

A Response to Racial Injustice from the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown

We, the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown, are deeply disturbed by the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and the other members of the Black and Brown community who are unnamed here but are equally precious in God's sight. We lament with their families and communities in crying out to our God for justice and peace in our land.

Scripture teaches us that all humans are made in God's image and likeness (*Gen. 1:27*) and that we are called to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God (*Micah 6:8*). We therefore assert that racism, racial bias, discrimination, and segregation are antithetical to the gospel, unacceptable in the life of the church, and should be intolerable in the life of our nation. James names this sin when he writes, **"My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others? But if you favor some people over others, you are committing a sin."** (*James 2: 1, 9*)

We confess that we have all sinned against our Heavenly Father in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. When we - as Disciples of Christ - fail to pursue justice for the vulnerable and the persecuted, we offend our Savior, Jesus Christ (*Matthew 25:31-46*).

We resolve to commit ourselves to the holy work of the ministry of reconciliation (*2 Corinthians 5:11-19*), devoting ourselves to good works in order to meet the urgent needs of all who are vulnerable (*Titus 3:1-14*) and to lead our congregation and the larger Christian community in doing the same. We do so with humility and with repentant hearts, as we actively seek to discern God's will, through the Holy Scriptures and prayer, to guide us in speaking out and laboring for justice.

We call on our congregation to join us in taking the following actions in this spirit of reconciliation.

- 1) Pray individually for the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of your need and your sin, including the sin of racism. (*Psalms 139: 23-24*)
- 2) Pray with others for justice, peace and reconciliation. (*Matthew 18:19-20, James 5:16*)
- 3) Listen generously and learn from our Black and Brown brothers and sisters in Christ. (*Proverbs 18:13*)
- 4) Take action as the Holy Spirit leads you to overcome the injustice that exists in our nation. (*James 1:22-25*)