

Saint Luke's Presbyterian Church  
Dunwoody, Georgia

### **Anti-Racism Policy**

Adopted by Session April 27, 2025

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge the pervasive sin of racism in church and society and to commit Saint Luke's Presbyterian Church to the work of dismantling racism and facilitating opportunities for racial healing. The commitment to dismantling racism grows out of the Church's commitment to the call to care for the marginalized and to build up the body of Christ.

**Scope:** This policy applies to church members, officers, pastors, teaching elders, ruling elders, deacons, employees, and volunteers working in, with, and for the Church.

**Definition:** As stated in the PC(USA)'s anti-racism policy, racism is "the opposite of what God intends for humanity. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings, for it says that some are less than others."

Further, racism is more than individual acts of bigotry or prejudice. It involves systems, institutions, cultural traditions, and structures that support white privilege and white supremacy (or any other form of racial privilege or supremacy). Racism stands in fundamental conflict with the command to love God and neighbor (Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:30-31; Galatians 5:14). It threatens the theological conviction that each person has been made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and it violates the truth of our unity in Christ (Galatians 3:28).

**Commitments:** Although efforts have been made to end racism, we acknowledge there is more work to be done. Therefore, as part of our commitment to create a church which lives into its vision: "Boldly following Jesus, we love all people and work to build a compassionate, just, and peaceful world," Saint Luke's Presbyterian Church commits to:

- treat all persons with respect
- pray that, "justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24)
- value and encourage the diverse gifts of each person
- acknowledge and repent of the harm done in the past to either create or maintain systemic racism
- acknowledge the wonderful diversity in God's creation and the diversity of where we serve, reside, and worship
- promote to church members, especially leaders, opportunities to participate in anti-racism and equality training to encourage education, understanding, and growth
- ensure that leadership, membership, personnel, vendor, and other decisions are made equitably and fairly
- respect other religious traditions and strengthen interfaith and intercultural relationships through fellowship, educational, service, and worship events

- include statements of belief, such as the Confession of Belhar, routinely in worship services to raise awareness and encourage repentance
- seize opportunities to support, advocate for, and work toward the enactment of laws, policies, and tangible actions leading to justice and equity for all.

**Retaliation:** Saint Luke's Presbyterian Church does not tolerate any form of retaliation against any victim, or witness, who reports a violation of this Anti-Racism Policy. Any person who believes that they have been retaliated against should initiate a complaint under this policy.

**Complaint Procedure:** It is appropriate, but not required, for any person who feels that they have experienced or observed a violation of this policy to address the behavior first with the offending party, if it is possible to do so without unwarranted conflict or danger.

If the behavior is repeated, pervasive, and/or overly offensive, the complaint should be taken to the Senior Pastor/Head of Staff, the Clerk of Session, and/or, in the case of employees, to the Chair of the Human Resources Committee. All complaints will be investigated promptly and, to the extent possible, with regard for maintaining confidentiality. If the investigation confirms conduct contrary to this policy has occurred, the Church will take immediate, appropriate, corrective action, as determined by the Senior Pastor/Head of Staff, the Human Resources Committee, and/or the Session.

**Reviews:** All clergy, including retired clergy serving a church in some capacity, must receive or repeat the Anti-Racism course, provided by the Racial Healing Committee of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, every three years.

In addition, ruling elders serving on various commissions and committees of the Presbytery must complete the Anti-Racism course every three years.

As part of Saint Luke's officer training, newly elected leaders of the Church will review this policy and acknowledge their understanding and agreement to comply.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Session.

The broader church membership, to which this policy also applies, will be made aware of this policy annually, and a copy of the policy provided by the Clerk of Session upon request.