

1 **OVERTURE 55** from Mississippi Valley Presbytery (to OC)
2 "Confession of the Sin of Racism, and Commitment to Christian Unity"
3

4 **Whereas**, the 43rd General Assembly considered a personal resolution on Civil Rights
5 Remembrance and deferred action on it until the 44th General Assembly in Mobile,
6 Alabama; and
7

8 **Whereas**, in the 1973 "Message to All the Churches," the founding generation of the
9 Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) expressly declared our denomination to be
10 the "continuing church" of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS),
11 saying, "We have called ourselves 'Continuing' Presbyterians because we seek to
12 continue the faith of the founding fathers of that Church"; and
13

14 **Whereas**, as a "continuing church," we rightly own the good Gospel legacy of the movement
15 of Bible-believing, Reformed Christians who brought us into being, and recognize our
16 indebtedness to them, while we also acknowledge the sins and failures of our movement
17 and denomination, including in those areas that have ongoing and significant
18 negative ramifications for the unity, ministry and witness of the church today; and
19

20 **Whereas**, as Calvinists who wholeheartedly believe in the Bible's teaching on sin and grace,
21 we are unsurprised by serious sin in even our greatest human heroes ("If we say we
22 have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us," 1 John 1:8), we are also
23 unafraid of confessing it (because of God's great mercy to us, in Christ, Ephesians
24 2:4-5), and thus we own and acknowledge both the good and the bad in the Bible-
25 believing movement that brought us into being, and in our own denomination's
26 history, and with both gratitude and sorrow remember different parts of that history
27 and legacy; and
28

29 **Whereas**, we rejoice and give thanks that our founding fathers officially, explicitly, and
30 tangibly rejected racism and segregation as motives for or aims of the formation of
31 the PCA, further, we recognize that our founding fathers did not intend the PCA to
32 be racist or to tolerate racism as they understood it, and indeed many of them during
33 the Civil Rights era increasingly longed for, prayed for, wrote for, preached for, and
34 worked for a Gospel solution to unbiblical segregation and discrimination in church
35 and society; and
36

37 **Whereas**, we grieve and lament that we have become increasingly aware that during the Civil
38 Rights era, many of those who became our founding denominational leaders, churches,
39 and members failed to live up to their and our own Confession's Biblical doctrine of
40 man, that all mankind is created by God "after His own image" (Genesis 1:27, Acts
41 17:24-28, *WCF* 4.2) by not only refusing to support, but also, both congregationally
42 and individually, actively working against racial equality (the unqualified
43 acknowledgment in belief and practice that African Americans are fully human and
44 made in the image of God, that no ethnicity is inherently superior to another, and that
45 the Bible provides no grounds for the enforced segregation of ethnicities) in both
46 church and society, through sins of omission and commission including: barring
47 African Americans from worship services; misusing and twisting the Bible to support
48 racial segregation; participating in and defending white supremacist organizations;

1 failing to speak out against state-supported segregation, not supporting efforts to
2 secure African Americans access to basic human and civil rights, and neglecting to
3 show solidarity with and support for African American brothers and sisters in Christ,
4 as they endured various kinds of discrimination and duress in the Civil Rights era; and
5

6 **Whereas**, the 30th General Assembly adopted a resolution on racial reconciliation that
7 confessed “covenantal, generational, heinous sins” connected with unbiblical forms
8 of servitude, but did not deal specifically with the heinous sins committed during the
9 much more recent Civil Rights era, which betrayed the visible unity of all believers
10 in Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22), the command to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark
11 12:31), and the image of God in all people (Genesis 1:27); and
12

13 **Whereas**, the 32nd General Assembly adopted a pastoral letter on “the Gospel and Race,”
14 but in doing so, adopted a statement that did not directly acknowledge our sins
15 against African Americans that many of our founding leaders, churches, and
16 members displayed during the Civil Rights era; and
17

