

**Presbytery of Charlotte Policy for
Mandatory Dismantling Racism Training
February 6, 2021**

1. The Presbytery makes a commitment to offer, provide resources for, and to publicize educational opportunities that focus on dismantling racism within our church institutions (Presbytery and congregations) and the communities we serve. The Presbytery will provide a training that incorporates the following elements:
 - A theological grounding in our call to a Beloved Community
 - Our regional history, including history of the former Catawba, Mecklenburg, Concord, and Fayetteville Presbyteries
 - Core concepts of systemic racism and its manifestation at the individual level
 - A new awareness of the impact of Presbytery and church policies and decisions on people of color
 - Tools and strategies to develop anti-racist behavior and culture within our presbytery and church life
2. The Dismantling Racism training shall be required at least once every three (3) years for:
 - All Teaching Elders who are serving as pastors to a congregation or otherwise engaged in a Validated Ministry are required to attend Charlotte Presbytery's educational program on Dismantling Racism, within one year after their arrival. Failure to fulfill this requirement within the specified time will result in being listed as not in good standing in the Presbytery until training is completed. The Presbytery of Charlotte will communicate to Pastoral Nominating Committees and presbyteries who are requesting references on the status of candidates with respect to this requirement.
 - Commissioned Local Pastors (CLPs) and Ruling Elders elected to serve on the Council, Committee on Ministry (COM) and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) are required to participate in a training within one year of being commissioned (CRE) or elected to Council, COM or CPM.
 - All Candidates for Ministry are required to attend a Dismantling Racism training or similar training (approved by the Presbytery). In the event that the timing or location of a training is not feasible, the candidate may work with CPM to determine an alternative means to meet this requirement.
 - All Presbytery staff is required to attend within one year of hire/election.
3. The Presbytery strongly encourages honorably retired teaching elders, and any persons serving on Presbytery committees or ministry team to participate in such trainings.
4. Training Administration & Oversight

This policy will be administered by the Anti-Racism Ministry Team, who shall provide oversight and authorize the hiring of training consultants. The Anti-Racism Ministry Team is responsible for reviewing attendance of training participants and evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the trainings.

The office of the Stated Clerk is responsible for ensuring notation of TE and CRE participation is made in their permanent files and notifying them of compliance deadlines. The Presbytery of Charlotte will communicate to Pastoral Nominating Committees and presbyteries who are requesting references on the status of candidates with respect to this requirement.

The General Presbyter will serve as staff support to the Team.

5. Provision for Training Evaluation & Policy Review

The Anti-Racism Ministry Team shall also undertake an initial review of this policy by the end of 2022.

Funding

The Presbytery shall designate funding to provide these trainings.

Scriptural and Theological Framework for Anti-Racism Training in the Charlotte Presbytery

The Matthew 25 invitation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) based on Matthew 25:31-46, calls for Presbyterians to actively engage the world by embracing and working towards one or more of three focuses: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. The Presbytery of Charlotte has accepted the invitation of the PC(USA) to be a Matthew 25 Presbytery and is committed to living out the Matthew 25 call to action. Thus, given the current racial climate of our nation and world, the Presbytery of Charlotte, in addition to building congregational vitality, and eradicating systemic poverty, is especially called in this season to engage efforts that lead towards the dismantling of structural racism.

As followers of Christ, we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39) and to fully embrace the fact that all people are equally loved by God (John 3:16, Romans 5:8) and equally valued by God (Galatians 3:28).

These New Testament passages rest on the foundation of the Old Testament. From the Pentateuch's outline of a covenant community built on pillars of justice and mutual responsibility to the prophets' fiery presentations of God's expectations and calls for fairness that echo through the Wisdom literature, the Old Testament reminds us again and again about God's call to full inclusion and equity.

The creation story portrays God's creation of humankind in one image, without race, that of the Lord. The Mosaic law makes clear that to love neighbor is to love the Lord. When God's people err, we hear the thunderous correction of the prophets speaking for God.

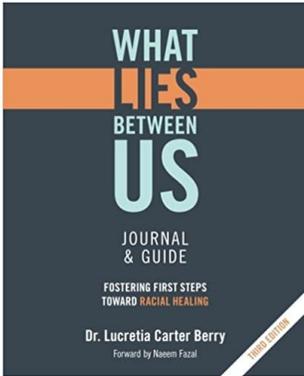
Amos 5:21-24: The Lord's rejection of worship without justice: *²¹I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. ²²Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. ²³Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. ²⁴But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

Isaiah 40:4-5: The Lord's vision of equality, equity, and fairness: *⁴Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain...*

Micah 6:8: What God Requires: *⁸He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

From cover to cover, scripture portrays God's vision of equality, equity, fairness, and justice. To fully live into this vision and love our neighbor as ourselves, we must seek to know and understand the effects of racism on our neighbors of color. Understanding racism and its traumatic effect on those who experience it, is of paramount importance if divisive racial barriers are to be torn down and structural racism is to be dismantled.

Curriculum: "What LIES Between Us"



A 5-Week Self-paced Anti-racism Educational Course from brownicity.com

About The Course: Anti-race/ism Curriculum Specialist, Dr. Lucretia Berry and Team Brownicity designed the What LIES Between Us series to guide, support, and equip 'new comers' with an analytical framework for examining race and racism in the United States.

Learners will be equipped with a historical, political, and social context for understanding race/ism and how it is sustained. The content will allow participants to build a sound knowledge base and develop a perspective beyond popular discourse and uninformed opinions. With a practical understanding of contributing ideologies—like white supremacy, meritocracy, colorblindness—and interpersonal and systemic dynamics—like unconscious bias, and power and privilege – participants will have a broadened awareness of themselves, “others,” and our interconnected society.