

Northern Indiana District Church of the Brethren
2017 District Conference
Resolution: We Reaffirm that Racism is a Sin Against God and Our Neighbors

We, the delegates of the 2017 Northern Indiana District Conference, reaffirm Annual Conference reports and statements which name racism as a sin against God and against our neighbors.ⁱ In 1991, a study group reported that, “Members of the Church of the Brethren face the subtle temptation of thinking that because there are not many black Americans in the denomination, or because many of us do not live in physical proximity to black people, that the problem of racism is not our concern. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many of us benefit from racist practices, without being direct participants, because of decisions and policies already in place in our religious, economic, and political institutions.”ⁱⁱ

We confess that we as the church have not taken the lead in transforming the understanding or the agency of racism in our society whether to African Americans or to people of other minorities. We confess our need to recommit to Bible study, prayer, and lament, and to reaffirm the witness of Jesus Christ in response to white supremacists, hate crimes, and an awareness of social injustice; we must connect our faith with our actions.ⁱⁱⁱ

The words of a 1963 Annual Conference Resolution carry the same challenge and urgency now as they did then: “The call of Christ is for commitment and courage in such a time as this. This call comes to every one of us, every congregation among us, and every community in which we live. We can dodge neither the revolution nor the call of Christ. Let us respond in works as eloquent as our words, in practices as profound as our prayers, in action as heroic as our gospel.”^{iv}

ⁱ 1991 Annual Conference report: Brethren and Black Americans.

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ⁱⁱⁱ 2018 Annual Conference Moderator Samuel Sarpiya, Church of the Brethren *Newsline*, August 14, 2017.

<http://www.brethren.org/news/2017/and-who-is-my-neighbor.html>

^{iv} 1963 Annual Conference Resolution: The Time is Now to Heal our Racial Brokenness.