

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST RACIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT

God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8

The First Congregational UCC of Sarasota with this statement reaffirms our Christian call to understanding and unity through discussion, research and the sharing of personal witness to identify systemic racial injustice, white privilege, and racially biased Law Enforcement. This we do to prepare ourselves for necessary action to combat not only injustices but also our own inherent racism.

First Congregational United Church of Christ of Sarasota has a history of embracing diversity and racial equity, as stated in our core values, actively supporting constructive efforts to love, support and uplift all people.

We have sought and seek to confront the tenets of racism and the oppression of our brothers and sisters of color. We have tried to model the love and grace of Jesus in his outreach to those people who live on the margins. We have tried to be good Global citizens supporting mission worldwide. Yet, we know there is so much more to accomplish. The time for action is now!

We commit to actionable steps of lament, hard listening and anti-racist engagement by our Ministers, Church officers, Church community and as individual participants in our local and greater community.

We reaffirm our commitment to policies of equity and the dismantlement of harmful myths, actions, rules and laws. One way we do this is through our leadership in SURE* (See detail below in resources) Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity with a number of community churches and our participation in other community initiatives. (Other Resources below)

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but the spirit of power, of courage and resolution, to meet difficulties and dangers; the spirit of **love** which will carry us through opposition. 2Timothy 1:7

RESOURCES

Recent Lecture Series on Reconstruction by David Wilkins Esq, FCUCC

Link; asalh-manasotafl.org Manasota ASALH Inc is the largest branch in the USA

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History

National Website; ASALH asalh.org

****SURE** <http://www.suresarasota.org>

for detailed information for accomplishments and initiatives.

Sarasota United For Responsibility and Equity is a 23 year old interfaith based organization currently made up of 20 congregations in Sarasota. It is a Justice Ministry designed to train volunteer leaders to work with community leaders and public officials to correct inequities in the Sarasota community that adversely affect people of color, the poor, under-served and disadvantaged. SURE provides hope for equality of opportunity now and in the future.

SURE Issues Currently Being Addressed:

Affordable Housing

Restorative Justice Strategies in Sarasota County Schools and Florida

Comprehensive Treatment Court for the Homeless

Criminal Justice Reform - Implementation of a Civil Citations,

A Program for our Youth and now for Adults

Gathering information about racial disparities in our criminal justice system

National UCC resources you can choose from many to be more informed and involved as an individual, here are two of several:

www.ucc.org/justice_racism For a Just World listings

https://www.ucc.org/racial_justice_resources_2020

National Websites for more information and individual participation;

Black Lives Matter <https://blacklivesmatter.com>

Sojourners <http://sojo.net>

Southern Poverty Law Center <http://splcenter.org>

American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU <https://www.aclu.org>

Podcasts and UTube Videos like "The Truth About the Confederacy in the United States"

Film Resources;

13th; 2016 docu-drama looks at racial inequalities in the justice and prison system in the US

Just Mercy; A civil rights lawyer works to free a man wrongly condemned to death

The Hurt U Give; A young woman lives in two worlds, one of Whites and one in her Black community

I Am Not Your Negro; Documentary James Baldwin Interviews

PBS; A Class Divided; by PBS on Frontline, Teacher Jane Elliot's experiment. Many other documentaries and discussions of Racism

Amazon and Netflix; Type Racism in search for many more films

Current Best Seller Books;

Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America, Ibram X. Kendi

How to be an Antiracist: comes with a work book, Ibram X. Kendi

White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism, Robin Di Angelo

Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People, Mahzarin R. Banaji

So You Want To Talk About Race: Ijeoma Oluo

We're Different, We're the Same: (Sesame Street) Picture Book
one of several books to enable conversations with the young

Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own, by Eddie S. Glaude Jr.**

"James Baldwin grew disillusioned by the failure of the civil rights movement to force America to confront its lies about race.

In our own moment, when that confrontation feels more urgently needed than ever, what can we learn from his struggle?"

Democracy in Black, How race still enslaves the American Soul.

**Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is a Distinguished University Professor at Princeton University