

Racial Justice Statement

Valley of Peace Lutheran Church, Golden Valley, MN

PROCLAIMING GOD'S CREATION

We Believe that all people are created in God's image and that God has named us all "good." Gen 1:26

IN TODAY'S CONTEXT

We Believe that racism has plagued the Church and our community. Entrenched systems and behaviors continue to marginalize certain people based on the color of their skin or ethnic heritage.

We Recognize that we live and worship on land taken from the Wahpekute band of the Santee Dakota Nation.

OUR CONFESSION

We Confess that racist systems have permeated our entire culture, including the Christian Church. For far too long we have not challenged these systems, even as we have benefited from their existence and enforcement, nor have we understood their grave and destructive impact on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPoC).

We Confess that as a congregation made up mostly of white people, we are only beginning to understand the current manifestations of the historically deliberate unjust systems that perpetuate racial inequality. For too long, our congregation, as part of the Christian Church, has remained silent or even actively reinforced this unearned white privilege of being free of barriers created by racial discrimination.

We Acknowledge that people of color at Valley of Peace and in the global Christian Church have lived with these systems of inequality, which deny them full rights and privileges.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S LOVE, REDEMPTION AND RECONCILIATION

We Confirm that we are guided by Jesus' love and acceptance of all people, and by the words of the prophet in Micah 6:8.

God has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does God require of you
but to do justice,
and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God.

OUR MISSION

We Believe that we are called by Jesus, through the workings of the Holy Spirit for healing, justice, peace, reconciliation, service, and care for all of God's beloved community.

We Confirm that, as a ministry of Jesus Christ, we envision a faith community that celebrates all people and strives for racial justice in all that we do.

OUR ACTIONS AS OFFERINGS

We Commit to racial justice in all aspects of our congregational life, in our community and in our global outreach efforts.

We Commit to practice kindness and respect as we listen, learn and determine how to become anti-racist as individuals and as a congregation.

We Commit to address the inequities in our community, trusting that God's love and Word will guide us.

November 23, 2021

Current version developed by the Valley of Peace Racial Justice Team

Approved by the Church Council on March 16, 2021 and again on December 12, 2021

Adopted by the congregation on January 30, 2022

Historically, Valley of Peace has had members participate in the racial justice work of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA, since 2016, as encouraged by this document:

“Scripture calls us, as part of our Christian response, to walk in solidarity with people of color, because standing in silence sanctions continued injustice and violence.” – from the Minneapolis Area Synod Resolution Addressing Racial Injustice (RC2016-01)

In June, 2020, a VOP Racial Justice Team was formed, to further bring this work to our congregation.

This work at Valley of Peace is also in response to the call to justice from the national ELCA, as stated in these documents:

“Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture”, 1993

“Explanation of the Declarations of the ELCA to People of African Descent”, 2019

This is God’s work. We are God’s hands.