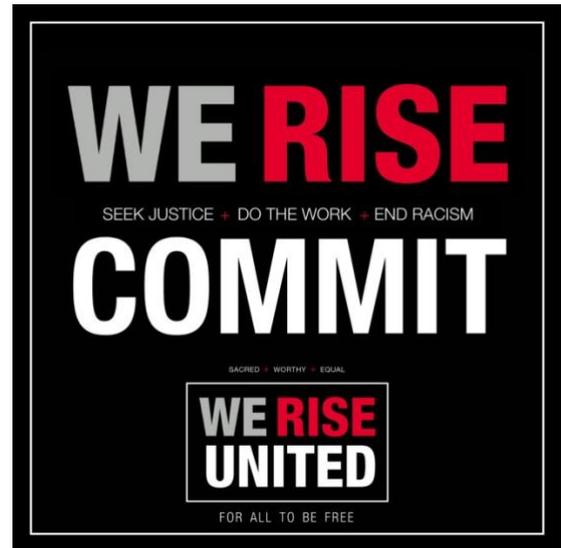


Commitment to Becoming an Anti-Racist Church

As people of God, we lament and confess the sin of racism and we commit to work without ceasing, led by the Spirit of God, to resist and deconstruct racism wherever it exists. Our hearts have been broken by the recent deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and Rayshard Brooks; and, we know that their killings are among too many children of God whose lives have been ended as a result of the dehumanization and devaluation of Black lives. We lament the deaths of all impacted by this sin and violence that has plagued our beloved country for far too long. We mourn with all who have seen loved ones taken from them, have experienced racial violence and those who've lived with the pain and trauma of ignored, rationalized and/or justified interpersonal, institutional, and structural racism.



According to the scholar, activist and author, Angela Davis, and Ibram X. Kendi, the founding director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University, there are no non-racists. There are only anti-racists — those who expose and eradicate racist ideas wherever they encounter them (including within themselves) — and racists — people who allow racist ideas to spread without opposition. Being anti-racist is believing that racism is everyone's problem and understanding that we all have a role in stopping it. That being said, being anti-racist is different for White people than for people of color. No one is born racist or anti-racist; these result from the choices we make.

As we see embodied in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ, who proclaimed good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind and that the oppressed be freed, as Christ-followers, we must choose to be anti-racist both individually and collectively.

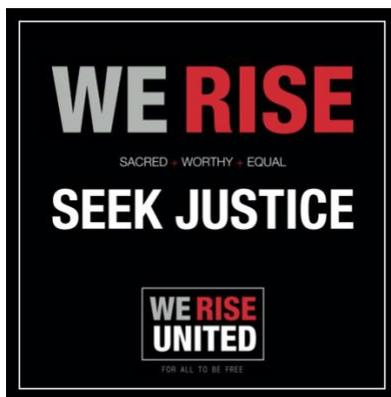
In order to become an anti-racist church, we believe that White people must acknowledge and confess their participation in systems of racism and White privilege. Just as we approach God in a spirit of confession in our worship, we believe that the transforming love of Jesus Christ is most fully experienced when we begin from a place of humility and acknowledge our sins both known and unknown. We believe in the power of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation offered in Jesus Christ to transform individual hearts and social systems. It takes commitment to walk together in this sacred, yet difficult, work.

As we commit to transform our lives, our churches, and our society, we acknowledge that we each enter this work in different places. We acknowledge that some people have been fighting for human rights for a significant amount of time, some people have actively engaged in the [NEJ Call to Action for Racial Justice](#), and some don't want to engage in this conversation at all. We acknowledge that no matter what we put in this document, it will not be enough for some and far too much for others. The chasm of experience between being

a White person and a Black person in America must be crossed. This bridge requires not only faith in God, but enough faith in one another to begin the journey of healing and hope.

We know that all people are sacred and worthy. We are made equal by God, who created humanity in God's own image. Out of our deep love of God and neighbor, when we see people being treated as less than equal we will speak out.

Therefore, we invite you to pray about how God is calling you and your church to be engaged in dismantling racism, not for a moment, but for a lifetime. As a continuation of the [NEJ Call to Action](#) for Racial Justice, we are asking churches to pledge their Commitment to Becoming an Anti-Racist Church by signing below. Together, we will seek justice, do the work, and end racism as disciples of Jesus Christ.



