

RESOLUTION

A Prophetic Call for White Responsibility and Accountability in Dismantling Racism¹

Preface: We prayerfully and humbly submit this resolution. As Christians, we are called to hear difficult truths and, in this moment, acknowledge the sin of racism as one of those truths. We affirm the inherent dignity and value of people of color. We confess that we have a responsibility and an opportunity to do something about racism. This resolution is an important step in the marathon work of dismantling racism. This requires building cross-racial relationships to develop understanding and commitment to take action both personally and collectively.

WHEREAS Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matt 5:9) and elsewhere reminds us that peacemaking begins with individual and corporate confession, asking hard questions with the goal of transcending from the transactional to the transformational approach of changing lives;

WHEREAS St. Paul admonishes us that Jesus entrusted “the message of reconciliation to us” (2 Cor 5:19), encourages us to “let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:5), and declares that “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28);

WHEREAS the entirety of scripture, from creation to consummation, convicts us that racism is sin and antiracism² is central to an understanding of discipleship that leads to our being made perfect in love, growing into the likeness of Christ. We acknowledge that we all need healing because we are all bound together in the body of Christ and that healing begins with naming racism as sin;

WHEREAS in our baptismal covenant we pledge to “renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of [our] sin” . . . ”accept the freedom and power God gives [us] to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves” . . . and “confess Jesus Christ as [our] Savior, put [our] whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as [our] Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races;”

WHEREAS *The United Methodist Social Principles (2016:162A)* says, “Racism, manifested as sin, plagues and hinders our relationship with Christ, inasmuch as it is antithetical to the gospel itself... Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons;”

WHEREAS we acknowledge that white privilege³ and white supremacy⁴ are racist⁵ aspects of oppression bound to the white community and must be addressed by white people in partnership with siblings of all constructed races, ethnicities, and identities, with transformation emerging out of a deepened sense of accountability to and dialogue with people of all races if we are ever to experience God’s vision of Beloved Community;

WHEREAS reason and experience demonstrate that racism has both systemic and personal dimensions within The United Methodist Church (and its predecessor denominations) and the United States which require our heartfelt repentance;

WHEREAS some faithful people have been working to become more aware of white privilege and white supremacy and have become deeply committed to end racism, and some have failed to move from rhetoric to action and remain unaware of their privilege and the ways in which these systemic injustices do harm; and

WHEREAS racism, white privilege, and white supremacy are dominant realities in our church and our society, and even perpetuated by the community of faith despite its calls to prayer and action, they are inconsistent with the kingdom of God and leave the church complicit with a culture of racism and white privilege.

THEREFORE WE RESOLVE

To repent of our failure to live fully into our baptismal covenant.

To call upon people who benefit from white privilege to acknowledge and repent of the ways they have abused their privilege and power, so that all might rediscover their calling to be ambassadors of reconciliation and peace, living more faithfully with all God's children into God's Beloved Community, which is characterized by justice and well-being for all.

To invite white United Methodist clergy and laity of the Florida Conference to acknowledge that the church has been complicit with white supremacy, that it has exalted white privilege, and has perpetuated harm to people of color.

To initiate, in every district and local church, ongoing conversations about white supremacy, white privilege, racism, and oppression and to build cross-cultural and cross-racial relationships with nearby faith communities. Every local church will include a report on these conversations in their annual Fall Charge Conference.

To initiate, continue, and support training on racism, white privilege, white supremacy, racial equity⁶, conflict resolution, and reconciliation for the District Superintendents, Florida Annual Conference staff, clergy, and lay leadership, making these conversations a focus of all Florida Conference-sponsored leadership events and efforts, with a report on this work to be included in the Report of the Dean of the Cabinet annually.

To call on all District Superintendents and the Bishop to equip, support, and affirm clergy in this work through ongoing conversations and mentoring as clergy bring their local congregations to the table for these challenging conversations on racism, white privilege, and white supremacy.

To pray for our church, that our hearts may be softened and warmed, that we may hear stories of injustice with listening ears, and that we may be faithful and courageous in the spiritual call to dismantle racism, for we have been called to this prophetic work for a time such as this (Esther 4:14).

Definitions:

¹Racism

Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and

practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

²**Antiracism**

Anti-Racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

³**White Privilege**

Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

⁴**White Supremacy**

The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazis, white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and “undeserving.”

⁵**Racist**

One who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or interaction or expressing a racist idea.

⁶**Racial Equity**

- a. Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.
- b. “A mindset and method for solving problems that have endured for generations, seem intractable, harm people and communities of color most acutely, and ultimately affect people of all races. This will require seeing differently, thinking differently, and doing the work differently. Racial equity is about results that make a difference and last.”

Systemic Racism

Systemic Racism, also known as institutional racism, refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact.

Implementation

This will be implemented by the Bishop and Cabinet with work shared by the Bishop's Task Force on Anti-Racism (Training and Accountability, Public Policy and Witness, and the Beloved Community), CCORR (and our ethnic minority people groups) with the Conference Social Justice Committee.

Respectfully submitted by the Gulf Central District Anti-Racism Team (Kimberly Brown, Ian Campbell, Julius David, Alison Flinchum, Susan Garcia-Nikolova, Betsy Grizzard, Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis, Lee McAuliffe, Linda Palmer, Warren Pattison, Beth Potter, Andy Whitaker Smith, Rev. Melissa M. Stump, Bailey Schreiner, M.E. Ram, Robert Dinwiddie, Natalie Faria, Matt Wallis).

