

October 30, 2020

Dear Members of Third Reformed Church,

Following the recent racial struggles in our country during the summer and fall and concern by congregational members to support fellow brother and sisters in Christ who are African Americans, the church board was asked to communicate publicly our support for equal and just treatment of all citizens, particularly African-Americans. The overwhelming sentiment which is shared by the deacons of our church and church board is that this is a core value of the Christian faith. This is expressed, for example, in numerous scripture passages and adhered to by our confessional creeds, including the recent adoption of the Belhar Declaration that affirms racial equality and reconciliation at the heart of the Christian gospel.

The deacons have thoroughly processed the request to make a public stand and statement, and they passed a recommendation to the consistory which then gave their approval. The church will place signs on Pine Avenue, on the portico over the main entrance of the church, and in the gathering space that reads the following:

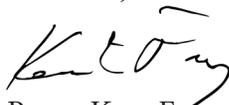
BLACK LIVES MATTER.

JUSTICE & EQUALITY FOR ALL MATTER.

An overwhelming consideration on the part of our elders and deacons is that we have much to learn so that we may be supportive of members of our congregation who are Christians of color. Their experiences vary greatly from that of the majority. Here's just one example: Often these brothers and sisters of ours in Christ, as parents and grandparents, must teach their children—who are also our children as baptized members of the congregation—what they must do with encounters and communication with the police. This is something most of our members would never even think to do with their children because, as the majority, the need is not there.

Jesus' resurrection was for individual salvation and the redemption of all peoples.

In Christ,

  
Pastor Kent Fry

  
Scott Millen  
Deacon Chair

  
Steve Orlow  
Vice-President of Consistory



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