

A Resolution to recognize the United Nation's International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024)

A Summary by Terry McGarry

Racism has been a topic that the United Church of Christ has made a priority for many years. Prior UCC Synods have addressed it numerous times. In 2003 two resolutions were adopted that addressed a commitment to combat racism. But racism still endures in 2021. There are disparities in healthcare, housing, and education among a myriad of interconnected issues. In 2020, four black men were found hanged to death.

The United Nations accounts for over 200 million people who self-identify as African descent living in the Americas. Seeing them as people whose rights must be protected and promoted, the UN, in 2013, declared the decade 2015- 2024 to be an International decade for African descendants.

The UCC resolution is based on racial inequality that stems from prejudice, bigotry, white privilege, white fragility and white supremacy. It calls on all settings of the United Church of Christ to adopt the 3 themes of the United Nation's declaration. The themes are recognition, justice and development.

UCC churches are encouraged to acknowledge the decade for people of African descent. They are called to adopt it's frameworks for addressing issues affecting people of African descent, and to promote the declaration and resulting outcomes for advocating for the rights of African descendant people.

This is a resolution of witness and the 33rd synod passed it overwhelmingly.

Biblical support for this resolution is found in Genesis 1:26-27, where “ all people reflect the Divine”. In Luke 4:18 we read “let the oppressed go free”. And John 17:21 reads in part “That they all may be one”.

Other resources:

I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown

Dear White Peacemakers: Dismantling Racism With Grit and Grace by Osheta Moore