ's commissioning us, in Matt. 28:18-20, to 'go and make disciples of all nations'. To do this effectively requires us to understand the community and the culture that God has called us to minister within. Race and other related social issues impact our mission field. They can be bridges or barriers to others receiving the good news of Christ.

Forging a new humanity in Christ

Aware of the intersectionality that creates advantages and disadvantages, and that there is no hierarchy of disadvantages, I

maintain a broad perspective of equality, diversity, and inclusion, including, among other things, social issues such as income levels, gender, age (youth), disability, educational attainment, sexuality and related matters such as rural/urban divide, and climate justice.

'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.' (Gal. 3:28-29).

This verse seems to strike a modern note about equality, diversity, and inclusion. It is contrary to what Paul's contemporaries experienced around them where, as today, such ethnic, social, and gender distinctions directed human interactions. But for Paul, as it should be for us, hope is to be found in Christ.

Neither Jew nor Gentile. Not long after the resurrection, Christians resolved the dominant view informed by Hebrew scripture that, for legitimacy, Gentile converts to Christ must be circumcised. Paul posited that the days of separation

of Jews from Gentiles belonged to a prior Abrahamic age that ended with the new era of incorporation in Christ.

Neither slave nor free. Regrettably, it would take 1800 years for Christians to distance themselves from the institution of slavery, with the caveat that systemic racism still prevails.

No longer male and female. Similarly, gender inequalities persist in Christianity, as does the binary categorisation of gender. Galatians 3 contains diverse influences on multiculturalism:

1. Christological – our identity and single humanity in Christ should have an egalitarian influence on our relationships with others. **2. Eschatological** – Gentiles are blessed by a shared faith of Abraham and, far from being subsidiary or secondary, their blessing is necessary for the blessing of Jews. One is conditional on the other. And **3. Missiological** – ethnic, cultural and social distinctions are rendered meaningless because they had been eradicated by the cross and resurrection, which inaugurated a new order and relegated old prejudices to a past age.

Conclusion

Rather than being overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task, we should go forward trusting that God's peace, justice, and love are with us. We shall flourish with God's help and the many blessings offered by being faithful to the gospel. Let's keep hope alive and continue our walk of faith with love.

Such a journey of reconciliation will neither be swift nor easy. Generations of marginalisation and injustice cannot be healed overnight. Racism and cultural biases are not stains to be washed away but, to quote the Chair of the Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice, Lord Boateng, a 'gaping wound in the body of Christ' that, to heal, needs to be cleansed by truth-telling and reconciliation.



30 YEARS AFTER STEPHEN LAWRENCE'S MURDER, HOW MUCH PROGRESS HAS THE CHURCH MADE IN RACIAL JUSTICE?



Isaac Charles Bortey Borquaye, better known as **Guvna B**, is a rapper, author and broadcaster from Custom House, London. He has released 10 albums and two books, produced segments for the BBC, and is a football pundit for Sky Sports News' Good Morning Transfers. He has also appeared on television and in schools, discussing topics that affect young people from underprivileged communities.

In 2017, sadly I lost my dad to cancer, which turned my world upside down. He had moved from Ghana to London with my mum in their early 20s, searching for new opportunities. He wanted to work hard, be smart, and provide our family with the best life possible.

Our story was familiar to the London council estate where I grew up. Working-class Africans, Asians, Caribbeans, Europeans, South Americans and, of course, the native British, all wanted the same. The beautiful thing was that even though we looked different, the melting pot of all our differences united us.

A few weeks after my dad's death, I discovered he had left me some money. I was surprised because, for the most part, my family just managed to keep our heads above water; we were rarely in surplus. His gift was a testament to just how hard he worked and how important it was

for him to secure our future. The money contributed to the deposit my wife and I put down on our first property.

Filled with excitement, I went down a rabbit hole on the internet a week before we moved. I wanted to know more about the south-east-London street we would soon call home. What I found stopped me in my tracks. The most famous person that had lived there was one of the suspected murderers of 18-year-old Stephen Lawrence. He was one of the five men arrested over the racially motivated attack in 1993 that sent shockwaves through the nation.

Murder of Stephen Lawrence

Just like my mum and dad, Stephen's parents had emigrated from their home country – not Ghana but Jamaica – and they, too, were searching for opportunity. There's often a misconception that by 'opportunity', immigrants mean 'handouts'.

They don't. Mass migration from the Caribbean (on the likes of the HMT Empire Windrush) was driven by the need for workers to help rebuild England after the Second World War.

It was supposed to be mutually beneficial. But it's one thing for immigrants to realise they might not be as welcome as they first thought; it is another thing to admit their children are unsafe on the streets. That was Doreen and Neville Lawrence's story. Their son, Stephen, was slain by a gang of white thugs because of his skin colour. They treated him as though he didn't belong.

In the aftermath of his murder, the Churches Commission for Racial Justice (CCRJ) got behind the campaign to bring Stephen's killers to justice by not only marching peacefully through the streets of London as a form of protest, but by putting their tithes where their mouths were and providing financial support for the Lawrences' privately funded campaign.

This campaign resulted in an inquiry in 1997, and in 1999 the Macpherson report was published, a ground-breaking 350-page document that branded the police force institutionally racist and, eventually, in 2012, helped bring two of Stephen's killers to justice. While the CCRJ played its part, most of the wider church left much to be desired. From speaking to friends and Christians who were a lot older than I was in 1993, I understand that although some churches supported the Lawrences and called for policy change, a large number didn't view the case as enough of a priority.

