

Pentecost and Anti-Racism Response Resources

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability.” Act 2:4 NRSV

In the throes of pandemics, protests, and pandemonium we can be thrust into the silence of solitude. I am convinced that solitude is a needed spiritual discipline in time such as these. The past three weeks have been difficult and distressing for our nation and our African American siblings in particular. In addition to the disproportionate death rate from COVID-19 in African American and Latinx communities, two more African American men were killed by white law enforcement officers. Major cities in our nation, including Minneapolis, Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago are smoldering from flames of combustible rage and despair resulting from the death of George Floyd caused by a Minneapolis police officer's knee on his neck inhibiting his ability to breathe.

Protests turned fiery and business have been breached by broken entry points and theft – looting has occurred. Yet, looting cannot be the legacy of this season. As a Pro-Reconciling and Anti-Racist Church, we must keep a meta-view of this moment. This is not about bad actors who burn buildings and steal merchandise. The depth and longevity of individual and collective despair has many expressions. Four hundred plus years of actual and symbolic knees pressed onto the necks of people of African descent in this nation has festered into blisters that burst and ooze with rage, resolve, and repression of the human spirit.

All of this as we enter into the season of Pentecost. As the Spirit rushes upon the Church like a mighty wind we are propelled into a shift. This shift is requiring that we, like the disciples on that Pentecost Day in biblical antiquity, that we receive the Holy Spirit. It is requiring that we trust the Spirit to use our different tongues and languages to employ our skills, gifts, passions, and talents to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. We will not all protest in a local town square, but I pray some of you will. We will not all form prayer circles and pray for Spirit to accompany our culture shift to dismantle racism, but I hope many of you will. Many, if not all of us, can vote, join a movement in our local community, learn how to be an ally, and educate ourselves in anti-racism.

I am attaching below a document with a few resources that have emerged over time from Disciples pastors, scholars, and ecumenical partners. It is my hope they will help you to embrace the rushing wind of the Pentecost season so that we can all affirm the image of God in every human body and spirit. It is my prayer that we, too, “filled with the Holy Spirit, will begin to speak in different languages as the Spirit gives us ability” to be the reconciled body of Christ from this day forward.

Prayers of Confession and Repentance for our Ecumenical End Racism Sunday
September 2015:

<https://reconciliationministry.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/EndRacismSunday-AMELitany-PrayersofConfessionForgiveness.pdf>

Resources for White Ally-ship:

Black People Need Stronger White Allies — Here's How You Can Be One

https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2020/05/9841649/allyship-ahmaud-arbery-george-floyd?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email_share

Paul Kivel: Guidelines for Being a Strong White Ally (from Uprooting Racism book)

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/kivel3.pdf>

100 Ways White People Can Make Life Less Frustrating For People of Color

https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/ne95dm/how-to-be-a-white-ally-to-people-of-color

10 Things You Should Know About White Privilege

<https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2016/10/13/10-things-you-should-know-about-white-privilege>

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Disciples Leaders Responses:

Rev. John Mobley – An Open Letter to the Pastor of the Alabama Northwest Florida
Region. <https://www.facebook.com/john.p.mobley.3/posts/10156822352361792>

Rev. Kevin McNeil: Homily “We Are Not Saved”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YE9pPr-ne18&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3XsdCCde8VvZAppuG4IzjBLluuDYRRjZSnrt4VYJmJSQNVYzeLaBRM7aU&app=desktop>

General Minister and President, Rev. Teresa Hord Owens

<https://www.facebook.com/terrihordowens/videos/245086473418034/UzpfSTYxMTQxMTEyNTozMDYwNjExMjk0OTk0MTQ6MTA6MDoxNTkwOTk0Nzk5OjI2MTA5OTQwNjA3NTU0MjA1NDE/>