

New England Yearly Meeting

Since 1965, NEYM has had various bodies within the yearly meeting addressing race and racism. The current incarnation is the [Committee on Racial, Social, and Economic Justice \(CRSEJ\)](#). CRSEJ publishes the [Freedom and Justice Crier newsletter](#).

Contacts: Rachel Carey Harper, Clerk of the Committee on Racial, Social, and Economic Justice at [rch\[at\]cape.com](mailto:rhc[at]cape.com). The 2013 Freedom and Justice Crier newsletter is available by email request to Rachel Carey Harper.

The Committee on Racial, Social, and Economic Justice is continuing the work of the recently approved Minute Repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery (included below) by offering the workshop, “A Journey of Healing” to meetings in NEYM. The workshop is produced and facilitated in partnership with indigenous women from New England. The workshop serves as a five-step process to bring meetings through the steps of repudiation, acknowledgment of harm, apology, working so apology is accepted, making amends and moving forward together.

Minute Repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery

Adopted by New England Yearly Meeting of Friends in annual sessions, 2013

More information on the minute can be found in [this article](#).

The Doctrine of Discovery was used to justify Christians' "right" to dominate, exploit and claim the lands of non-Christians that they "discovered." In the days of European exploration and colonization, governments relied on the Doctrine of Discovery, which has its roots in racism, to commit great harm against native peoples. This doctrine has justified policies of deception, forced removal, sterilization, enslavement and genocide. The doctrine has not disappeared or been revoked. It has the force of law globally and serves as a framework of oppression fully intact in U.S. federal Indian law today. In 2012 the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) focused on encouraging global repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery.

We as New England Yearly Meeting repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. We are beginning a journey to consider the moral and spiritual implications of how we benefit from and have been harmed by the doctrine as individuals and meetings. The workings of this doctrine are invisible to most of us. Our first work is to remove the logs from our eyes so that we may see. We need to learn more, find ways to seek forgiveness and ask how the Spirit might lead us. We have heard powerful testimonies to how these issues have affected our lives. We encourage consultation with Indigenous Peoples to restore the health of ourselves and our planet. We recognize that this is our work to do. On this path, respectfully traveled in love, our goal is true healing so the Light of God can be

answered in everyone. Our intention is to walk toward being in right relationship with the whole human family and the planet.

Minute on Racism

Adopted by New England Yearly Meeting of Friends in annual sessions, 2003

New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends affirms its commitment to becoming an open, affirming, anti-racist Religious Society. Our understanding of racism is that it is a system that accords advantage or disadvantage based on racial identity. Racism is fundamentally inconsistent with the divine guidance that has led our Religious Society to testimonies such as Equality, Peace and Community. We seek divine assistance and the help of other friends of Truth to examine our individual and corporate complicity in racism. We aspire to a more perfect union with the Author of all, who shows no partiality in the diversity of creation.

Those of us who have grown up with a white identity in America have a particular challenge in that we have been conditioned not to notice the system of racism and white privilege. Our well-intentioned attempts at colorblindness can have the unfortunate result of blinding us to the system of racism in which we unwittingly participate. Let us remember Jesus' admonition to remove the log from our own eye before seeking to remove a speck from our brother's or sister's eye. We all pray for clarity of vision so that in the words of George Fox, we may "be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone; whereby in them you may be a blessing, and make the witness of God in them to bless you."

Friends for Racial Justice at Friends Meeting at Cambridge

Friends for Racial Justice (FORJ) sponsors activities and workshops at Cambridge Meeting, and has been active for several years. Friends in the Boston area interested in being involved can contact Cornelia Parkes, [chparkes\[at\]Verizon.net](mailto:chparkes[at]Verizon.net).

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