With more than 40,000 registered churches in the UK, justice is unlikely to roll like a mighty river (see Amos 5:24) if only a tiny portion of that number engages. I was only four years old when Stephen was killed. Still, I certainly remember being hurt and disappointed by my church's passivity towards George Floyd's murder 27 years later. On the Sunday that followed his death, a mention, a prayer, a public sign that they cared would have sufficed. But there was nothing.

Even though it was uncomfortable to move to the road where one of Stephen's suspected killers had lived, I eventually felt peace because, as a society, we have moved forward in the area of racial justice.

In 2022 the Church of England, for example, publicly accepted responsibility and apologised for the part that it played in the slave trade. This conversation had previously been swept under the carpet (C of E money produced from the slave trade helped pay the incomes of poor clergy in the eighteenth century). Justin Welby said he was profoundly sorry and introduced a fund 'to address past wrongs'. Considering these milestones and the importance of George Floyd's life and death in opening society's eyes to racism, I figured that what had happened to Stephen was unlikely to happen to me – or so I thought.

On 24 August 2021, I went to get a coffee in my local area. As I left the coffee shop and approached my car, three white men were standing in front of it. I said: 'Excuse me, please', but they acted as if they couldn't hear me. I asked again and they ignored me again, so I gently brushed past them. One of the men threw hot coffee in my face, followed by a punch. This all happened within a five-minute drive of where Stephen Lawrence was murdered.

I called the police. When they arrived at the scene, the three men had made a run for it and I was there alone. One of the first questions the officers asked me was if I had been in trouble with the police

before. A strange question to lead with, considering I was the one calling for help. I'm not sure what relevance that question held or whether it would have been asked of an elderly victim of an attack or a white middle-class woman.

Another question they asked me was whether the perpetrators said anything racist. I realised then that maybe we had not made the great strides in society that we think we have. The perpetrators didn't say the 'N' word, but that doesn't mean their actions weren't racially motivated. People may have learned what *not* to say, but it does not mean they have changed their prejudices.

1 Samuel 16 says that man looks 'at the outward appearance', but God 'looks at the heart', and I wonder if that is what we as a church need to grab hold of in this season. In a time where church staff and volunteer teams are getting more diverse, and black people are treated a little more equally, we must ensure we do not enter the realm of learning how to behave and how to tick boxes without changing our hearts.

Corporate responsibility

I grew up in a majority black Pentecostal east London church led by a Ghanaian pastor. It felt like an extension of what

it was like inside my home. Soulful and energetic praise and worship music, great African food after services, powerful sermons, and a room filled with people that looked like my family. We felt at home and like we belonged. But even though our church was many amazing things, one thing it was not was diverse.

In my late teens, I wanted to find faith for myself – not one lived vicariously through my parents – so I started to search for a church of my own. I happened to stumble across one that I liked, in the heart of London, which happened to be a majority-white church. The community aspect was amazing. The church attracted people from many different walks of life and many students, which I quite liked because I was at a similar stage of life. I felt I belonged, and enjoyed being exposed to a different expression of worship and a different way to do church.

A seat at the table

A few years later, the church started to plant congregations in inner-city areas with many nationalities. As a result, it became more racially diverse, but interestingly it stayed extremely white at the leadership and board levels. Black leaders were deployed to look after the new locations, but were more like puppets than pastors. All strategy and messaging were passed down from the top,

and the black leaders were mainly there to distribute it to their diverse communities.

In his book *We Need to Talk About Race* (SPCK), Ben Lindsay describes this phenomenon as ‘the Guinness effect’: white majority leadership at the top and black majority congregation below. Although assuming a leadership position does not end racism, a seat at the table sends the message that your voice is valid, that we want to hear you, and that you belong here. That church has since made genuine efforts to find more of a balance from the top down, and I’ve spoken to many pastors who openly admit they also have work to do in this area.

Speaking of balance and belonging, a pastor friend of mine was leading a church just outside London when God spoke to him and said the church was currently for the wealthy and the white. ‘It needs to be a church for everyone’, God said, so my friend strategically made the youth group more outreach-focused. He attracted young people from different backgrounds, classes, nationalities, and economic statuses.

If black people feel unwelcome, we need to ask why

Some of these young people had issues from childhood that they were working

through, some were vulnerable, and some were thriving, but they all found a home at this church. God was moving powerfully – but then my friend started to get emails from the white, wealthy people in his congregation who had been there a while. One family after another said they were leaving the church. When he asked why, they said they did not like the direction it was going in. In other words, they did not want to mix with those who were not like them.

Love one another

Stephen Lawrence was treated as though he did not belong, and the repercussions of that were catastrophic. I want to think the church has made promising strides around racial justice, but if there are black people in our congregations who feel they are not welcome, we need to ask why that is and what needs to change.

Before George Floyd, there was Stephen Lawrence and countless others. Thirty years after Stephen’s murder, I cannot help but ask: have attitudes towards race changed – in broader society or the church? I travel to many churches up and down the country to play music and speak to young people. From what I have seen and heard, churches are not only becoming more diverse from the top down, but they are also thinking more about the experiences of their black

members and how they can build bridges. But we cannot rest on our laurels because there is still much work to be done.

Christians are some of the best at helping those in need. The church I am a part of now (which incidentally also has work to do around race) launched the Love Your Neighbour campaign a couple of years ago, of which many churches nationwide have become a part. It has united the church beautifully and provided more than a million meals a month to those in need. It is incredible, but God is calling us to do more.

