

## Towards an Anti-Racist Community



Over the last number of weeks, the degree to which racism has infected our society has become increasingly apparent to those not directly affected by it. The knee on George Floyd's neck and the words "I can't breathe" and "Black lives matter" have served as rallying cries for everyone who believes that racism is an evil that must be confronted, challenged, and eliminated. This fact is one of the reasons that The United Church of Canada in 2000 declared racism and its impact on people and society to be a sin that separates us from God and from one another.

As people have gathered together around the world to challenge racism another painful truth has emerged: it isn't enough to be non-racist, or to label racism a sin. The Christian community needs to be anti-racist.

When the Board met on June 16 it unanimously approved a statement which says that Trinity United Church will actively work towards being a safer community for everyone regardless of race and being an anti-racist church.

The full statement reads:

Recent events have reminded us how far we must go to truly enter into the call of loving our neighbour. It has exposed some very disturbing truths about our society and who we are as disciples of Jesus.

We, the Board of Trinity United Church, PG, acknowledge that anti-Black racism and racism, in general, has existed and exists in our institutions, systems and community. We acknowledge that The United Church of Canada is actively working toward being an anti-racist church and that, unfortunately, progress is slow.

We lament that we have not lived into our identity of being a community that truly loves its neighbours.

As an expression of solidarity with Black, Indigenous, People of Colour and a commitment to engage in developing processes that facilitate real change, we state that at Trinity United Church, PG: Black Lives Matter; and, that anti-Black racism and racism, in general, will not be tolerated.

We commit ourselves to listening, praying and acting in ways that embody this statement and will take action to repent our white privilege and return to the hard work of truly loving our neighbours, becoming allies and eliminating racism in all its forms, wherever it is found.

Everyone is encouraged to think about how we can challenge racism in all its forms, wherever we encounter it. Let's think about the words we use, the assumptions we make, and how we act. Maybe consider shopping at business owned by Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. Maybe you'd like to join one of our study groups starting in September. Maybe you're part of a book club that would like to tackle issues related to racism, white privilege, and how to be anti-racist in our daily lives.

Together we state that we're a church that values being an inclusive community. Doing the work of being anti-racist is one more way we embody what that means and ensure to the best of our abilities that when people join with us they know it is safer space for everyone.