

Takoma Park Presbyterian Church
Resolution of Committed Racial Mindfulness

May 2015

1. Commitment to Racial Mindfulness

Whereas, racial classification and identity are historically and powerfully embedded in the foundation of the USA society and entrenched in many of the social institutions, systems and mentalities of our nation so that historic and ongoing influences of racism continue to justify and perpetuate unequal distributions of resources, opportunities and potential between racial groups; and

Whereas, racism is a multidimensional, persistent and highly adaptive system that dominates significant institutions, systems, processes and interests at all social levels of our society, as seen in social adaptive shifts of slavery to jim crow laws to mass incarceration; and

Whereas, we are alarmed and disturbed by the effects of racism against many peoples in the United States, including people of African descent, Latinos, Native Americans, and Asians; and

Whereas, we are extremely concerned by historic and persistent discrimination against African-Americans as currently represented by disproportionate imprisonment of black citizens, high rates of law enforcement killings of black men, the poverty-level social situations of many African-Americans, and apparent racism portrayed in our social and political systems; and

Whereas, we acknowledge that these systems entrench each and every one of us in assumptions, behaviors and practices that serve to the advantages of some and the disadvantages of others, such that to bring about positive changes we all need to be engaged in “**racial re-formation learning**” that will our counter conscious and unconscious individual and systemic racism and injustices; and

Whereas, we are committed to the Gospel taught by Jesus to promote compassion, peace and social justice, so we therefore desire to proactively counter and reduce discrimination, suffering, pain and injustices induced by racism, we seek to help shape a present and a future that shall overcome racism in our society;

Therefore, we hereby propose to undertake a program of **Committed Racial Mindfulness** that will promote “**racial re-formation learning**” for ourselves and in our congregations and communities by:

- ✧ Raising our knowledge and understanding of the patterns, processes, practices and effects of racism in our lives, institutions, communities and society;
- ✧ Heightening our commitment and capabilities to counter racism in its multiple forms in our lives, our congregations, our communities and our society;
- ✧ Making us more effective messengers and practitioners of conscientious racial mindfulness in our daily lives, in our congregations for our spiritual life and our service, and in our communities for our social collectivities, institutions and gatherings.

2. Proposal for Program of Committed Racial Mindfulness

The program of **Committed Racial Mindfulness** (CRM) will begin with focus on two levels of proactive “racial re-formation learning”:

- i. **CRM leadership:** Creation of a core unit of persons who are deeply personally committed to conscientious racial mindfulness, willing to assume leadership roles for “racial re-formation learning”, and who will proactively engage in training, reflective discussions, and racial engagement as CRM leaders.
- ii. **Community CRM program:** Creation of an ongoing CRM program involving our broader congregations and communities in diverse processes of training, meetings and experiences to promote CRM and “racial re-formation learning” in our congregations and communities.

We are initiating a program for Conscientious Racial Mindfulness at the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church and are open to working jointly with other interested congregations from the area. We are currently planning the initial steps of our CRM program.

Stage 1: CRM Training for formation of our CRM Leadership Team

This involves participation in a selected training program by persons who are committed to being proactive and assume leadership roles for “racial re-formation learning” in our congregation(s) and community.

Stage 2: CRM Awareness Training for involved congregations and communities

This involves promoting a series of training and experiential opportunities for interested persons in our congregations and communities to learn about CRM and invite their participation in CRM initiatives in their daily lives, congregations, and communities. *In order to bring greater diversity into the initiative, we will build relationships with additional congregations, like-minded community organizations, and selected leaders in the greater community.*

Stage 3: Design and Initiation of an ongoing CRM program for our congregations and communities

This step involves the formation and implementation of plans and ongoing CRM activities and engagements by CRM members in our lives, congregations and communities.