

In the wake of events and protests across our nation and the world, we, the session of Highland Presbyterian Church, are compelled to witness to Christ's commands to love, honor, and care for all people. As a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we are guided by our Book of Confessions including The Confession of Belhar, which states, in part:

We believe that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.¹

As Presbyterians, we acknowledge the importance of confession and lament. Therefore, we affirm that:

- Racism is sin;
- White supremacy is idolatry;
- The structures of the United States—including our economic, educational, healthcare, and police systems – have embedded in them the effects of our national legacy of colonization and slavery.
- We lament the deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, David McAtee, and Ahmaud Arbery, beloved children of God. Though circumstances of each death were different, each was a tragic incidence of violence against our black siblings;
- We confess that by our actions and inactions, we have been complicit in our nation's failure to address the underlying racism inherent in these and other deaths.

Repentance requires effort to change our ways, turning away from sin and towards God and neighbor. Therefore, we will:

- Pray without ceasing that “justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24);
- Examine critically and intentionally the history of whiteness as a social construct;
- Work in our own lives and in the life of this congregation to dismantle white privilege;
- Humbly listen to, support, and receive guidance from leaders of color;
- Use our voices, our influence, our privilege, and our bodies to stand in solidarity with our community against economic, political, and legal systems that perpetuate racism, violence, fear, and hate;
- Support, advocate, and work toward the enactment of laws, policies, and tangible actions leading to racial justice and equity for all.

Adopted June 17, 2020

¹ The Confession of Belhar, adopted by the synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa in 1986 and by the 222nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. in 2016.