

Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church

Anti-Racism Policy

Introduction

Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church (FPUPC) is committed to upholding the values of love, justice, and equality as taught by Jesus Christ. We believe that every person is made in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Racism in any form is contrary to our Christian faith and our mission to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Affirm FPUPC's commitment to being an anti-racist congregation.
2. Establish guidelines for identifying, reporting, addressing, and preventing racism within our church community.
3. Promote a culture of inclusivity and equity.

Definitions

Racism: Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race, nationality or ethnic group.

Anti-Racism: The active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

Principles

1. **Biblical Foundation**: Our anti-racism stance is grounded in scripture, notably Galatians 3:28, which states, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
2. **Inclusivity and Diversity**: We celebrate and embrace the diversity of God's creation and commit to fostering an environment where all individuals feel welcomed and valued.
3. **Equity**: We strive to ensure equal opportunities and fair treatment for all, actively working to dismantle systemic barriers that perpetuate racism.

Commitments

1. Education and Awareness:

- Provide ongoing education on racism, its impact, and anti-racist practices through sermons, workshops, and discussion groups.
- Encourage the congregation to engage with diverse perspectives and learn about the experiences of marginalized communities.

2. Inclusive Worship and Fellowship:

- Ensure that worship services, church activities, and leadership opportunities are accessible and inclusive to people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Celebrate cultural diversity within the congregation through events, music, and storytelling.

3. Support and Advocacy:

- Offer pastoral care and support to those affected by racism.
- Advocate for social justice and racial equality within the wider community, partnering with local organizations and participating in community initiatives.

4. Policy and Accountability:

- Review and revise church policies and practices to ensure they promote racial equity and do not perpetuate discrimination.
- Session with the Senior Pastor and/or the Personnel Committee will oversee the implementation of this policy, address incidents of racism, and provide regular reports to the church leadership and congregation.

5. Reporting and Response

- Reporting Mechanism: Individuals should report incidents of racism or discrimination within the church to the Senior Pastor and/or the Personnel Committee. All reports are held in confidence.
- Response Protocol: All reported incidents shall receive timely and appropriate responses, including mediation, support for affected individuals, and disciplinary actions if necessary.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Regularly assess the effectiveness of anti-racism initiatives and make necessary adjustments.
- Gather feedback from the congregation to ensure the policy remains relevant and impactful.

Conclusion

Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church is dedicated to creating a community that reflects the inclusive and transformative love of Christ. Through this anti-racism policy, we commit to standing against racism in all its forms and working towards a more just and equitable world.

FPUPC STATEMENT OF INCLUSIVITY

Convinced of God's Grace,
We affirm that there can be no exclusiveness in the body of Christ.
We welcome all regardless of race, ethnic heritage, national origin,
age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic standing;
and we encourage the full participation of all in the life of our congregation.

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