PCC Anti-Racism Statement

With the violence of white supremacy and systemic racism in our country painfully clear, the words of Mordecai speak to our hearts: “For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise from another quarter, but you and your father’s family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this” (Esther 4:14).

The God of justice and mercy calls us to break silence: Black lives matter. All lives are sacred to the Creator, and Black lives are in critical danger. God “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps 139:13) human beings in God’s own image (Gen 1:27) and called them “very good” (Gen 1:31). God loves every creature and calls us to love one another, because God is love (1 John 4:7–12).

We lament the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Desmond Franklin, Tamir Rice, and so many other Black people killed by police officers. We denounce police brutality, which disproportionately affects people of color. We bless peaceful protests for the dignity and rights of people of color.

In such a time as this we focus on police abuse, but we understand that danger within the larger setting of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation, and lack of access to health care for people of color. We acknowledge our entanglement and complicity in systems of racism. Having heard the good news of our Lord that God’s realm has drawn near (Matt 4:17; Mark 1:15) and seeking to “bear fruit worthy of repentance” (Matt 3:2), we commit ourselves to the anti-racist work of dismantling white supremacy and racial oppression and pledge to:

- identify and overcome our fears of rejection and retaliation in order to break our silence about racial injustice in both the small and seismic ways it manifests itself
- speak back to the anger of those who express racism and speak up when we hear racist remarks or jokes
● humble ourselves to become constant learners, listening to people of color and amplifying their voices
● discern, question, and examine covert and overt racism in ourselves, our families, and our friendships
● be unafraid to talk with our white friends and family about justice for our black friends and their families
● be willing to acknowledge the years of injustices that gave power to white people at the expense of black people
● participate in Black-led events in our local community
● read books to continue to educate ourselves, such as those suggested in the New York Times by Ibram X. Kendi
   (https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/29/books/review/antiracist-reading-list-ibram-x-kendi.html)
● ensure that young people in our church are exposed to multi-cultural books and curriculum
● financially support organizations that work for equality, such as Southern Poverty Law Center, Black Lives Matter, and the Poor People’s Campaign
● create a Bible Study that looks at passages that have historically been seen as racial
● publicly display our support to Black Lives Matter movement by displaying banner in front of church and wearing T shirts
● write to elected officials
● pray in silence for 8 minutes and 46 seconds for an end to racism, in remembrance of George Floyd’s murder.

We recognize the variety of gifts for a variety of faithful services (1 Cor 12:4) and that an individual may not be able to commit to all these actions. We call on members of Peace Community Church and all white people to commit to eight anti-racist actions this year in remembrance of the more than 8 minutes of George Floyd’s death. Jesus, the Christ, promised to leave peace with his disciples. We seek this peace—the peace of God, which surpasses all
understanding (Phil 4:7), a peace which presupposes merciful justice and life abundant. May God’s Holy Spirit abide with and in us, granting breath to all God’s children.