



May 29, 2020
Thy Kingdom Come, “On Earth As It In Heaven”
A Position Statement of the North Carolina COGOP Regional Plurality of Leaders

“History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.”
Martin Luther King, Jr.

Over the last few weeks, we have witnessed again the unnecessary murders of Brionna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and most recent George Floyd. Our hearts are saddened by the reality that our African American brothers and sisters live in constant fear that their lives can be taken at any moment by the hands of citizens or police without consequences or due process.

While prayer is critical in this matter, prayers alone are no longer enough; we must act. The church must find a way to address matters of race and hate to a greater degree. We must not be silent on the issue, we must not turn a blind eye to the systematic injustices that have been experienced by so many people of color, and we must not keep silent and act as if we are not concerned with the value of Black and Brown lives. Because what we don't address will eventually come back to haunt us.

Therefore, we the North Carolina Regional Plurality of Leaders publicly speak to systems of racism and white supremacy that demonize black and brown bodies. Every time we see an African American person dying or being attacked, we weep, and our righteous indignation is stirred by the inhumane actions of refusing black and brown people the right to be at home, breathe, run, walk or simply be. We have the responsibility to care for all of God's creation, even those who may be different from us.

“The Samaritan probably did not have a comprehensive understanding of how to nurse the man beaten on the Jericho Road back to health. That does not mean he could, like the priest and Levite, avert his eyes. The first step toward doing right is to recognize that something is wrong.

This also means that white Christians must join our black and brown brothers and sisters in Christ in recognizing that racism and impartiality in justice, wherever and however this occurs, is a problem, not just for our lives as citizens in a free country but also as ambassadors of a kingdom of those who are united together under the headship of Christ by the Holy Spirit.”¹

¹ <https://www.russellmoore.com/2020/05/28/what-george-floyds-death-should-remind-us-about-justice-and-the-gospel/>

The (multiethnic) Leadership Team of the NC COGOP stands with our black and brown brothers to say enough is enough!!!! We believe it is our responsibility to heighten the importance of matters of race and diversity, which require honesty, sensitivity, action, and prayer. As a result, we view the injustices that we have all witnessed in the media as a Call To Action, to learn what it is we can do.

Thereto, we will take the following actions to address the race issue:

1. We will continue to ask God to Heal Our Land, and our wounded and bereaving in this matter; On Earth As It In Heaven.
2. We will provide preliminary information to our pastors and churches regarding diversity within the next three months.
3. We will partner with our ministry leaders to facilitate diversity and sensitivity training for all our pastors, bishops and state staff within the next six to eight months. We will continue annual briefings.
4. We will participate in, join, and/or engage in Zoom conversations regarding race and sensitivity within the next 45 days and ongoing. We will invite multiethnic brethren, pastors and leaders to join in a conversation about class, race and diversity.
5. We will reach out to engage in conversations with other Pastors and leaders including those affiliated with the White Evangelical Church. Our message will be, "Together we will make this world a reflection of God's love for all of humanity". On Earth As It In Heaven.
6. We will reach out to engage in conversations with local Law Enforcement Officers and encourage our Pastors and leaders to do the same. We will enquire and dialogue about their challenges, standard arrest policy and procedures, and best practices.

There is no injustice in Heaven, so let it be on the earth.

Bishop Jeffery A. Davis, State Presbyter
Bishop Rolf Woodard, Region 1 Presbyter
Bishop Steve Crews, Region 2 Presbyter
Bishop Clarence Laney, Jr, Region 3 Presbyter
Bishop Eugene Hartley, Region 4 Presbyter
Bishop Frank Taylor, Region 5 Presbyter