Handouts can feel great because they make us feel important, but do you know what is more costly? The church is giving up some of its wealth, comfort, and positioning, and leaving the four walls of the building to get its hands dirty. Partnering, collaborating, and building relationships with organisations and communities actively fighting against issues like racism is a start. We have to begin treating those we help like people and not projects. When we start to do this, we tend to focus less on political or denominational agendas and more on love and empathy.

Conclusion

Whether it is the life-ending racist attack on Stephen Lawrence, the slow nine-minute murder of George Floyd, or the shocking attack on me in broad daylight, the thread that holds these three completely different events together is an attitude of hate. The antidote for that is love, something Jesus intended for the church to have in abundance. The mandate is clear: 'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' (John 13:34-35).

GM

THE CHURCH CAN PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE INTERCULTURAL WORSHIP SERVICE



The Revd John Root is the father of intercultural mission in the Church of England. For 31 years he was vicar in Alperton, near Wembley, where the church started two Asian-language congregations. Before that, he was Vice-Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. He ministered in Harlesden and a church plant on a housing estate in Hackney. He is now involved in retirement ministry in Tottenham. John does a weekly blog, *Out of Many, One People: thoughts on the church in a multi-ethnic society, on faith and race* (accessed at johnroot@substack.com). His wife Sheila is from Malaysia, of Malayalee background. Their son is a co-founder of an IT start-up company.

Some years ago, the Nigerian Chaplain in Britain referred to those Nigerians in England with continuing involvement in the Church of England as 'the remnant'. So many had moved into mainly African Pentecostal churches such as the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG).

I attended a training day for church planters in the Nigerian-originated, fast-growing RCCG a few years ago. The quality of the 75 or so people in the room was breathtaking. The impact would be transformative if they were all to join the Church of England overnight. However, you and I know it will not happen, because the Church of England is too established in its ways to embrace or create space for such gifted and passionate ethnic minority people. Is this because of 'institutional racism'?

'Thick' and 'thin' institutional racism

Institutional racism in the Church of England is now a generally accepted fact, but two significant priorities prove that the Church of England is failing to provide appropriately for people of different cultures. Firstly, our failure to foreground the reality of being in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society, and secondly, making provision for that reality by equipping our church leaders for intercultural mission. The oft-emphasised failure to produce leaders from minority ethnic backgrounds is, in many ways, secondary to these foundational failures. We can describe this failure of what we do as 'thick' institutional racism.

By contrast, 'thin' institutional racism raises the question of who we are. I doubt if any of the RCCG church planters described above would have seen themselves as 'victims' of Church of England racism or felt excluded. They did not see good enough

reasons to be a part of it. 'Thin' institutional racism, then, explores what the Church of England is and what it should become if it is to provide a more effective ministry to and with people from ethnic minorities (not just, of course, Chinese, Nigerians, Kenyans, or Pakistanis), and whether or not, in Macpherson's terms, it is being 'unprofessional' in failing to evolve in response to cultural diversity.¹

How the church could change

Here are five proposed changes for how we might provide a culturally and professionally appropriate service. Let us explore them thoughtfully and thoroughly.

1. More expressive worship

'Expressiveness' is a problematic term to define. It is generally agreed that it highlights expressing feelings more readily and doing so with greater intensity and more display. In this respect, most (though not all) ethnic minority cultures differ from

the more reserved English norm. This becomes particularly clear when we gather to worship.²

For example, in a survey of several multi-ethnic churches, David Baldwin, lecturer in Mission at Oak Hill College, identified how in several instances, disappointment at the more restrained style of musical worship led to tensions, even to the withdrawal of minority ethnic members. A black member of our church identified a significant contrast in a survey of black men's attitudes to the Church of England among her acquaintances. For the older men, experiences of racist rejection by churches in the early days of settlement in the UK left a legacy of disengagement and distrust; for the younger men, the problem was simply the same as with younger white men of similar social and educational backgrounds: the church was 'boring'. So, churches with more 'expressive' worship, such as Hillsong, draw young people from various ethnic groups. This finding confirms American evidence that flourishing multi-ethnic churches tend to be charismatic.

2. More entrepreneurial ministry

Several of the RCCG church planters mentioned above were doctoral students, living where there was no nearby RCCG church. In their window of three years or so here, they used their spare time to plant a church. It is a 'travelling light' ministry. After

being authorised by the centre, renting a building is only the cost. The leader's training (as at the meeting described above) is on the job. If the church takes root then, praise God, a new congregation! If not, then very little has been lost.

The contrast with ministry in the Church of England is stark. The process, from first raising the question of ordination through selection, training and a curacy, can take eight years before a person has responsibility for a parish, during which time there has been a considerable investment of money and expertise by the church.

More broadly, there is a significant difference between what is required of Anglican incumbents compared to leaders (quite often also founders) of diaspora congregations.

The latter usually minister to people of similar ethnicity, age, social background, and spiritual/theological formation. In contrast, the Church of England's parochial vision ideally involves ministry across widespread ethnic diversity, different ages, and educational backgrounds, and usually with a range of spirituality and theological outlook. In this respect, leadership is a more demanding task. It also means the church must be more cautious about whom it selects. A wrong

decision can mean the church is saddled with ineffective personnel at a time when both 'undemanding' posts and money are increasingly hard to find. So, the Church of England is structured to move cautiously and slowly.

