

WFWP Colorado Interreligious Sharing Series: Racial Healing

Gale Alves
June 10, 2020



On June 10th, 2020, eight participants gathered on Zoom for the Interreligious Sharing Series hosted by Gale and Antonio Alves to talk about the racial explosion in the United States and to offer their insights for racial healing. The diverse group from Colorado included representatives of the Baha'i Faith, young missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, a Christian pastor and members of Women's Federation for World Peace and its sister organization Universal Peace Federation (UPF). Five of the participants were white Americans, one was Native American, one was Tongan, and one was Portuguese.

Gale and Antonio welcomed everyone warmly as hosts and moderators of the discussion, and later

offered their own thoughts on the topic as well. It was apparent that everyone had prepared well for this engaging discussion.

A representative of the Baha'i faith emphasized the interconnectedness of all human beings: "We are connected globally like a village. The earth is but one country and its people are its citizens. Therefore, we should treat each other with respect."

With an earnest desire for people to move beyond racial barriers and grow in understanding by truly listening to each other, she encouraged everyone to "make an effort to hear each other's hearts."

The Christian pastor offered some reflections on how racial healing would be most effective, namely when it starts at the grassroots level of society. "Start small and expand step by step," he concluded.

The young missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints shared some wisdom that they had learned from their parents. One of them mentioned a heartfelt piece of advice from her mother: "Put yourselves in the other person's shoes so you can understand them and have compassion."

They also credited their religious upbringing for the kindness and compassion they strived to practice in their daily lives, by tapping into "the pure love of Christ."

As representatives of WFWP and UPF, respectively, Gale and Antonio also offered their thoughts: "White people started the problem of racism in America. White people need to repent and be responsible to fix it."

They also saw the necessity for a God-centered approach to racial healing. "One family under God needs to be our outlook," said Gale.

This is just a taste of the lively discussion that was held. Moreover, as representatives of various faith communities, everyone offered spiritual readings and prayers for racial healing before concluding the session.

Editor's Note: Together with her husband Antonio, WFWP Colorado Representative Gale Alves hosts a regular Interreligious Sharing Series that brings together people of various faith backgrounds for honest discussions around thought-provoking questions. The gatherings have moved online for the time being due to social distancing recommendations, and the most recent discussion addressed the racial injustice that is currently gaining widespread attention.