



SPC Statement on Racism

March 15, 2022

Some people will say that there is little value in a local church like ours making statements about the great issues of the day. What difference can it possibly make? I suppose that question is compounded when a church leadership has said nothing about a vital issue like racism, which has dominated the national headlines over the past two years, and where our silence, we know, has hurt people we care about.

Why has the Session said nothing up until now? In the eighteen years that I have been Senior Pastor, the church has only made two public statements about an issue in the news and, significantly, both of them have been about racism - the first after Charlottesville in 2017 and this one now. Certainly, the pastors and leaders have spoken about racism in the last two years, but the Session as a body said nothing because we were not able to reach a consensus on what a statement should say. Some of us felt that whatever we said in the charged atmosphere of the news and political polarization of the last two years would either add to the problem or be seen as just words at a time when everybody was making statements. Others felt that to say something, however imperfect, as an expression of Gospel values and pastoral care for our friends would be valuable. We couldn't agree, and because we couldn't speak with one voice, we said nothing.

Why are we choosing to say something at this time? Although the Session couldn't previously agree on a statement, we did agree that one way in which we could best serve the congregation, short of a statement, was to offer a class on worldviews that would frame the issues of our day against the backdrop of our biblical theology and Gospel values. Mark Bilger has led that class for many months now and many of you have benefitted from it. As part of the whole, Mark offered a discussion on racism, and this statement follows its good work.

We hope that this statement now, even though it follows so long after the events that inspired our national discussion, will be read for what it is: our commitment to the priority of living out the Gospel together. Only the biblical revelation of God can deliver us from racism, but it is a revelation that must be grasped and applied to the teaching and fellowship of a church, and that is what we, going forward, intend to do.

Steve Constable
Senior Pastor



STONY POINT CHURCH DENOUNCES RACISM IN ALL ITS FORMS AS SIN.

1. Racism in all its forms denies Scripture's affirmation of the equal value and dignity of all people, who are created in God's image [Genesis 1:27-28]. These ideologies expressly deny Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves [Mark 12:31]. Therefore, we reject and condemn every ideology and system that teaches or supports the supremacy of one race or the inferiority of another. We believe, without reservation, that racism is sin, being abhorrent to God and deeply contrary to Scripture's command to walk in both truth and love [3 John 1:4; Ephesians 5:2].
2. Racist ideologies and systems set themselves against God's intention to reconcile diverse people to one another in a united community, even as he reconciles that diverse community to himself [Ephesians 2:14-16]. The Church is to be composed of people from every tribe, nation, and language [Revelation 7:9]. Therefore, we reject and condemn every ideology and system that divides people from one another based on ideas of racial superiority or ethnic purity. We affirm our essential unity as a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multinational people united in Christ.
3. We recognize, with grief, that Christian churches, ministries, and individuals have at times, promoted or participated in racism. Too frequently, churches have stood silent and failed to confront racist attitudes and actions. We depend upon the work of the Holy Spirit to guide us in all truth as we continue to reflect and repent of all sin including racism [John 14:26, Romans 12:2].
4. We stand committed to extend hospitality and comfort that comes with the good news of Jesus Christ who will reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross [Colossians 1:20].

The Session

Further discussion of the PCA's biblical and theological views on this topic can be found in: Committee on Mission to North America PASTORAL LETTER ON RACISM Approved at the March 2004 MNA Committee Meeting as the Committee's Recommendation to the Thirty-Second General Assembly [27 pages] - https://www.pcahistory.org/topical/race/2004_pastoral_letter_on_racism.pdf REPORT OF THE AD INTERIM COMMITTEE ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC RECONCILIATION TO THE FORTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY [73 pages] - https://www.pcahistory.org/topical/race/2018_report_ethnic_and_racial_reconciliation.pdf