

The First Presbyterian Church of Ottawa

Anti Racism Policy (Diversity)

F-1.0403 states, *Unity in Diversity*:

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction.

There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

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. Because of our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity, the PC (USA) must stand against, speak against and work against racism. (GA policy reference) G-3.0106 requires each Council to adopt an anti-racism policy.

As a congregation within the PCUSA we will:

1. Seek to welcome and be open to all people (believers)
2. Educate ourselves to seek awareness of our own behavior and biases and the impact on our community of faith and the wider community.
3. Seek resources (curriculum, worship, preaching and music) which are reflective of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.
4. Study Matthew 25 materials and resources to increase our awareness of systemic racism and its impact. (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/matt-25-resources/>)
5. Hiring practices: As set forth in the current Manual of Operations for the First Presbyterian Church of Ottawa, Dousman, WI.
 - These practices may include references, job history where necessary, previous church interaction when appropriate, Wisconsin C-Cap research. And any other practice deemed necessary by the Current Sitting Session and/or Hiring Committee.