

Presbytery of Tres Rios

Antiracism Policy

Adopted by the Presbytery on October 25, 2024

Racism is defined as “a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial difference produce an inherent superiority of a particular race; also, a behavior or attitudes that reflect and foster this belief.”ⁱ This is not only limited to people of African descent, but any non-Caucasian ethnic group, including but not limited to those of

LatinX, Asian, and Indigenous ethnicities. Although the church often affirms that racism is the opposite of what God intends for humanity; we admit that the racism and racial prejudice that has a strong history in the United States, often transfers from the secular world into the life and legacy of the church.

The Presbytery of Tres Rios affirms the statement made by the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s document entitled Facing Racism: A Vision of the Intercultural Community “Because of our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity, the PC(USA) must stand against, and work against racism. Antiracist effort is not optional for Christians. It is an essential aspect of Christian discipleship, without which we fail to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.”ⁱⁱ

Although work has been done to end racism, we acknowledge there is more work to be done. Therefore, in our efforts to create a church where “all persons are treated with respect, all gifts are valued and encouraged, knowing diversity is a gift to be valued”ⁱⁱⁱ the Presbytery of Tres Rios commits to:

- Continue to acknowledge and repent for the harm done in past to either create or maintain the systematic racism;
- Provide anti-racism and equality training for our leaders and congregations to encourage education, understanding, and growth;
- Recognize the community and lands in which we serve, reside, and worship as the unceded homelands of the Lenape people. We also acknowledge that we as a church have been both the beneficiary of this historic reality and an active participant in the exclusion and erasure of native peoples.
- Acknowledge the wonderful diversity in God’s creation and the diversity of where we serve, reside, and worship. iv
- Strive to work with the Representation and Recruitment Committee to ensure that our elected leadership is representative of the diversity of our body.

The *Book of Order G-3.0106* requires “All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies; a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protections policy, and an antiracism policy. Each council’s policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months”

Resources

Facing Racism: Vision of the Intercultural Community

<https://www.pcusa.org/resource/facing-racism-a-vision-of-the-intercultural--40843/>

i Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed January 29, 2024,

https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/racism?utm_campaign=sd&utm_medium=serp&utm_source=jsonld

ii Facing Racism: A Vision of the Intercultural Community, 222nd General Assembly (2016)

<https://www.pcusa.org/resource/facing-racism-a-vision-of-the-intercultural--40843/>

iii “Racial Equity,” Presbyterian Women’s website, accessed January 30, 2024,

https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/what_we_do/build-community/antiracism/