GREAT CONEWAGO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ANTI-RACISM POLICY

Statement of Purpose:

To provide guidance to the Congregation and Leadership of Great Conewago Presbyterian Church for our anti-racism policy based upon the following:
"We believe…that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world" …. (Belhar Confession)

We understand that we may need to unlearn existing habits of thought and behavior that form our speech and our social interactions as well as reform our ecclesial structures and policies, for racism persists despite our expressed values and intentions. If we are to create an antiracist church where "all persons are treated with respect, all gifts are valued and encouraged, and diversity is a gift to be valued,"[1] we will be open to courageous self-reflection, confession, and repentance that leads to transformed persons, relationships, policies, and habits of interacting with one another.

Policy Statement:

In the Book of Order G-3.0106 requires each Session to adopt an anti-racism policy. As a congregation within the PCUSA we will:

1. Seek to welcome and be open to all people.
2. Educate ourselves to seek awareness of our own behavior, blindness, and biases and the impact on our community of faith and the wider community.
3. Seek resources (curriculum, worship, preaching, music, and literature) which are reflective of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.
4. Study Matthew 25 materials, the Churchwide Anti-Racism Policy (2016), and/or other materials as advised by the presbytery or PC(USA) to increase our awareness of systemic racism and its impact.
5. Together seek within the congregation and the community those whose experience and expertise can be instructive and inspiring, and for partnerships that increase cooperation and understanding.

This policy takes effect when it is approved by the session.

We commit to requiring all Ministers of Word and Sacrament in permanent and temporary pastoral relationships, validated ministries, as well as members-at-large to comply with the Carlisle Presbytery training. This training is required to be taken once every three years. Further, the presbytery has committed to its churches that anti-racism training will be offered on an annual basis.

Our church anti-racism policy affirms that our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity demands that, as a church of the PCUSA, we must stand against, speak against, and work against racism. Anti-racism is an essential aspect of Christian discipleship, without which we fail to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Adopted by the Session of Great Conewago Presbyterian Church on March 15, 2026

Adapted from "Antiracism Statement" of the Presbytery of Carlisle (PCUSA)