18 **Whereas**, an unwillingness to acknowledge, confess and repudiate these sins, and to speak
19 openly and contritely of them, significantly hinders our present-day witness and
20 unity, our efforts for solidarity and reconciliation with our African American
21 brothers and sisters and their participation in the PCA; as well as our Gospel
22 outreach to men and women of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation; and
23

24 **Whereas**, The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley recognizes that the sins of racism and
25 racial injustice—not only toward African Americans, but also toward other racial
26 minorities—are not simply past sins, but continue to be sins with which our churches
27 and congregants wrestle; and
28

29 **Whereas**, scripture enjoins the necessity of unity in the body of Christ such that when a
30 brother is thought to have something against another brother, reconciliation between
31 them supersedes even worship (Matthew 5:23,24); and
32

33 **Whereas**, God has once more given the PCA a gracious opportunity to show the beauty,
34 grace, and power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through confession and through the
35 fruits of repentance: such as, clarity that racism is a sin requiring formative and
36 corrective discipline; growing into cultural intelligence regarding minority
37 ethnicities; establishing interracial friendships and partnerships inside and outside
38 our denomination; renewing our church’s commitment to develop minority
39 leadership at the congregational, presbytery, and denominational levels; and
40 encouraging a denomination-wide vision for and commitment to a more racially and
41 ethnically diverse church; and
42

43 **Whereas**, we greatly rejoice that, in spite of ourselves, the Lord has graciously blessed the
44 PCA with an increasing racial and ethnic diversity, including a larger proportion of
45 minorities (among them Asians, Latinos and African Americans), than many
46 traditionally majority white North American denominations (and more than we
47 might have expected, given our history), the Lord has granted the PCA an increasing
48 number of African American teaching and ruling elders, the Lord has raised up

1 Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) campus ministries at historic Black colleges
2 and universities (HBC/Us) and many multi-ethnic church plants in the PCA
3 (including our own Jackson State University RUF and Redeemer Church, Jackson),
4 the Lord has this year brought in the largest number and percentage of African
5 American students in the incoming class in the history of Reformed Theological
6 Seminary, Jackson, the Lord is bringing about a resurgence of the doctrines of grace
7 in parts of the African American church, and there are more presbytery overtures
8 calling for repentance for racism and racial reconciliation submitted to the 44th
9 General Assembly than for any other issue in the history of the PCA (thus showing
10 an overwhelming, denomination-wide concern and resolve to speak faithfully to this
11 issue) – all of this is the Lord’s doing, not ours, but it is marvelous in our eyes!
12

13 **Be it therefore resolved**, in the light of the continuing nature of the Presbyterian Church in
14 America, that The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley recognizes and confesses,
15 and joins with many sister presbyteries in asking the 44th General Assembly of the
16 Presbyterian Church in America to recognize and confess, our denomination’s
17 history of involvement and complicity in racial injustice, congregationally and/or
18 individually, inside and outside of our churches during the Civil Rights era; and
19

20 **Be it further resolved**, that The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley also confesses, and
21 asks the 44th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in American to confess,
22 our continued sins of racism and failure to love brothers and sisters from ethnic
23 minorities in accordance with what the Gospel requires; and
24

25 **Be it further resolved**, that The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley recommits itself to
26 bear fruit in keeping with our repentance, seeking appropriate courses of action and
27 reconciliation humbly, sincerely, and expeditiously, for the glory of God and the
28 furtherance of the Gospel, and asks the 44th GA of the PCA to do the same; and
29

30 **Be it further resolved**, that the attached “Pastoral Letter” from The Presbytery of the
31 Mississippi Valley to its constituent churches be offered as an example of how a
32 presbytery might provide shepherding leadership for its churches toward racial
33 reconciliation; and
34

35 **Be it further resolved**, that the attached “Bibliography and Resources” concerning race and
36 unity be offered to our presbyteries and churches for their use in studying, evaluating
37 and implementing their own efforts toward the goal of reconciliation with all racial
38 minorities; and
39

