

BMCR, Resolution Regarding Racial Justice

Whereas, The Greater New Jersey Caucus of Black Methodists for Church Renewal upholds the ideals of equal justice under the law, racial justice, and human dignity for all of God's people; and

Whereas, the recent deaths of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Oscar Grant, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray and other unnamed African American males persons by police or policing organizations, compels us to address the inequities within our system; and

Whereas, these deaths are indicative of a growing social-economic division that threatens the current and future well-being of our society; and

Whereas, we experience here within the Greater New Jersey Area the toxic impact of the intersection of racism and poverty in too many of the lives of citizens of urban rural and suburban settings ; and

Whereas, while we recognize that there have been some progress within police departments here in New Jersey and across the nation to engage in constructive dialogue and good faith efforts to improve relations among officers and communities of color and young people, problems still exist and improvements are needed in order to protect lives; and

Whereas, we express solidarity with the thousands of protesters across the nation who are **peacefully** expressing their outrage and frustration at the deaths of unarmed African-Americans; and

Whereas, the Strategic Plan of the Greater New Jersey Conference calls for the resourcing of congregations to engage in justice and mercy ministries in the community and around the world, and while we profoundly believe and insist that ~~the lives of our young black men matter~~ all lives matter with great emphasis on young black men and women, and that the growing divide between "haves and have not's" in American society undermines the realization of that belief in the fairness and the stated "color blindness" of the U.S. Constitution, the criminal justice system, our schools, and the economy,

Therefore, be it resolved that The Greater New Jersey Conference leadership and congregations explore the concepts of equal justice under the law, racial justice, ~~and~~ institutional racism, and white privilege at both the conference and local church levels; and

Be it further resolved that the Greater New Jersey Conference creates a task force to identify resources to help congregations engage in initiatives that address that needs of the community, the perpetrators, and the victims that bring God's restoration and helps congregations promote positive relationships between the community and the police. We also ask that the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference designates BMCR and the Conference's Board of Church and Society and the Commission of Religion and a Race to work in consultation with the bishop to set the membership of this task force. This task force will report their findings and recommendations at the next annual conference.

Be it further resolved that the bishop, extended cabinet and the connection table read and have a discussion on the book, "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander.

Be it further resolved that the Greater New Jersey Conference continues to promote dialogue between members of the various communities and law enforcement officers and agencies; and

Be it finally resolved, that Greater New Jersey Conference join with other labor and community groups to call for the creation of a national model for community policing, and an end to institutionalized racism in the criminal justice system.

Submitted and Presented by Rev. Rupert A. Hall, Jr. (856) 873-1465 gideonrah@comcast.net