FACILITATING THE *IMAGINE NO RACISM* EXPERIENCE WITH ZOOM

Thank you for your interest in teaching the Imagine No Racism (INR) curriculum on Zoom. We're excited that you're going to be involved in this important ministry!

As you know, the INR curriculum, as originally written, is designed for experiential, face-to-face learning. To maintain INR's impact and power, we've developed a list of ideas for maximizing the benefits of the curriculum while minimizing the potential stumbling blocks.

Facilitation Tips

- <u>Remember that we are facilitators, not trainers</u>. What is the difference between the two? A trainer is an expert, or well versed, in imparting knowledge or helping to develop a specific skill or skill set. Think: teacher to student. Facilitating is a more collaborative process of peers exploring. The facilitator provides the tools, tone, flow, calm, presence, and energy to help guide the group through its exploration. INR facilitators are familiar with antiracism concepts and help guide the group in its understanding and interruption of racism.

- Be mindful of the size of the group—it should be no more than 12. There are two reasons for this. First, facilitating a group experience more than 12 people can become quite challenging. Second, "seeing" members becomes increasingly difficult, because as the group size grows, the size of each participant's thumbnail images decreases.

- Be mindful of group members' entry points. If a group has more than seven or eight participants with clear delineations among the entry points, it may be necessary to create separate spaces for conversations. Zoom allows the host to create small groups, and the host can easily check in with each group while they are working.
  - In particular, when completing session six, be aware of who's in each of the small groups and think about the goals of that session.
  - If a small group comes from the same church or geographic area, be sure to make space for them to bring their ideas together.
  - Conversely, a group whose members are not from the same area will have different ideas, which may spark creativity. Be sure to honor that, too.

- Be sure to carefully review the goals of each session carefully beforehand. You may need to do certain activities a bit differently in Zoom than you would face-to-face, and time managing each session and/or breakout session is critical.

- Be purposeful about offering all participants the opportunity to speak. Extroverts can dominate in-person conversations. Zoom makes it much easier for introverts to withdraw if they aren't engaged regularly and purposefully. It's important for the facilitator to invite comments from everyone in the group.

- The curriculum elements were designed to be experienced as a group; however, facilitators may occasionally choose to have participants review some portion of the curriculum outside of group session. If you do this, you may also want to pose a question or two that is connected directly to the reading for that session. If a question is posed, the facilitator should include it in that week's discussion.

- The curriculum has the potential to arouse deep negative feelings, including anger, despair, frustration, sadness, and anxiety. You'll want to reinforce the importance of keeping the sessions emotionally safe for all.
  - Please remind participants to be in a room by themselves where they won't be disturbed by humans or animals—this helps maintain confidentiality for both the individual and the group.
  - Covenant with the group so that if a participant feels emotionally challenged by some portion of the curriculum, they may excuse themselves by either turning off the video or muting themselves.
  - Each session should go no more than 90 minutes. To avoid Zoom fatigue, build a "stretch break" into each session.
  - In particular, if white participants get in touch with shame, remind them that none of us is blameless in this work—we are all in this together. Also, remind participants of God's grace. Our sense of worth and value is not earned by our goodness, but given by God in spite of our sin. Nowhere is this grace more powerfully applicable than to those affected by America's "original sin."

- As a facilitator, you'll want to be especially aware of participants' physical cues and body language, which can be more limited in video conferencing.

- Remind participants to download the INR curriculum beforehand. If they decide to print a copy, it runs about 68 pages.

Technology Tips

- As the facilitator you will be hosting. Therefore, it is critically important that you be very familiar and comfortable with Zoom technology. You will need to be able to create small groups, share video, and other types of content in this environment. YouTube is a great resource to help you learn to use these different options.

- <u>Participants must have video capability</u>. It can be hard to establish connection and trust if the group can't see everyone, especially during challenging parts of the conversation. Facilitators need to ensure that all participants can see each other in the gallery.

- Both facilitators and participants will need to work with high speed Internet connection to accommodate videos. The Internet connection should be capable of at least five megabytes per second (mbps). To determine internet speed, just Google "internet speed test." The tests are free.

- If you know that internet streaming may be problematic for your computer, download the videos before the session and run from your computer's hard drive or a flash drive.

- If there are group members who have never used Zoom, YouTube tutorials can be very helpful. Several are short (10 minutes or less) and designed for the novice. One site to consider is: https://youtu.be/kh50kVaIdAY

- For facilitators who aren't accustomed to working with Zoom, the conference website provides a tutorial: http://www.unyumc.org/about/webinars#Using%20Zoom. Here are its main points:
    - If you're working "unplugged," your computer should have as much battery life as possible.
    - You may need something to prop your computer on so everybody can see your face.
    - Make sure you're the right distance from your camera—not too close, not too far away.
    - Lighting is important. Adjust lighting to see what's best.
    - Plan your session, and rehearse it.
    - Remember to smile! You'll help people to feel the joy and excitement of what you're doing!
    - Pray!

- Make sure your WiFi signal is strong in the room you're using. For the best signal, consider hardwiring (using Ethernet cable) your computer to your router.

- The facilitator should be prepared to do some Zoom coaching. Consider a pre-session of about 20 minutes where participants can log into a Zoom meeting. Participants can then test their equipment (e.g., camera and microphone) and connection. New Zoom users can see that their set-up works as they try out using Zoom. A facilitator can review some Zoom group basics—for example might be what to do if some one's internet connection drops or someone has problems logging in.

- Consider using an empty Word doc to share discussion points such as "Three Simple Rules," and to brainstorm in other sessions. You may also use Zoom's White Board feature. To become more familiar with White Board, you may find this YouTube tutorial helpful: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQ4-wrwHAxk.

- To further ensure safety, be sure that encryption, password, and waiting room features are enabled.