



Statement on Racial Justice and an Invitation to Work Toward Anti-Racism

We were moved by our experience of working on the Southwest Association Annual Meeting in October 2020, so this statement and invitation is offered by the following individual members of the Executive Committee of the Southwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ.

As pastors and lay leaders within the United Church of Christ, it is our calling to speak out on issues of injustice and to work cooperatively with others towards just, equitable, and anti-racist communities. Given the social unrest our nation is experiencing following the well-publicized death of several unarmed Black individuals at the hands of police in 2020, and the greater harm imposed by Covid-19 on people of color, the time is now to commit to anti-racism work. To this end, we, as individuals, invite others to join us in the following work of becoming anti-racists:

1. To encourage dialogue whenever possible regarding the systemic nature of racism in our country.
2. To listen to the stories and experiences of Black members of our community and other people of color. To not dismiss, minimize, or devalue in any way their shared experience.
3. To connect with other organizations equally committed to racial justice paying special attention to evidenced based theory and practice.
4. To increase our awareness of the history of the system of domination that has affirmed whiteness over people of color, and the experience of Black people in our country.
5. To learn about White privilege and how White people benefit from systemic racism even if they do not seek and may not even be aware of those benefits.
6. To pay special attention to and to support leaders and organizations who show an understanding and investment in fair treatment for all races and equitable opportunities for education, work, and leadership development.
7. To commit to being aware of the environmental consequences of the unjust racial system, of the special burden Black and minority communities have faced regarding land and water, and to work towards a world in which all people share equally in our natural resources.

We invite you to join us in these commitments as a way of being God's love in this world. Begin by saying, "I denounce White supremacy." It is an evil in whatever form it takes – in the hearts of people, in the structures of society and economy, and in the treatment of others.

If you have questions about the document or would like more information about ways to join us in these efforts, please email us at: swaucc@gmail.com

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