DISCIPLES SEEK JUSTICE

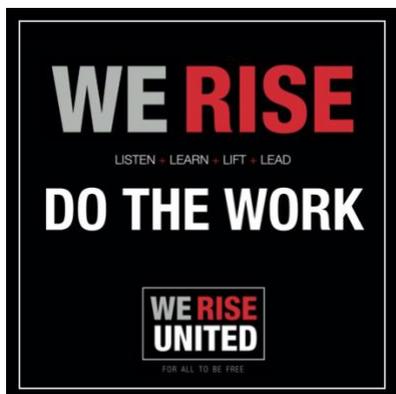
Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our shared history includes a primary emphasis on Christian living, on putting faith and love into action.

Live: Our church commits to include the spiritual discipline of justice as a part of our understanding of discipleship and congregational vitality. John Wesley's Rule of Discipleship needs to be understood and resurrected today: *"(T)o witness to Jesus Christ in the world and to follow His teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship, and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."*

Resist: Our church will regularly uplift our shared [baptismal vows](#) to encourage believers to a) repent of the sin of racism; b) resist evil, injustice, and oppression as it relates to racism; so that, c) we might be able to live into the vow to be in union with people of all ages, nations, and races.

Organize: Our church commits to directly engage with our local leaders and officials to work toward ending racism, poverty, and violence based upon the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ, our United Methodist Social Principles, and Book of Resolutions. Specifically:

- [Resolution 5031](#): Humanizing Criminal Justice;
- [Resolution 3378](#): Racism and Economic Injustice Against People of Color in the US;
- [Resolution 3422](#) Speaking Out for Compassion: Transforming the Context of Hate in the United States;
- [Resolution 3371](#): A Charter for Racial Justice in an Interdependent Global Community;
- [Resolution 3376](#): White Privilege in the United States.

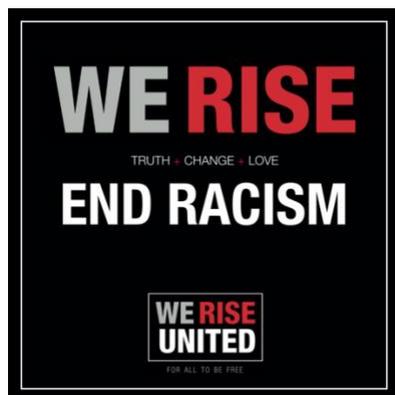


DISCIPLES DO THE WORK necessary that results in naming and addressing racism when they witness it and working toward becoming a racial justice change agent. Each church's leadership needs to engage in doing the work.

Listen: We will build relationships across lines of difference as we listen deeply and get to know someone who doesn't look, think, or act like us. Download this resource sheet for help. Listen to the pain, experience, hopes, and shared humanity and consider how you might be an agent of love and healing. Pray for what God is calling you to do as a result.

Learn: Our leaders will educate themselves on how to have conversations about race. This resource from the National Museum of African-American Culture and History includes the following topics: Bias, Being Antiracist, Community Building, Self-Care, Race and Racial Identity, Social Identities and Systems of Oppression, Whiteness, Historical Foundations of Race.

Lead: Our leaders, once they know better, do better by exposing and eradicating racist stereotypes, naming microaggressions, and speaking up. They will help others learn how to have conversations about race and use their power to talk about racial justice in worship, small groups and service ministries; include more voices at the table; and create more equity.



DISCIPLES END RACISM because racism is a sin. Our church acknowledges that perfect love casts out fear and will persist in the work of ending racism. We will seek to love all people as Jesus loves, whatever their racial and ethnic heritage, and work together to restore the broken body of Christ. These deep wounds can be is delicate and will require humble involvement from those who have previously remained silent.

Truth: Our church will discover and tell the whole truth about our church's history with regards to racism. This may include looking at the language in our deeds, tracing our churches' role during the time of slavery and sequestration, and looking at the historical accuracy of how the images in our churches depict Jesus. Truth-telling also includes confronting our racism and affirming that Black lives and all lives of color really do matter.

Change: During a season of prayer and fasting, our church will repent and identify what change is needed to be intentionally anti-racist given the uncomfortable truths we have discovered. We will persist even when we don't want to.

Love: Our church will participate in vital conversations in cross-racial and/or cross-cultural groups followed by a discerned, collective action in the wider community.

Express your commitment to become an antiracist church by [signing here](#).