3. More authoritarian leadership

The members at the church planters meeting, described above, had been told to be there by the denomination's central leadership. People had travelled down from Aberdeen. Failure to attend would have put at risk their authorisation to minister. Expectations of leadership vary substantially across cultures, stemming back, of course, to how children relate to parents and other older adults. English church leaders can be taken aback by the dictatorial approach of their African counterparts, who in turn can view with scorn the weakness of the authorities in England, whether in churches or education. If the RCCG leadership calls a fast, all the members are expected to fast.

The division and debate in the Church of England over homosexuality is significant in this context. For many from ethnic minorities, the church's failure to maintain a clear, orthodox position is cause, in itself, to be outside it.

4. More supernatural theology

A few years ago, I had the experience of teaching a one-week Urban Mission course at an informal Pentecostal Bible college in North London, where around three-quarters of the participants were African. Let me describe my experience at prayer time at the end of one morning: I said I was driving off to see my mother, who had been diagnosed with terminal cancer. The students were very concerned and compassionate; prayed together fervently; and at the end, said I should not be concerned for my mother was certainly healed. Should I believe my spirit-filled African brothers and sisters or the ungracious cancer specialist? As a child of the European Enlightenment, I believed the latter, preferring to cherish the last few loving weeks with my mother rather than hold to a fervent, tense hope that she would be healed. (After a few years, the college stopped inviting me, suspecting, I think, that I was insufficiently illuminist.)

Books such as Philip Jenkins' *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford, 2006) chart the growth of 'southern' churches with a strong, literal biblical emphasis, usually allied with a strong focus on healing and victory over evil spirits. As with the other characteristics listed here, the differences between minority ethnic Christians and the

range found in the Church of England are not absolute, but clearly marked.

5. More overt evangelism

Why do churches like RCCG grow? Because they make evangelism front and centre in the life of the whole congregation – more than they perhaps realise. They benefit from ministering to a still religiously responsive culture (although there are not many more than a million Africans in Britain and their hopes for a successful 'reverse mission' – spreading the gospel to secularised white English people – has not borne significant fruit).

Nevertheless, among their respective ethnic groups, diasporic congregations (or multi-ethnic mega-churches) have effectively evangelised and constitute a challenge to the Church of England. By contrast, Southwark Diocese's 'Ouseley Report'³ on its ministry in a multi-ethnic context spoke only in the weakest terms of evangelism. However, the Church of England will only become an energetic multi-ethnic body if it is committed to boldly sharing a life-transforming faith in Jesus with people of all backgrounds. Failing that, we become – despite our good intentions – what we too often are: elderly, white, middle-class.

What next?

The above menu is suggested as ways to 'provide an appropriate and professional service' to people of minority ethnic cultures. 'Thin' institutional racism raises the question of how far the institution itself needs to change to become a more credible spiritual home to more than ten million people whose cultures have shades of difference from the culture of the English people and of their inherited church.

However, what is the responsibility of the Church of England here: to become a widely acceptable spiritual home or to hold faithfully to a specific Anglican identity? The Church of England (contrary to widespread assumptions) is not a monopoly national institution, unlike Parliament or the judiciary. You cannot decide what sort of law you get tried under, but you can decide what church you attend. So, churches, while having a responsibility to be welcoming, do not have a responsibility to change and cease to be the sort of institution they believe themselves called to be.

The question highlights the issue of what may be termed the 'dual vocation' of the Church of England:

- Is it called to be 'Anglican' – a particular Christian tradition that has emerged

in England and is characterised by, for example, a tradition of liturgical and sacramental worship; and a theology which is always ready to bring to scripture serious questions raised for us by our surrounding intellectual and social context?

- Or is it called to be the church for all the people living in England and seeking to live out the Christian faith in response to the cultural context in which they now live, including implementing change when that context sees a massive change in its ethnic composition?

Once, these two vocations were in harness. In a traditional, prescriptive society, people receive the religious tradition given to them, but our church has become voluntary – a group you join through cultural affinity. We must decide how far we hold to a traditional Anglican identity (representing the accumulated wisdom that sources long-term, resilient, faithful obedience) and how far we acculturate to the considerable diversity that marks England today.

One might argue that cathedrals hold a reasonably stable continuing Anglican base, while parish churches and, especially, church plants respond to diverse contexts. A ‘failure to provide’, by holding on to what you believe is vital to your identity, could be regarded as institutional racism. Indeed, virtually all minority ethnic churches can also be classed as institutionally racist since they have no intention of adapting their ways of doing things to provide an ‘appropriate service’ to people of other ethnicities.

A more robust logic requires that the church seeks, here and now, to manifest the vision of Revelation 7:9 – of people ‘from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb’. That means scrutinising and being ready to change what the church does and what the church is, to be an institution that can gather together in worship people across the spectrum envisaged in Revelation.

WHY HAS WINDRUSH HAD SO MUCH ATTENTION, 75 YEARS ON?



The Revd John Root was vicar in Alperton, near Wembley, where the church started two Asian-language congregations. Before that, he was Vice-Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. He ministered in Harlesden and a church plant on a housing estate in Hackney.



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In early 1998, there was a letter in *The Times* from Arthur Torrington, pointing out that in their list of coming events and anniversaries for that year, the paper made no mention that it was the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the *Empire Windrush*. Mike and Trevor Phillips' book *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain*, and the accompanying television series, drew attention. Still, by and large, *Windrush 50* was of niche interest rather than an event of national significance.

