

# **RACIAL RECONCILIATION**

## **RACIAL RECONCILIATION AS MISSION**

The mission of New Life Church is to give God glory by making disciples of all people through the gospel of Jesus Christ. This mission statement emanates from both the Great Commandment (Matthew 22.37-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28.18-20). We join with Jesus' desire that His Church on earth would consist of people from every tongue, tribe, and nation (Matthew 24.14; Revelation 7.9) and live in unity (John 17.22-23).

## **RACIAL RECONCILIATION AS DOCTRINE**

We believe that Scripture is clear that all people, regardless of ethnicity, are: created in the image of God (Genesis 1.26-27), fallen in their human nature (Romans 5.12-17), offered salvation through Jesus Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection (John 3.14-18; Romans 6; Revelation 5.9-10), called to be co-heirs of the kingdom of God (Romans 8.17), commissioned to be ministers of reconciliation (Luke 10; 2 Corinthians 5.18-21), and invited to an eternal banquet in the age to come (Revelation 19.7). While our human ethnic identity is never lost, we affirm that the believer's primary identity upon faith in the gospel is in Christ (Romans 6.1-4). Therefore, he or she is a part of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12.12-31); and in Christ, all believers, regardless of ethnicity, are made one (Galatians 3.26-29; Ephesians 2.11-18).

In light of these Biblical truths, we pronounce that racism, i.e. the belief that one's own ethnicity is superior and the different ethnicity of another is inferior, is sin. Racism violates the eternal truth that all human life is made in the image of God and thus has equal dignity regardless of ethnic origins. In thought, word, or deed, racism is a profound evil that has been an underlying source of immense pain, suffering, and death among the peoples of the world. It is only in the mercy and grace of a Triune God, walking in repentance and forgiveness with each other, and pursuing justice for all, that we will find healing from the evil of racism.

## **RACIAL RECONCILIATION AS DISPLAY**

We believe that the multi-ethnic Church can be a sign and wonder to a racially divided culture. When Christ's Church worships in unity and diversity, it is a living witness of Christ as the sent One (John 17.20-23) and a visual display of the gospel's power to bring people together (Ephesians 3.8-10). The multi-ethnic Church is the radiant display of light from a city set on a hill to a darkened world that provides healing to a hurting and ethnically divided land (Matthew 5.13-16). By intentionally pursuing a community of faith that is united, while celebrating cultural differences, we live to fulfill Christ's prayer that His Church might be one (John 17.11,21). We believe that the multi-ethnic Church, worshiping together in this age, is not only a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Isaiah 56.5-8, Amos 9.11-12, Zechariah 8.20-23) but also acts as a conduit of heaven's blessing (Psalms 133.3) in the neighborhoods and cities where those churches are rooted.

## **RACIAL RECONCILIATION AS ACTION**

We believe as a reconciled people and multi-ethnic church, that upholding the biblical standard of righteousness and justice in our community is not simply an ideal but must reflect mutual care towards one another in measurable ways. Scripture's command is clear that love for one another must be demonstrated with actions of justice towards one another (Micah 6.8), which are ultimately actions of love that are done unto Christ Himself (Matthew 25.40). Therefore, we actively advance biblical peace and reconciliation with one another to further the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. Reconciliation begins with a united worshiping community and advances by advocating on each other's behalf racial equality for all, in every sphere of life. Therefore, New Life condemns any action, singular or systemic, that denies fundamental human and civil rights to any person based on their ethnicity. As a pro-life church, we commit to a Spirit-led strategy of action that will take up the cause of the defenseless and oppressed in our community (Isaiah 58.6-7; James 1.27).