



Cumberland Community Church's Statement on Systemic Racism & Injustice

As a community of faith deeply committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, Cumberland Community Church affirms the God-bearing image of every person - regardless of race, gender, background, or social status. Although sinful behavior separates us from God and distorts that image, Scripture assures us that even our sin cannot erase this reality. Such a view demands that we value each person as God does, and boldly oppose the dark forces that threaten people of their dignity. We believe the gospel of Jesus Christ is a redemptive call for justice, mercy, and righteousness, not only inwardly in relation to the Creator, but also, outwardly in relation to all of creation.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:27 (NIV)

Therefore, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ:

We reaffirm our calling to Biblical Unity

We are one in Christ, and therefore, we find our identity in Him. Although we are all born into a fallen world, through Christ we are “re-born” out of it. The divisions and factions that separate us and characterize our humanity become secondary for those who are born of the Spirit. This is fundamental to biblical unity, and therefore, an extreme priority for our multi-ethnic church. We embrace and engage all of our differences, and will take on the challenging tensions that entail this journey of oneness, not sameness. We will not drift towards the ease of assimilation, but rather courageously choose to honor and accommodate our cross cultural family. We will not dismiss the pains of the past, but will seek to understand, to listen, and to allow the healing that Biblical unity requires. We make our allegiance to Christ alone.

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26-28 (NIV)



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We oppose and stand against the ideology of White Supremacy in all its forms

We dare not minimize the tragic history of our country, and its unique expression of racism. From colonialism, to slavery, to Jim Crow South, our country continues to reap what was sown from the seeds of white supremacy that were planted as foundations for this nation. The ideology of white superiority, whether embraced intentionally or accidentally, is absolutely void of theological value, and holds no place at the table of the family of God. We challenge all who share in its heretical sentiment, and lovingly call them to repentance.

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. Acts 10:34-35 (NIV)

We acknowledge, expose, and oppose all evidences of Systemic Racism

We recognize an original sin of America - racism - as much more complex and layered than a series of isolated events. Personal bias and prejudices are amplified within our cultural power structure and they normalize the preferences of the majority at the expense of the minority. Such gross inequity arises from the dark forces of oppression and has permeated institutions such as the criminal justice system, residential housing, the education system, the marketplace and the church, and it numbs the compassion of our nation to the needs of her very own. Therefore, Cumberland will accept her role as a voice of Godly conscience in our society, and apply biblical truth to the occurrences of racial inequality.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)



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We call to account the sin of Police Brutality

While offering unwavering support for officers who work tirelessly to protect and serve, we will not ignore the persistent evil of racial profiling, excessive force, and abuses of authority within our current police culture. We raise our voice in this cry for justice and add our agreement to the deeply emotional and truthful sentiment that Black lives matter¹. Moreover, black lives are precious, worthy and valued.

“Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.” Leviticus 19:15 (ESV)

We commit ourselves to the grace-filled work of Justice to redeem lives, families, communities, and the world through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We view the gospel holistically, and embrace the Lord's desire to realize His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Therefore, we accept the call to be salt and light in the world - passionately proclaiming a gospel that promises salvation for sinful souls while actively fulfilling a gospel that seeks redemption for a broken society through repentance and faith in Christ. The gospel does not shy away from the ills of society, but rather, steps into them willingly, with grace, as a practical demonstration of love. The gospel also serves as our foundation and our hope as we wrestle with our own pain, experiences and implicit biases, and commit to do what is necessary to achieve real change. With this in mind, we offer up suggestions at www.cumberlandchurch.org/statement-on-racism on practical steps you can take as you commit yourself to advancing God's kingdom here on earth.

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. 9 Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy. Proverbs 31:8-9 (NIV)

¹ We invoke this sentiment not as support for or to align Cumberland with any secular group or organization or its positions, but rather in recognition of the fundamental, Scripture-based truth of the phrase itself.