



Christian Reformed Church

Race Relations

A Prayer in Response to Charlottesville by Rev. Kate Kooyman

Prince of Peace,

We stand at your feet. We need your presence, your wisdom, your peace.

In Charlottesville this weekend, we saw racism on full display. We saw unbridled hate. We saw evil. We saw sin, as clear as a snake in a garden.

And we lament, Lord, that we saw ourselves. Racism is real in Charlottesville and it is also real in our own city. It is real in our own hearts. It is real in our church. We confess this, Lord. We pray that you empower us to truly lament; to turn from our sinful ways.

We pray for those who gathered in Charlottesville—for those who are invested in creating a whites-only America. We pray for them, Lord, and the fear that consumes them. Cast out that fear.

We pray for those standing in protest to this hate—those who risk harm, who have been harmed. Protect them. Heal them. Empower them. Fill them with peace.

We pray for those who are not shocked by any of this, Lord—who have lived in the reality of this America for generations. This America long ago denounced their dignity, discarded their humanity. We pray for their hope, for their future, Lord. It is wrapped up in our own.

We pray that we might deeply long for justice to roll down, that we might invest our lives in changing this devastating, hate-filled story, not because it's virtuous or pious, but because every time a person encounters violence it is a violation of our faith. It is a dismissal of the sanctity of human life. It is a denial of you, Lord.

We pray for your church. We have failed to name the sin of racism, and to root it out. We have been silent in its wake. We have been complicit in its growth. We have been unaware of its hold on us. We proclaim today, Lord, that nothing in white supremacy comes from you. And we ask you to convict us. Push us to speak up and to step out of our comfort zones. Change our hearts, oh God.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the prince of shalom, we pray.
Amen.