

Recognition of Honorable Retirement from the Ministry of Word and Sacrament

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 90:1-2; Psalm 103:1-5

Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.

**Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born,
from age to age you are God.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

**Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits,**

who forgives all your sins
and heals all your infirmities;

**who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;**

who satisfies you with good things,
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

REMEMBERING • GIVING THANKS

The moderator briefly recounts the ministry of the retiring ministers.

It is appropriate for other members of presbytery to offer personal reflections as well.

You have completed your active service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament, *and as a Commissioned Ruling Elder*. Your sisters and brothers in this presbytery rejoice with you in the evidence of the Holy Spirit in your work. We thank God for your dedicated ministry in the church of Jesus Christ, and we praise God for the grace that has allowed your ministry to touch many lives.

Now we come to mark with you the fulfillment of your calling, as the presbytery celebrates your retirement. While we know this begins a time of rest and the enjoyment of other callings, we value the experience you have gained and the skills you have acquired throughout your years of ministry. Therefore, we welcome your continued participation in the life of the church, using your gifts in meaningful ways. You remain a colleague in ministry, and we will continue to seek your wisdom and your fellowship.

Together with the whole church, you will find new opportunities to fulfill your baptismal calling, as one marked by the Holy Spirit, a disciple of Jesus Christ. May God continue to bring joy and peace to your life, just as you have blessed the Presbyterian Church with your ministry and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Eternal God, through all the years of our lives your love protects and guides us. By your Spirit you call us to varied ministries in the service of Jesus Christ. We praise you for your gifts to your servant(s) _____, _____ *and* _____ for their faithful proclamation of your Word, the administration of the holy sacraments of Jesus Christ, and their pastoral care and leadership in the church. Grant to them time for refreshment and rest, reflection and rejoicing, and the fullness of your peace. Through your Holy Spirit bless each of us that we may remember the love of Jesus Christ, which unites us in the service of our Lord. In the name of Christ we pray.
Amen.

The moderator leads the presbytery in greeting the retiring ministers.

Policy on Dismantling Racism Training
Presbytery of _____

5 The Presbytery of _____ rejects any form of racism, discrimination, or prejudice. We recommit ourselves to creating a culture of belonging in which every person, created in the image of God, feels welcomed, valued, respected, and heard. We further believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion enhance the health of the Body of Christ, maintaining a standard of excellence in all aspects of our life together. To that end:

10 1. The Presbytery makes a commitment to offer, provide resources for, and to publicize educational opportunities that focus on dismantling racism within our church institutions (Presbytery and congregations) and the communities we serve. The Presbytery will provide a training that incorporates the following elements:

- 15
- A theological grounding in our call to a Beloved Community
 - Our regional history, including history of the former _____ and _____ Presbyteries
 - Core concepts of systemic racism and its manifestation at the individual level
 - A new awareness of the impact of Presbytery and church policies and decisions on people of color
 - Tools and strategies to develop anti-racist behavior and culture within our presbytery and church life

20 2. The Dismantling Racism training shall be required at least once every three (3) years for:

- 25
- All Teaching Elders who are serving as pastors to a congregation, appointed to moderate a session(s), or otherwise engaged in a Validated Ministry are required to attend _____ Presbytery's educational program on Dismantling Racism or similar training (approved by the Presbytery) within one year after their arrival. Failure to fulfill this requirement within the specified time will result in being listed as not in good standing in the Presbytery until training is completed. The Presbytery will communicate to Pastoral Nominating Committees and presbyteries who are requesting references on the status of candidates with respect to this requirement.

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- Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) and Ruling Elders elected to serve on the Council, Committee on Ministry (COM) and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) are required to participate in a training within one year of being commissioned (CRE) or elected to Council, COM or CPM.

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- All Candidates for Ministry are required to attend a Dismantling Racism training or similar training (approved by the Presbytery). In the event that the timing or location of a training is not feasible, the candidate may work with CPM to determine an alternative means to meet this requirement.

- All Presbytery staff are required to attend within one year of hire/election.

40 3. The Presbytery strongly encourages honorably retired teaching elders, and any persons serving on Presbytery committees or ministry team to participate in such trainings.

4. Training Administration & Oversight

45 This policy will be administered by the _____ *Committee/Team*, who shall provide oversight and authorize the hiring of training consultants. The _____ *Committee/Team* is responsible for reviewing attendance of training participants and evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the trainings. The office of the Stated Clerk is responsible for ensuring notation of TE and CRE participation is made in their permanent files and notifying them of compliance deadlines. The Presbytery will communicate to

50 Pastoral Nominating Committees and presbyteries who are requesting references on the status of candidates with respect to this requirement.

The General Presbyter will serve as staff support to the Team.

55 5. Provision for Training Evaluation & Policy Review

The _____ *Committee/Team* shall also undertake an initial review of this policy by the end of 20__.

Funding

60 The Presbytery shall designate funding to help ensure that required participants can attend at minimal expense to the individual or congregation.

