

NCC: Race poll shows need for 'sacred conversations' Still sharp divisions along racial lines

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A recent poll indicating sharp national divisions along racial lines should remind Americans of the need for “sacred conversations on race,” said the head of the National Council of Churches.

The *New York Times*/CBS News poll released July 16 found that 40 percent of blacks believe that racial discrimination is as bad as ever, while one out of four whites said there is too much emphasis on discrimination. Seventy percent of blacks and half of Latinos said they have been targets of racial discrimination.

Overall, Democratic senator Barack Obama led Republican senator John McCain among registered voters by 45 percent to 39 percent.

But the survey also showed racial and ethnic divisions in voter preference for president. Nearly 90 percent of black voters favored Obama, while 2 percent favored McCain. White voters chose McCain over Obama by 46 percent to 23 percent. Latino voters supported Obama by 62 to 23 percent.

“These figures are discouraging but not surprising,” said Michael Kinnamon, general secretary of the NCC. “Last April our churches called for a ‘sacred conversation on race’ in American pulpits, and this poll shows how badly those conversations are needed.”