

2021 January – June

RECONCILIATION

In seeking reconciliation, the prophetic community works for justice, responds in compassion, speaks truth to power, confronts difficult issues, and boldly proclaims the mandate of the gospel.

As Congregations, Sessions, Pastors

We will be:

- Authentic friends to those in our neighborhood
- Missional
- Conduits of prayer and spiritual enrichment for our neighbors

Therefore, we will:

- Reach out to those who would never visit
- Make friends and cultivate relationships
- Discover the needs of the neighborhood to be the hands and feet of Christ
- Incarnate God’s love through service
- Form partnerships in the community
- Volunteer in community events
- Dismantle systems of injustice, racism, poverty

As the Presbytery

We will be:

- Networkers in forming partnerships with neighbors
- Change agents in dismantling racism and poverty

Therefore, we will:

- Enhance our capacity to embrace multi-culturalism
- Stimulate opportunities for partnerships
- Provide anti-racism training
- Continue reconciliation conversations
- Giving people of diverse backgrounds and theology “a place at the table”

Action specific to Reconciliation:

- Focus on the Biblical Theme for the 6 months – encouraging congregations to join in the shared Bible Study on reconciliation

Biblical Narrative

Scripture:

- **Luke 4:14-19:** 14 Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. 15 He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. 16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 18 ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’
- **Isaiah 61:1-2a:** The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor,

Process:

- COVID-19 has presented a unique challenge and a shift for the process of how the Presbytery will encounter the topic of Reconciliation.
- One helpful challenge is that concurrent to the pandemic there is a culture surge in looking at issues of racism and what that means for neighborhoods, cities, and the culture at large. This wider cultural context offers the Presbytery an opportunity to join the conversation and consider what Biblical mandates and confessional standards call the Church in this unique moment in history.
- At the February Assembly the attendees will give a presentation on the Confession of 1967 and reconciliation as the central theme. Participants will consider a theology of reconciliation.
- Congregations will be encouraged to use the materials on a Theology of Reconciliation as a congregational study resource.
- At the May Assembly intersections between reconciliation and racism will be drawn and a discussion about adding anti-racism work as a requirement for members will be considered.

