

**Race Relations Team (RRT)**  
REPORT TO CLASSIS GREATER LOS ANGELES  
[www.racerelationsgla.org](http://www.racerelationsgla.org) / [www.classisgla.org](http://www.classisgla.org)  
October 18, 2011

**Our purpose** is to help all of Classis Greater Los Angeles to promote ministry that is racially and culturally inclusive in congregations and their local communities.

**Team members:** Mattie Young; Richard Jones; Ruth Palma; Frank De Haan; Daniel Méndez; Irma Méndez

**1. Items For Approval By Classis**

The budget as submitted by Classis Treasurer

**2. Items For Information**

- a: the Team continues to actively seek new members;
- b: the Team authorized an evaluation of the previous years' work (available on its' website);
- c: the Team designed its' strategic directions for the current year;
- d: the Race Relations website is up and running (address noted above);
- e: the Team opted to be heard and voiced its' objections regarding the classis overture of May 31;
- f: the Team partially funded 6 of the 11 GLA participants to the Multi-Ethnic Conference, 2011;
- g: the Team collaborated with the denominational Office of Race Relations on a Leadership & Race Workshop at the MEC;
- h: in light of synod's recent decisions on the BOT recommendations and the Diversity in Leadership Planning Group Report, this workshop has been adopted for denominational leadership training;
- i: the Team appealed to the Classical Leadership Team for reconciliation on August 18<sup>th</sup>, in the aftermath of May classical events;
- j: two team members met with the Classical Leadership Team to begin seeking a process for reconciliation by doing everything we (RR Team and CLT) can, to move the process along;
- k: the Team met with Interim Executive Director and his Deputy on September 20, who were in the area and had expressed their desire to meet and "deal directly with some tensions and issues that remain between some folks in GLA" as they had become aware of such tensions "both in private communications and in the overtures to synod." They expressed "that a direct address with the people involved is the best way to hear the concerns and address them as best we can". In response to their desire to "honor local protocol" they asked, and we as the RR Team invited them to meet with us;
- l: the outcome of this meeting was that because of the apparent pain and probable misunderstanding and need for reconciliation between the groups, it was suggested to the Race Relations Team that an outside mediator might be necessary and advisable to seek to bring the groups to mutual understanding and appreciation and remove the friction that currently exists.
- m: the Team has concluded the work of finding and submitting proposals from two different mediators to bring us through reconciliation; at this time the Team does not know *how* the cost of this reconciliation work could be covered, but to make this important matter possible, the RR Team will need funding from outside sources, since none is currently available in the RR budget;
- n: the Team seeks to add value to its' work in this greatly diverse region; in order to do so, the team finds itself needing to address assumptions;
- o: the Team is presently seeking to better grasp and understand the currently established *policies and procedures* of Race Relations work in Classis Greater Los Angeles;

### 3. PRAISES

- a: the Team was able to find volunteers to initiate the Race Relations website;
- b: Team members are responding and addressing leadership needs in our area;
- c: the Team is able to address issues of tension and friction;
- d. the Team is communicating to the leadership team to ease ethnic tensions; issues we need to work through are being addressed and the Team is seeking to resolve them. In coming together (the RR Team & the CLT), we seek to discuss things, as we prefer to not end the year with this going on;
- f. the Team was able to assist GLA attendees to the Multi-Ethnic Conference, 2011;

### 4. PRAYER NEEDS

- a: true cultural diversity for our churches and classis;
- b: the reconciliation process: though the RR Team realizes that we are not going to conquer the sinful monster of racism, prejudice and all that comes with these, we sense it is a start in the right direction. We will not make excuses in terms of biblical reconciliation, and we are serious about living out our Classis GLA statement: ***Better Together***;