

Statement on Racism

Mennonite peoples have a long history of being sojourners in a strange land. Mennonites have migrated from Europe to China, Russia, Canada, the U.S. and Latin America. Fellow Mennonites have extended hospitality to them as called for in the Biblical injunction to welcome foreigners and aliens in our home lands.

Throughout history Mennonite peoples have also been the victims of intense religious and ethnic persecutions. They have lost lands and in some cases families and possessions. But they have not lost the Anabaptist faith which speaks to the Biblical issues of peace and justice.

The prophet Isaiah in Chapter 52:7 admonished us to bring good news, to proclaim peace, to bring good tidings and to proclaim salvation. With Jesus we proclaim that the spirit of the Lord has anointed us to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, and to release the oppressed.

We believe that the Bible teaches us that we are one family united under Christ. Christ has destroyed the dividing wall of hostility. Christ came and preached peace to those who were far away and peace to those who were near. Consequently, we are fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone.

As Mennonites we are deeply concerned about the policies of hatred, divisions and exclusions that are being sown in the current political and social climates. These policies divide our nations along racial and ethnic lines and open our societies to the grave dangers of ethnocentrism.

As followers of Jesus Christ we call the Mennonite churches of North America to national ministries of peace and justice. We call the Mennonites of North America to be a voice and witness against the hostility among races and classes and against these and neglect of the poor and marginalized.

We call the Mennonite churches in North America:

- to transform our church structures, policies and procedures to eliminate all vestiges of racism;
- to contact our local, state and national legislators and government officials to promote policies of reconciliation;
- to create working partnerships between churches of all ethnicities;
- to facilitate the establishment of cross-cultural personal relationships of mutuality.

We commit ourselves to join the larger church in prayer and action to bring about the reign of God in our midst.

Prepared and presented at Wichita 95 by over 30 Hispanic leaders and representatives from Hispanic churches in the U.S. and Canada

Hispanic Mennonite Convention
AMIGA - Mennonite Associate of Hispanic Church

July 29, 1995