By contrast, the 75th anniversary has seen a torrent of responses: full newspaper coverage, television programmes, church services, and reports such as that by British Future. That report includes an extensive listing of nationwide celebrations and events. And it is no coincidence that books, such as those by Linton Kwesi Johnson and Tomiwa Owolade, have come out around this time. Overall, the contrast between the muted coverage of *Windrush 50* and the high-profile response to *Windrush 75* has been significant and exciting. So why

has the bandwagon started rolling now? Here are some suggestions to explain the phenomena:

Higher African-Caribbean profile – an opportunity to affirm

The recent, superb, brilliantly eloquent, generous-hearted and thoughtful Richard Dimbleby Lecture by the actor David Harewood not only exemplified but also pointed out and celebrated the growing contribution of African-Caribbean people to national life, especially in the arts and media. Their significant contribution in football (but, ominously, not in cricket) is prominent. Jude Bellingham, the son of a white ex-policeman, black mother, and now probably the world's most coveted footballer, underlines the point: increasingly, African-Caribbean people have become a natural part of the fabric of national life. But alongside the increasing flow of high-profile celebrities is a more profound appreciation of the working contribution of black people to national life, especially in health and transport. (Interestingly, a

recent survey shows that the most stressful occupations are not being CEO of a major company or a Premier League football manager but being a bus driver – many bus drivers have a *Windrush* heritage). Slow but steady geographical diffusion and slowly increasing social mobility have made equal-status inter-ethnic relationships more common and heightened appreciation of the contributions of 'ordinary' African-Caribbean people.

As a corollary, surveys such as *Racism and Ethnic Inequality in a Time of Crisis*¹ consistently indicate that 78% of African-Caribbean people have a positive sense of belonging to this society. Despite the racism on the one side and hurt and anger on the other, overall both parties are optimistic about the consequences of the *Windrush* arrivals.

A shameful past – an opportunity to expiate

The word '*Windrush*' only came into widespread usage because of the

'Windrush scandal', made public in 2018 when it became fully apparent that people who had been schooled, worked, married, and become parents and grandparents in this country were being deported (or threatened with deportation), or were losing a range of benefits and rights because of the Government's 'hostile environment' policy. That the manifest injustices could be tolerated for so long, and could impact so many people, indicated an extraordinary level of institutional racism and cold-hearted unconcern for the rights of ordinary black people. It also served to both revivify and vindicate awareness of the direct racism black people had suffered in the early days of settlement, and that such racism and injustice were not over.

Consequently, the national narrative has struggled to catch up and make up for such shame. The Church of England's General Synod, February 2020, passed a motion apologising for its rejection and mistreatment of earlier migrants. Further, the death of George Floyd and the subsequent Black Lives Matter protests brought the grievances felt by descendants of the 'Windrush generation' to national attention. Therefore, the attention lavished on Windrush 75 reflects, in considerable part, a sense of national guilt and a desire to make amends. We are anxious for the situation now to look good. Because of

such events, the situation has changed markedly over the last 25 years and the last five years.

It was significant that in British Future's survey of what the Government's policies should be to reach 'net zero racism' by 2048, the black respondents emphasised fair chances in employment, and the white respondents tougher rules on online hatred. White people want race relations to avoid unpleasantness, and black people want them to be just. This has not been explicit. Perhaps a sense of 'let's just move on' better expresses the national aspiration. Nonetheless, the felt need to recognise and celebrate the arrival of SS *Windrush* testifies to the uneasiness of British consciousness and the need for some gesture to express our guilt and shame.

A sense of improvement – an opportunity to celebrate

One significant difference between 1998 and 2023 is the rapid increase in the minority ethnic proportion of the population. The 2000 Parekh Report: *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*,² rightly warned against the over-simplification of seeing Britain as a '95:5' society, split between a white majority and bulked together 'ethnic' minority. Today, the proportion of people from ethnic

minorities has risen substantially – we could (unhelpfully) speak of an '80:20' society. However, in this context it needs to be noted that African-Caribbeans are the only ethnic minority that is not growing in Britain. Only 60% of children born to African-Caribbean mothers have African-Caribbean fathers. In that sense, the success of integration is also (as it has been for the Jews) a threat to the continuing strength of the minority.

Celebrating Windrush can be seen as a coded way of celebrating something much broader – a multi-ethnic society, where the first immigrants from the Caribbean were simply the forerunners of a wider, more significant, more complex movement into a highly diverse society. So, in the past 25 years, ethnic diversity has increased and become more harmonious. People want to affirm the present situation. After a few initial wrinkles, there developed a national consensus that footballers should take the knee – which indicated, in the international context, an assertion of a raised level of British race relations.

In what might be regarded as an overkill of positivity and desire to do the right thing, black people have become ubiquitous in television adverts, and not only given significant roles in present-day TV series but even artificially written into unlikely appearances in period dramas. In such

developments, it is legitimate to see goodwill and an uneasy pressure to atone for past guilt.

But even where such developments are largely window-dressing, they do not entirely misrepresent the product inside. There is a sense of a more relaxed atmosphere on the streets than in previous decades, when tensions were higher. The

importance of progress being made is that race is a less difficult subject to discuss.

There can still be a 'feel bad' tone to the debate, but now increasingly, a 'feel good' tone is more prominent (or even at times a 'feeling good about feeling bad' tone, especially if reading Reni Eddo-Lodge's *Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race!*).

Who knows what Windrush 100 will be like? Hopefully, the positive trajectory will have continued – even if it is too optimistic to hope to be at a point where concern about race has diminished, the centenary will be a curio rather than a focus for concern.

Conclusion

The contrast between the subdued response to Windrush 50 and the nationwide attention paid to Windrush 75 signifies a significant shift in attitudes. The growing profile and contributions of African-Caribbean people, coupled with a sense of national guilt, have driven this change, and greater diversity and

integration in society have fostered a desire to affirm the present multi-ethnic Britain.

