

The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor, in consideration of 'A Statement from the Special Committee on Racism, Truth and Reconciliation' by our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA), establishes the following goals for the work that is ours to do as a congregation:

[Note: words in *italics* are direct quotations from the PC(USA) statement.]

As followers of Jesus Christ, who loves all and calls us to challenge the unjust structures of church and society, we are called to work for justice and peace for all God's people.

We the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor affirm that:

- God's abiding truth is this: every human being is created in the image of God and therefore has intrinsic, and equal, value and worth.
- As Christians we must be guided by the unconditional love that Christ has for each of us, no matter our race.
- Racism is an utter rejection of what God intends for humanity; insinuating that some of God's children are less worthy than others.
- Now is the time for First Presbyterian Church to renew our commitment to abolish systemic racism and white privilege, and to work for lasting justice and equality.
- Relying on the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, we vow to continue to reflect and repent, to study and to advocate, to change and to grow and to work to achieve complete racial equality in our world. Black Lives Matter.

The Session is committed to addressing the inequities of Racism and Injustice through the work of each committee and all the ministries of our church

We call for our congregation to commit to engaging in the work and practice of eliminating racism.

- To ensure that racial justice remains a part of our confessions and worship
- To include racial justice in the Christian formation program for all ages
- To continue to share the work of social transformation with our neighbors in our mission field

We call each member of our congregation to a season of repentance for its complicity in the horrific history and unjust treatment of people of color, which continues to this day.

- To further their individual journey by reading, learning, dialogue and action
- To take the 21-Day Equity Challenge to further our self-awareness, education, and action

We call for white people to recognize their privilege in society and engage in the work of eliminating racism and racist acts against people of color.

- To engage in study and reflection on the injustice of white privilege individually, communally and as a congregation, through discernment and prayer
- To engage thoughtfully and with sensitivity in dialogue with people of color
- To examine the ways in which white privilege has permeated First Presbyterian and begin the work of dismantling these inequities

July 19, 2020

Appendices

(Links to be added at a later date)

The Presbyterian Church played a valuable role over time in the effort to abolish slavery and address racism. Today we are faced with the truth that injustice on the basis of race is a continuing legacy. Now is the time for us to play a role in abolishing systemic racism and white supremacy and to work for lasting justice and equality. The following links can give some perspective on the historical influences from the denomination and, specifically, of First Presbyterian.

<https://www.cacgrants.org/assets/ce/Documents/2019/WhiteDominantCulture.pdf?fbclid=IwAR371GJYMO4P9nLultBzdpbkOQXQkiKl4exkZJsDHyBJGWGEgGhhgg9q9sM>

PCUSA Statement

Confession of Belhar

Theological Declaration of Barmen

Sarasota Statement

Links to Sermons