

A Little About Me

And why I feel called to minister with the ReNew Partnerships

Michaela Gregory

The youngest of five children, I was born and raised in the inner city of Toledo, Ohio. I accepted Christ at the age of ten and began fully walking it out two years later. When I became a freshman at The Ohio State University I had been walking with the Lord for four years. During that time I began to sense the Lord pointing out my issues and dislike toward white people because of the past racism that my family and I had experienced. One of the ways He did that was through a relationship with a staff member of a campus ministry at O.S.U.

"Michaela, the Lord has really been dealing with me about racial reconciliation and racism and I've been praying that God would send an African-American friend in my life to help me work through some of these things.... " Carrie sincerely proclaimed.

Little did I know that the Lord had sent Carrie to help me work through some things of my own. That year I became involved with their campus ministry (which was predominantly white) mainly because of my relationship with Carrie. Carrie and I not only learned a great deal personally from each other by living life together, offending, loving, hurting and reconciling over and over as friends, we also learned from doing ministry together at historically black universities, Central State and Wilberforce, for five years. We also saw and experienced together the differences in how people hear and receive the gospel in the context of their culture. Through the process I also learned how to effectively share my faith, lead small group bible studies, and disciple women.

While I was involved with campus ministry, I observed there was a revolving door of ethnic students coming in and out. So, five other students and I began a new campus organization which was affiliated with Carrie's group but "contextualized" toward the needs of African American students. It maintained the same principles of evangelism and discipleship within a context that was comfortable and conducive for African Americans to worship and be themselves culturally. I served as the leader of the new campus organization for three years and also went on several stateside summer missions trips. In 2001 I turned over my leadership role to pursue ministry in my local church where I served as the youth pastor for three years.

Even though I transitioned to working with my church, I continued to be involved with campus ministry. In 2004, I was contacted by Chad Brennan as he was starting up a ReNew Partnership in Columbus. When I heard the vision of ReNew, my heart instantly was drawn in! As I began to get involved, I could see how the Lord had prepared me for leadership with ReNew -- through the cultural offenses, my involvement with the Nation of Islam for a short time, my friendship with Carrie, misunderstandings from African Americans as to my involvement with the "other side", etc. I could tell he wanted to use me as a catalyst of change, a bridge over bitterness and misunderstood waters!