Challenges may persist, but the journey from Windrush 50 to Windrush 75 offers a glimpse of a more united and diverse future for the nation.



GOD'S HEART FOR ALL NATIONS: FOSTERING INCLUSION, BRIDGING DIVIDES, GROWING UNDERSTANDING



The Rt Revd Dr Timothy Wambunya is the General Editor of *The Oxford Journal for Intercultural Mission*. He recently founded the Anglican Network for Intercultural Churches to champion forming intercultural worshipping communities through a learning community of diverse stakeholders. Following in the footsteps of John Root, David Bronnert, and other pioneers, Tim is a strong champion for intercultural mission in the Church of England.

The phrase 'God's heart for all nations' emphasises a divine perspective that seeks to bring people together. 'Fostering inclusion, bridging divides and growing understanding' suggests promoting unity and inclusivity among different nations and cultures. Genuine intercultural mission should intentionally reach out to all people and integrate them as they love God and each other.

In John 17:21, we read Jesus' prayer for his disciples: '... that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me'. This verse highlights Jesus' heartfelt prayer for unity among his followers, mirroring the unity he shares with God the Father. This unity is intended to be deep, intimate, and spiritual, reflecting the perfect unity within the Trinity. The purpose of this unity is to bear witness to the truth of Jesus'

mission, leading the world to believe in him. As believers, we should strive for this unity, knowing that it not only brings glory to God but also testifies to the gospel's transformative power. Therefore, unity and inclusion are critical drivers for compelling intercultural mission.

This article has three broad goals: First, to explore the biblical foundation for intercultural mission, highlighting fundamental principles that guide and inspire individuals, communities, and organisations engaged in this vital work. Then it explores why racial justice is crucial in intercultural mission, emphasising the need to foster inclusion in our efforts. Finally, we explore why cultural awareness is paramount in intercultural mission, highlighting the need to bridge divides and cultivate a genuine understanding and climate of acceptance.

The biblical foundation for intercultural mission

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, numerous passages highlight God's desire for all nations and cultures to know and worship him.

In the Old Testament, God made a covenant with Abraham, promising to bless and make him a great nation. However, the ultimate purpose of this blessing was not limited to Abraham and his descendants alone. God stated that through Abraham, 'all the families of the earth shall be blessed' (Gen. 12:3). This indicates God's intention to bring his salvation and blessings to people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. This promise to Abraham is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who offers salvation to people of every race, ethnicity, and culture.

The prophets of the Old Testament also spoke of God's plan to extend his kingdom beyond Israel. Isaiah, for instance, prophesied the coming of the Messiah, describing him as a light for the nations and declaring that God's salvation would reach the ends of the earth (Isa. 42:6, 49:6).

In the New Testament, Jesus himself commissioned his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19). He emphasised the universality of the gospel message and the need for it to be proclaimed to people from every culture and background. The early church took this commission seriously, and the book of Acts records their efforts to spread the gospel to various cultures and regions, such as the Samaritans, the Ethiopian eunuch, and the Gentiles.

In his letters, the apostle Paul further emphasised the inclusiveness of God's mission. He spoke of the unity of believers from different cultural backgrounds, declaring that in Christ, 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female' (Gal. 3:28). Paul's ministry exemplified his commitment to cross-cultural evangelism, as he travelled extensively to proclaim the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles.

The book of Revelation paints a vivid picture of people from every tribe, nation, and tongue worshipping together before

the throne of God. This vision affirms the biblical foundation for intercultural mission, inspiring believers to work towards unity, reconciliation, and realising God's kingdom on earth.

The ministry of reconciliation

The biblical foundation for intercultural mission is rooted in the ministry of reconciliation. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, believers are called ambassadors of Christ, entrusted with the message of reconciliation. God, through Christ, reconciled humanity to himself, breaking down the walls of division and hostility. As ambassadors, intercultural missionaries are called to extend this message of reconciliation to people from all backgrounds, fostering understanding, forgiveness, and unity. The biblical narrative reveals God's redemptive plan, including individual salvation and restoring relationships between diverse cultures and ethnicities.

Cultural sensitivity and adaptability

The Bible provides valuable guidance on cultural sensitivity and adaptability in intercultural mission. The apostle Paul, known for his missionary journeys, demonstrates a remarkable ability to adapt his approach to diverse cultural contexts. In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Paul explains that he becomes all things to all people to save some.

This principle highlights the importance of understanding and respecting cultural nuances, adapting communication styles, and embracing cultural practices that do not compromise biblical truth. By embodying cultural sensitivity and adaptability, intercultural mission workers can effectively engage with diverse cultures, building bridges and fostering genuine relationships.

The kingdom of God and social justice

The biblical foundation for intercultural mission includes a call to pursue justice and righteousness. The prophets of the Old Testament repeatedly emphasise God's concern for the marginalised, the oppressed, and the vulnerable. Jesus himself proclaimed the arrival of the kingdom of God, which seeks to address social injustice and transform society. Intercultural mission, rooted in the biblical narrative, champions justice, equity, and the restoration of human dignity. It calls believers to challenge systemic injustices, advocate for the voiceless, and work towards a world where all people can experience God's shalom.