Scriptural and Theological Framework for Anti-Racism Training

65 As followers of Christ, we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39) and to fully embrace the fact that all people are equally loved by God (John 3:16, Romans 5:8) and equally valued by God (Galatians 3:28).

70 These New Testament passages rest on the foundation of the Old Testament. From the Pentateuch's outline of a covenant community built on pillars of justice and mutual responsibility to the prophets' fiery presentations of God's expectations and calls for fairness that echo through the Wisdom literature, the Old Testament reminds us again and again about God's call to full inclusion and equity.

75 The creation story portrays God's creation of humankind in one image, without race, that of the Lord. The Mosaic law makes clear that to love neighbor is to love the Lord. When God's people err, we hear the thunderous correction of the prophets speaking for God.

80 *Amos 5:21-24: ²¹ "I hate, I despise your religious festivals; your assemblies are a stench to me. ²² Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. ²³ Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. ²⁴ But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!*

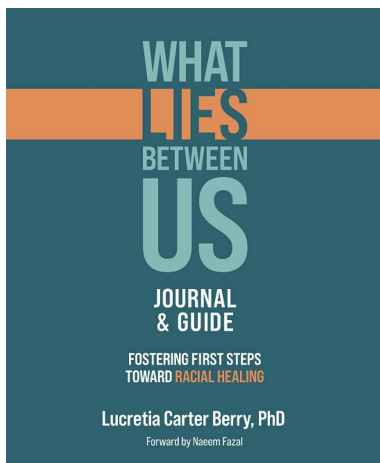
85 *Isaiah 40:4: Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.*

Micah 6:8: He 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?

90 From cover to cover, scripture portrays God's vision of equality, equity, fairness, and justice. To fully live into this vision and love our neighbor as ourselves, and given the current racial climate of our nation and world, we must seek to know and understand the effects of racism on our neighbors of color. Understanding the sin of racism and its traumatic effect on those who experience it, is of paramount importance if divisive racial barriers and systems are to be torn down. We are called to create and sustain a

95 culture of racial reconciliation and accountability to the communities the presbytery serves, becoming fully the Beloved Community God intends for us, following the Great Ends of the Church to promote social righteousness and exhibit the kin-dom of heaven to the world.

Curriculum: “What LIES Between Us”



A 5-Week Self-paced Anti-racism Educational Course from brownicity.com

About The Course: Anti-race/ism Curriculum Specialist, Dr. Lucretia Berry and Team Brownicity designed the What LIES Between Us series to guide, support, and equip ‘new comers’ with an analytical framework for examining race and racism in the United States.

Learners will be equipped with a historical, political, and social context for understanding race/ism and how it is sustained. The content will allow participants to build a sound knowledge base and develop a perspective beyond popular discourse and

uninformed opinions. With a practical understanding of contributing ideologies—like white supremacy, meritocracy, colorblindness—and interpersonal and systemic dynamics—like unconscious bias, and power and privilege – participants will have a broadened awareness of themselves, “others,” and our interconnected society.

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- 10 1. Our Session will provide the resources provided by the Presbytery and/or Synod and publicize educational opportunities that focus on dismantling racism within our church institutions (Presbytery and congregations) and the communities we serve. These materials will be shared with all elected leaders and staff of the church, and training will be made available to any elected leader who desires to engage in such training.
- 15 2. The Dismantling Racism training is required at least once every three (3) years for:
- The Moderator of the Session
 - 20 • Any other pastoral leader who is engaged in ministry in the church (e.g. Associate Pastors, Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs), Parish Associates, etc.).
 - All program staff is required to attend within one year of hire/election.
- 25 3. The church strongly encourages Dismantling Racism training at least once every three (3) years and within one year of hire/election for:
- Any Ruling Elder or Deacon serving a term in leadership
 - 30 • All staff of the church
 - Any others who have a heart for dismantling racism
- 35 4. Training Administration & Oversight
- This policy will be administered by the _____ *Committee/Team*. The Clerk is responsible for recording in the minutes any in the church who have completed training, and for those for whom training is required ensuring notation of participation in their permanent files and notifying them of compliance deadlines.
- 40 The Moderator of Session will serve as staff support to the Team.
5. Provision for Training Evaluation & Policy Review
- 45 The _____ *Committee/Team* shall also undertake an initial review of this policy by the end of 20__.

Funding

The Session shall designate funding to help ensure that required participants can attend at minimal expense to the individual or congregation.

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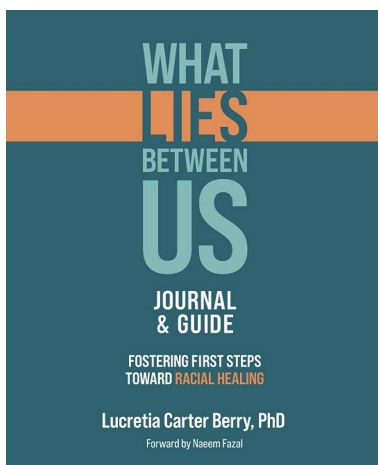
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