

Resolution on Systemic Racism in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference

57th Annual Meeting of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference 2020.

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WHEREAS the United Church of Christ claims, since its inception in 1957, that it is a *United and Uniting* Church for the sake of the gospel, and

WHEREAS the General Synod of the United Church of Christ did adopt in 1993 a resolution which called the United Church of Christ to be a multiracial and multicultural Church, and

WHEREAS the General Synod of the United Church of Christ did adopt in 2003 two resolutions: 1) Calling the UCC to be an Anti-Racist Church, and 2) Calling the UCC to Renew the Battle Against Racism in All Its Guises, and

WHEREAS the General Synod of the United Church of Christ did adopt in 2017 the resolution on Establishing Procedures for Cultural Diversity Training for Authorized Ministers, which included Anti-Racism Training, and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ affirms in its bylaws that Local Churches are inclusive and accessible communities of mission, evangelism, church development, education, unity, worship, nurture, and justice so that the good news of Jesus, the Christ, will be proclaimed in word and deed, and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ affirms in its bylaws that the Church in all its expressions are encouraged to speak prophetically on matters of justice, power, and public policy; to confront expressions of injustice and alienation in the Church and in society, and

WHEREAS the Board of the United Church of Christ affirms in its bylaws the provision for support for Local Church Ministry of service on behalf of those who

are poor, the forgotten and the oppressed, and for those marginalized by stigmas and discrimination, and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ affirms in its bylaws the following organizations: Ministers for Racial, Social, and Economic Justice; and United Black Christians, which seek to provide necessary advocacy and safety for our African American clergy and congregants, over 50,000 strong, and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ affirms in its bylaws the desire to witness and preserve the history and legacy of the African American people and churches, and

WHEREAS racism and its effects, including economic injustice, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves, and will not be eradicated without deliberate engagement in analysis and action; and

WHEREAS because of the impact of racism on all people, and the interconnection among oppressions, we realize we need to make an institutional commitment to end racism; and

WHEREAS we are called yet again by our commitment to faith in action to pursue this anti-racist, multi-cultural initiative in the spirit of justice, compassion, and community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Indiana-Kentucky Conference provide opportunities for its member Associations and their committees, and its member churches to carefully examine their own explicit and implicit racism, and the institutional structures of racism that pervade our churches from living in a racist culture, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Indiana-Kentucky Conference strongly urge that all IKC Associations adopt a requirement of anti-racism training for authorized ministers to hold and maintain standing, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Indiana-Kentucky Conference create an IKC Justice and Witness Ministries Task Force comprised of at least one member (lay or clergy) from each association for the purpose of studying and understanding the institutional structures within our associations that still promote, consciously or unconsciously, systemic racism, and

[Note: systemic racism is a form of racism expressed in the practice of social, political, and religious institutions. It is reflected in disparities regarding wealth, income, employment, housing, health care, political power, education, and criminal justice. These inequalities seek to maintain a white normative society.]

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the newly formed IKC Justice and Witness Ministries Task Force develop a conference-wide action plan designed to address issues of racism in our churches, in our Associations, and in Association and Conference committees, with the action plan being presented to the full Board of Directors prior to the 58th Annual Meeting of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference, to be voted on and, if passed, implemented by the Board, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a key focus of the 58th Annual Meeting include workshops and round-table discussions regarding the work of the IKC Justice and Witness Ministries Task Force, with a special evening session to include activities on understanding and seeing racism in our communities, and building a more just, racist free Conference.

Funding: The funding for the implementation of the Action Plan developed by the Justice and Witness Ministries Task Force will be determined by the Board of Directors as funds are available.