Supported by:

Blair Allen

Lynn Allen

Rev. David Allen

Rev. Deborah L. Allen

Michael Alphonse LeBlanc

Judith Ann Rose

Rev. Macon Armistead

Erick Ashley

Sharon G. Austin

Rev. David T. Averill

Kathleen Bell Bakewell

William S. Barnes

Rev. Betty Batey

Josh Bell (clergy)

Rev. Danny Bennett

Carleen Peterson Boyer

Clyde T. Boyer

Sandra S. Brooks

Kimberly Brown

Rebecca W. Brown
Rev. Jennifer Potter Buff
Archie Buie
Marta Burke
Arleigh-Ann Byer
Arleigha Byer
Arleigho Byer
Rev. Andrea Byer-Thomas
Gloria D. Campbell
By Krystal Campbell
Dr. Paul W. Chilcote
Rev. Janet K. Chilcote
Linda Comer
Nancy Constant
Adrienne Conwell
Rev. Ivan G. Corbin
James B Cottrell
Tammy Cox
Dwayne Craig
Teresa R. Craig
Art Cross
Lee Cross
Sharon M. Daniels
Kaley Delker
John A. Denmark (Jad)
Rev. Shelly Denmark
Rev. David Dodge
Martha Gay Duncan
Jacalyn Evans
Jeffrey Evans

Rev. Beth Fogle-Miller
Robert Foss
Bette-Jo (BJ) Foster
Kathy Freeburg
Susan Garcia-Nikolova
Audrey Garcia-Vigotty
Rick Gebauer
Angela Gibson
Shari Gillis
Kolby Gollither
Jan Gorissen
Jo Gorissen
James Green, Fort Caroline UMC, Jacksonville
Rev. Amy Greene
Jana Hall-Perkins
Lee Hall-Perkins
Doug and Raya Sue Hallman
Reverend Heather Harding
Jim Harnish
Martha Harnish
Jeannie Harper
Steve Harper
Cindi Harrell
Shannon Lynn Harris
Ethan Hartman
Steve Hart, Pastor, Grace UMC Merritt Island
Debra Hatch
Rev. Terry R Heck
Bertha Hein
Lynne Herbst

John Hill

Rev. Christine Allen Holden

Ashley Horan, District Delegate, Gulf Central

Jenna Horan

Matt Horan, Clergy, Gulf Central

Rev. Janet Horman

Kelley Hurley

Rev. Brian Hurley

Rev. Ann R. Hutchens

Thomas Iacovino

Rev. Charissa Jaeger-Sanders

Rev. Charissa Jaeger-Sanders

Dr. Kevin M. James, Sr.

Dan Johnson

Rev. Kevin Johnson

Jeanne Joyner

Rev. Meghan Killingsworth

Dwight R Kitchens

Shawn Klein

Joy L B Helmold

Karah Ladd

Nicole Lamb

Rev. Richard Landon

Bonny L. Larsen

Stuart E Larsen

Bernard H. Lieving Jr

Maureen R. Livers

Martha Lou Luce

Laura Lusa

Rev. Mike Luzinski

Bryant Manning
Walter Marsella
Rev. Geraldine W. McClellan
Megan McDonald
David McEntire
Molly McEntire
Craig McIntosh
Debbie McLeod
Ginger Medley
Leontyne Middleton
Rev. David Miller
Rev. Sarah B. Miller
Sandra O'Bryant
Emilisse Ortiz
Angie Pattison, First UMC Lakeland
Annette Stiles Pendergrass
Judith Pierre-Okerson
Gwen G. Pipkin
Rev. Melissa Pisco
Janet Prueitt
Vance C. Rains
Deaconess Joanne M Reich
Debra Reinhardt
Thomas Reuschling
Darren Richards
Dr. Mary Ellen Rider
Angela J. Ritchea-Hurst
Wyatt Robinson
Arnetta Rodgers
Suzanna Rodriguez

Jennifer H Rogers

Ken Roughton

Alisa Rushing

Madelyn S Lozano

C Sanders

Molly Schaaf

Karen Schmautz

Latricia Edwards Scriven

Kathleen Sheehan

Rick Sickles, First United Methodist Church or ORLANDO and the Nu Class

Mary Scott Singer

Ivor A Singer, Jr.

Ann E Skellenger

Donald Ray Skellenger

Timothy S. Smiley

Avis D. Smith

Brian Smith

Rosa A. Smith

Ben Spangler

Dylan Spelman

Dylan Spelman

Emily Sterling-Strongman

Nancy E. Stiles

David Stump

Patty C. Surface

Rick J. Surface

Mary L. Talbott

Janet "Nicki" Taylor

Blaine Thomas

Jerry Thomas

Rev. Linda Tice

Jonathan Tschanz

Sune Venter

Vicki Walker

Wynn A. Wargo

Keith Warren

Patricia Warren

Karen Warrick

Jac'line Weisgerber

Ted Wilhite

Rev. Tiffania Icaza Willetts

Alice Williams

Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams

Rev. Jenn Stiles Williams

Jean Wood

Rev. Dan Wunderlich

Lawrence Young