Why racial justice is vital in intercultural mission

In our increasingly interconnected and diverse world, pursuing racial justice has become an urgent and indispensable

aspect of intercultural mission. Intercultural mission refers to the work of individuals, organisations, and communities in promoting understanding, harmony, and collaboration across diverse cultures and ethnicities. Racial justice, on the other hand, entails the elimination of systemic barriers, discrimination, and prejudice based on race.

Acknowledging historical injustices

To engage in meaningful intercultural mission, it is imperative to acknowledge and address historical injustices that have marginalised and oppressed certain racial and ethnic groups. Many societies have a legacy of colonisation, slavery, and systemic discrimination disproportionately affecting specific racial communities. Without acknowledging these historical wrongs and working towards rectifying them, genuine intercultural understanding and collaboration are hindered. Racial justice ensures that the past is acknowledged, reparations are made where possible, and a foundation of trust is built for future intercultural engagement.

Creating equal opportunities

Racial justice is pivotal in intercultural mission, as it seeks to dismantle systemic barriers that hinder marginalised communities from accessing equal opportunities. By advocating for equal access to education, healthcare,

employment, and other essential resources, intercultural mission can foster an environment where individuals from all racial backgrounds can thrive. In doing so, the mission becomes genuinely inclusive, allowing everyone to contribute their unique perspectives, skills, and talents, towards the betterment of society.

Strengthening intercultural dialogue

Promoting racial justice in intercultural mission strengthens intercultural dialogue by providing a platform for marginalised voices to be heard. Meaningful dialogue requires active listening, empathy, and understanding of diverse perspectives. By acknowledging the experiences and struggles of racial communities, we can bridge the gaps in understanding and build connections based on shared values and aspirations. Intercultural mission that values racial justice cultivates an environment where authentic dialogue can flourish, leading to mutual respect and collaboration.

Challenging stereotypes and prejudices

Racial justice is instrumental in dismantling stereotypes and prejudices that perpetuate discrimination and inequality. Intercultural mission aims to break down barriers, fostering empathy and understanding among different racial and ethnic groups. By challenging stereotypes and debunking prejudices, intercultural mission opens the

door for authentic relationships to develop. These relationships become catalysts for positive change, transforming perceptions and building bridges between communities that may have previously been divided.

Building an inclusive society

Intercultural mission is about creating a more inclusive society, where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered, regardless of race. Racial justice is the foundation upon which inclusivity is built. It demands recognising and celebrating diverse racial identities and cultures, ensuring no one is excluded or marginalised. By actively working towards racial justice, intercultural mission contributes to constructing a society that embraces and appreciates the richness of its racial diversity.

The significance of cultural awareness in intercultural mission

Cultural awareness is the foundation upon which intercultural mission is built. It entails recognising and respecting differences in language, customs, traditions, and beliefs – celebrating diversity, breaking down barriers and fostering an environment of inclusivity and acceptance.

Individuals, organisations, and societies play a critical role in facilitating meaningful connections between varied cultural

groups. In recognising the unique perspectives, values, and ways of life of cultures and ethnicities, interactions between them can take place with increased humility and respect.

Effective communication and collaboration

Intercultural mission relies heavily on effective communication and collaboration. Awareness of cultural nuances, communication styles, and non-verbal cues helps to build rapport and navigate potential misunderstandings. Cultural awareness facilitates collaboration by fostering trust, empathy, respect, and in finding common ground amidst diverse perspectives.

Overcoming stereotypes and biases

Cultural awareness is instrumental in overcoming intercultural misunderstanding. Preconceived notions and generalisations can lead to perpetuate division. By embracing cultural awareness, individuals engaged in intercultural mission can consciously dismantle stereotypes, biases, and prejudices. The promotion of a deeper appreciation and understanding of diverse cultures paves the way for authentic relationships that are based on empathy and mutual respect.

Navigating cultural sensitivities

In intercultural mission, navigating cultural sensitivities is crucial to ensure respectful interactions. Understanding historical and social contexts enables navigation of potential pitfalls and avoidance of unintentional offence. By being mindful of cultural norms, customs, and sensitivities, intercultural missionaries can forge connections built on trust and understanding, creating an environment in which genuine dialogue and collaboration can flourish.

Promoting intercultural learning and growth

By immersing oneself in the richness and complexity of diverse cultures, individuals engaged in intercultural mission gain a broader perspective, leading to personal growth and a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of our global society.

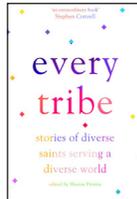
The biblical foundation for intercultural mission provides a firm and compelling framework for engaging with diverse cultures and fostering understanding and unity. Grounded in the Great Commission, God's heart for all nations, the ministry of reconciliation, cultural sensitivity, and a pursuit of justice, intercultural mission finds its purpose and inspiration in the timeless truths of scripture. As believers strive to fulfil this calling, let us draw upon

the biblical foundation, knowing that it empowers us to transcend cultural barriers, extend God's love to all people, and actively advance his kingdom.

Racial justice is an essential component of intercultural mission. We can foster an environment of understanding, collaboration, and respect, by acknowledging historical injustices, creating equal opportunities, strengthening intercultural dialogue, challenging stereotypes, and building an inclusive society. Through the pursuit of racial justice, we can truly realise the potential of intercultural mission and work towards a more harmonious and equitable world. In recognising that our collective efforts can bring about lasting change, we can create a better future for all.

Let us embrace cultural awareness in our intercultural mission. By respecting differences, facilitating effective communication and collaboration, challenging stereotypes and biases, navigating cultural sensitivities, and promoting intercultural learning, cultural awareness bridges divides and fosters understanding. It lays the groundwork for meaningful connections and authentic relationships across cultural groups, fostering a world in which diversity is celebrated and unity is cultivated.

