

ANTIRACISM POLICY

Responsible Commission: Commission on Nurture and Outreach

Approved November 16, 2021

Responding to the Sin of Racism and a Call to Action

"Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt.

 you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
 the restorer of streets to live in." Isaiah 58:12 (NRSV)

Background:

This 224th General Assembly of the PC(USA) (2020), declared that Black lives matter; that our country's most important institutions have been built to sustain white privilege, to protect white lives and white property at the expense of our siblings of color; and that the church, through ignorance, denial, and in some cases deliberate action, has participated in this injustice. We have been slow to face the reality of systemic racism. We have been slow to acknowledge the pain of our fellow Presbyterians, of our fellow Christians, of our fellow citizens, and of those who have come to America for a better life, whose value has been judged by the color of their skin. We pledge to join hands and hearts with our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) siblings to actively confront and dismantle systemic racism in our church and in society at large, and to work for a more just, merciful, and peaceful country that allows all of God's children to flourish.

{Therefore} It calls all Presbyterians to hear and heed the Gospel imperative to love God, neighbor, and self by living out a deeper commitment to active participation with Jesus Christ in the work of building God's kingdom through:

1. Personal and corporate repentance, spiritual renewal, and devotion to the Great Ends of the Church.
2. Listening and responding to the voices of peoples long silenced through programs such as Hands and Feet: Presbyterians Engaging in Communities, the Poor People's Campaign.
3. Energetic, intelligent, imaginative, and loving involvement in the Matthew 25 Initiative and its intertwined foci: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty.

(Taken from the document "On the Church in This Moment in History – Responding to the Sin of Racism and a Call to Action" from the 224th General Assembly)

Policy

The Presbytery of Scioto Valley commits itself to the work of antiracism. It also seeks to support and challenge congregations and members of the Presbytery to embrace learning about antiracism, and become actively antiracist in our theology, policy, and practice.

Training

Antiracism training and education shall be offered at least once/year. This might take the form of a workshop or a podcast.

Updating This policy will be annually reviewed by the Commission on Nurture and Outreach and the Stated Clerk. Any necessary changes will be presented to the Presbytery for approval. Additionally, this Commission shall annually review resources and make these available in training and on the PSV website.