

## **Eastminster Presbyterian Church Anti-Racism Policy**

The Presbyterian Book of Order, F-1.0403 states, Unity in Diversity: “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 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. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.”

Racism is the opposite of what God intends for humanity. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. A racist idea is any idea that suggests something is wrong or right, superior or inferior, better or worse about a racial group. An antiracist idea is any idea that suggests that racial groups are equals.

We have often considered only conscious prejudice – anti-Black animus. Seeing only this level means that we fail to see the full picture that keeps the system of racism in place. The opposite of “racist” is not “non-racist” it is “anti-racist.” Racism exists and must be addressed at several levels:

1. **Internalized Racism:** The set of privately held beliefs, prejudices and ideas that a person holds about the superiority of whites and the inferiority of people of color. Among people of color, it manifests as internalized oppression. Among whites, it manifests as internalized racial superiority.
2. **Interpersonal Racism:** The expression of racism between individuals, occurring when individuals interact, and their private beliefs affect their interactions.
3. **Institutional Racism:** Discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and practices, and inequitable opportunities and impacts within organizations and institutions, based on race, that routinely produce racially inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people. Individuals within institutions take on the power of the institution when they reinforce racial inequities.
4. **Structural Racism:** A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations and other norms work in various, often reinforcing, ways to perpetuate racial group inequality. The cumulative and compounding effects of societal factors including the history, culture, ideology and interactions of institutions and policies have systematically privileged white people and disadvantaged people of color.

Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings, for it says that some are less than others. Because of our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity, we must stand against, speak against and work against racism.

Eastminster Presbyterian Church rejects any form of racism, discrimination, or prejudice. In 2020 we created a Justice & Equity Statement with our beliefs and commitments. We recommit ourselves to that statement and to creating a culture of belonging in which every person, created in the image of God, feels welcomed, valued, respected, and heard. We further believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion enhance the health of the Body of the Christ.

As a congregation within the PC(USA) we will:

1. Seek to welcome and be open to all people.
2. Repent of the role we collectively and individually have played and continue to play in creating and maintaining white supremacy and systemic racism.
3. Educate ourselves to seek awareness of our own behavior and biases and the impact on our community of faith and the wider community.
4. Seek resources (curriculum, worship, preaching and music) which are reflective of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.
5. Require that all pastors and program staff participate in anti-racism training.
6. Bring an anti-racist perspective to our congregation's decision-making process.