BOOK REVIEWS



Every Tribe: stories of diverse saints serving a diverse world

Sharon Prentis (London, SPCK, 2019)

Drawing on her experiences as a Church of England priest and her passion for inclusivity and racial justice, Prentis celebrates the diversity of saints who have contributed to the church's history and still influence the world today. Through vivid storytelling, she highlights individuals from a variety of cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds, demonstrating their profound and inspiring impact.

Prentis uncovers hidden histories and amplifies marginalised voices, offering a corrective to the dominant narratives. This book explores diversity through the lenses of race, gender, and social justice, shedding light on the systemic injustices faced by many, and their efforts to create positive change.

While primarily focusing on the Christian context in the United Kingdom, the book's themes and insights apply to a global audience.

Prentis seamlessly weaves historical facts, theological reflections, and personal anecdotes to create a comprehensive, informative, and engaging narrative. *Every Tribe* serves as a call to action, encouraging readers to examine their biases and live out their faith in transformative ways.



Turning the Tables on Mission: stories of Christians from the Global South in the UK

The Revd Israel Olofinjana (Instant Apostle, 2013)

In this eye-opening book, the Revd Israel Olofinjana draws upon his experiences as a Nigerian-born pastor in the UK to compile a collection of stories showcasing the diverse journeys, challenges, and contributions of Christians from the Global South.

These personal stories, of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, challenge the traditional perspectives on mission and encourage readers to reconsider their understanding of mission and the global church.

By allowing readers to glimpse into individual lives, faith journeys, and the unique challenges that come with navigating a new cultural contexts, these stories offer profound insights into the resilience, vitality of faith, and spiritual depth of Christians from the Global South.

The stories are complemented by thoughtful reflections and theological insights, creating a well-rounded narrative. Olofinjana addresses power dynamics and cultural exchanges, highlighting how mission and Christianity have often been associated with Western dominance. He calls for a shift in perspective, advocating for a more equitable approach to mission that fosters mutual learning and partnership.

This book offers a fresh perspective on the dynamics of mission in our rapidly changing global context. Olofinjana's writing is accessible and engaging, and his passion will inspire readers to participate in building a more inclusive church, dismantling colonial legacies, and affirming the dignity, agency, and voices of Christians from around the world.

ENDNOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The church is not called to race or colour blindness

1 *From Lament to Action: The Report of the Archbishop's Anti-Racism Taskforce*, April 22, 2021. [churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/FromLamentToAction-report.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/FromLamentToAction-report.pdf)

2 Calvin Robinson, 'No, the Church isn't institutionally racist', *Spiked*, April 21, 2021, [spiked-online.com/2021/04/22/no-the-church-isnt-institutionally-racist](https://www.spiked-online.com/2021/04/22/no-the-church-isnt-institutionally-racist)

3 Robinson, 'No, the church isn't institutionally racist'. The other issue here is the rationale of the quotas. Apparently, only 14% of the UK population is from UKME/GMH backgrounds and that includes Asians who are predominantly Muslims or Hindu. Therefore, the proportion of UKME/GMH Church of England members could be much less, making these proposals unrealistic.

4 Andrew Tettenborn, 'The Church of England's diversity mission has gone too far', *The Spectator*, January 24, 2022, [spectator.co.uk/article/the-church-of-england-s-diversity-mission-has-gone-too-far](https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-church-of-england-s-diversity-mission-has-gone-too-far)

5 A colour-blind racial ideology can be defined as holding the belief that an individual's race or ethnicity should not influence how that individual is treated in society.

6 Dan Steel, *What the Diverse Church in Antioch Can Teach Us Today*, July 24, 2018. [thegospelcoalition.org/article/diverse-church-antioch-teach-today](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/diverse-church-antioch-teach-today)

7 Ian Paul, 'Ethnic and Social Diversity in the Church', *Psephizo*, April 9, 2021, [psephizo.com/biblical-studies/ethnic-and-social-diversity-in-the-early-church](https://www.psephizo.com/biblical-studies/ethnic-and-social-diversity-in-the-early-church)

8 Willie James Jennings, *Acts: A Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2017), p.153.

Symptoms of institutional racism in the Church of England

1 *Seeing a Color-Blind Future: The Paradox of Race* (1997 BBC Reith Lectures) by Patricia J. Williams (Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998), p.28.

2 *Ibid*, p.15.

Cleansing racism through truth-telling and reconciliation

1 [anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx](https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx)

2 ucl.ac.uk/lbs

30 years after Stephen Lawrence's murder, how much progress has the church made in racial justice?

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The church can provide an appropriate intercultural worship service

1 The report of the Macpherson inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence, a document formative in our understanding of institutional racism, spoke of 'the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin' (6.34). So let us restate the obvious – the Church of England has failed to provide appropriately and professionally for people of different cultures and ethnicities.

2 See John Root's Grove Booklet W236, *Worship in a Multi-Ethnic Society*.

3 [southwark.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/inquiry.pdf](https://www.southwark.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/inquiry.pdf)

Why has Windrush had so much attention, 75 years on?

1 *Racism and Ethnic Inequality in a Time of Crisis: findings from the evidence for equality national survey*, Eds. Nissa Finney, James Nazroo, Laia Bécaries, Dharmi Kapadia and Natalie Shlomo (Policy Press, Bristol University Press, 2023), Page 48.

2 *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* (The Parekh Report), The Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, (Runnymede Trust, 2000).

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