

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY

June 10, 2020

MOTION by Peggy Sheffield / Carole Bennett
that in response to current events the Church Council of Islington United Church, an Affirming congregation, adopt the following statement for posting on the church's website to denounce systemic racism in Canada and around the world.

We love because God first loved us. Those who say, "I love God" and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister who they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from God is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

1 John 4:19-21

We, at Islington United Church, are an Affirming congregation of the United Church of Canada. We are committed to including everyone – gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited persons; those who are marginalized for any reason –race or age; economically disadvantaged; developmentally or physically challenged.

We stand in solidarity with Black and Indigenous communities and all people of colour in our community, our country and throughout the world. We acknowledge that racial injustice is pervasive throughout society. We oppose all forms of racism and racialized violence.

Justice is what love looks like in public
Cornell West

SOME BACKGROUND

Shining Waters Regional Council among others in the United Church of Canada, including the Moderator, have made a clear public statement about systemic racism and current events. Islington would be joining with our sisters and brothers across our denomination.

We **affirm** our support for demonstrators,
and pray for their safety.

We **denounce** the violence perpetrated by those in positions of power
and long for their hearts to be oved through repentance.

We **lament** our own complacency and complicity for staying silent in times when we should have done more, and ask forgiveness from those whom we have neglected and harmed. We **commit** to speaking out against all forms of racism, anti-black violence and changing our own structures and ways of being with one another, rejecting the status quo in order to more fully realize God's call to love all our siblings.

Shining Waters Regional Council

On June 2, Moderator Richard Bott issued a joint letter with leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada to denounce the racism in our midst. Here is their letter:

https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/elcic-acc-ucc_joint_letter-racism.pdf

The Reverend Dr. Paul Douglas Walfall of First United Church in Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta who moved many to tears at General Council 43 in 2018 with his exposure of racism within the United Church of Canada has now written a call to the church.

<https://www.united-church.ca/blogs/round-table/dear-white-people>

Consider the ways that you can put love into action as a means of counteracting racism. Remember that love in the Christian faith is more than an emotion; it is an act of will. When we love, we choose the highest good for those we love. This love is both transformative and revolutionary.

Paul Douglas Walfall