40 **Be it finally resolved**, that The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley humbly asks the General
41 Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to urge all the congregations and
42 presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America to study this action as well as the
43 PCA position paper on the Gospel and Race, to confess their own particular sins and
44 failures regarding racial injustice as may be appropriate, and to seek to bring forth
45 fruits of repentance for the Gospel’s sake within their own local communities.
46

47 *Adopted by Mississippi Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, May 3, 2016*

48 *Attested by /s/ TE Roger G. Collins, stated clerk*

Attachment 1

**A Pastoral Letter on Racism and the Gospel
To the churches of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley (PCA)**

Dear Friends,

Last year, the 43rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) considered a personal resolution dealing with the sin of racism as it pertains to our church, both in history and in the present. Though action was deferred on it until the 44th General Assembly (which will be held in Mobile, Alabama in June), our presbytery felt it wise to give careful consideration to this matter ourselves. So a committee was appointed to report to our presbytery on the issue.

Your presbytery, having received that committee's report and recommendations, and having thoroughly discussed this issue in three different presbytery meetings, adopted an Overture to the 44th General Assembly of the PCA on "Confession of the Sin of Racism, and Commitment to Christian Unity" and now writes to you this pastoral letter.

As a presbytery, we not only want to address the past, we especially want to speak to the present and give biblical counsel and encouragement to our people and churches so that we may "all attain to the unity of the faith" (Ephesians 4:13). During our long discussions, there were moving testimonies of hearts changed, confessions of and repentances for racist language, attitudes and actions, expressions of brotherly forgiveness, and admissions by some that they are reticent to even talk about the issue of racism in the church for fear of the controversy that might ensue. In short, it became ever more clear to us that racism remains a current and ongoing pastoral issue, and that truly pursuing biblical racial reconciliation is not merely a matter of acknowledging the wrongs of the past but of endeavoring to "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly" with our God (Micah 6:8) in the here and now.

Your presbytery addresses the issue of racism in the same spirit as the PCA Pastoral Letter on the Gospel and Race (2004):

. . . we do so not because it is politically correct, or out of any pressure from outward society, but simply because it is our desire that the convicting and restoring power of God's grace in the Gospel be applied to the manifestations of racial sin of which we ourselves are guilty, and that those who experience the negative effects of these sins might know the healing power of God's grace – that we who have been reconciled to God through Christ might become together a holy temple in the Lord, reconciled to one another by His Spirit (Ephesians 2:20-22).

Because racism is a loaded term, and some suspect an unbiblical agenda when it is invoked, we want to say precisely what we mean by racism. Racism is the denial of the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27) and its implications to someone of another ethnicity. Racism in the

1 church is a contradiction of the visible unity of all believers in Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22,
 2 Revelation 5:9; 7:9). Racism inside and outside the church is a contradiction of Jesus’
 3 command to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31; Luke 10:25-37, esp. 29, 37), and
 4 of God’s creation of all people in his image (Genesis 1:27; Acts 17:26). So theologically,
 5 racism entails a denial of the biblical doctrines of creation, man, the communion of saints
 6 and is disobedience to the moral law. We will not mince words. Racism is not only sin,
 7 serious sin, it is heresy.

8
 9 Our final rule of faith and practice, the Holy, Inspired, Inerrant Word of God, The Bible and
 10 our subordinate doctrinal standard, *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, ground our treatment
 11 of all people with dignity, justice, and kindness in **the doctrine of our creation in the**
 12 **image of God**. God created our first parents in his own image (Genesis 1:26, 27, *WCF* 4.2),
 13 and therefore all human beings are of the same race. Scripture says: “The God who made the
 14 world and everything in it, . . . gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he
 15 made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth” (Act 17:24-
 16 26). Because of this, Christians are to treat every human being with equal dignity as made in
 17 the image of God. So both the biblical doctrine of creation and the biblical doctrine of man
 18 inform the Christian’s treatment of everyone, including people of other and minority
 19 ethnicities.

20
 21 The Bible and our *Westminster Confession of Faith* also ground our treatment of all people
 22 with dignity, justice, impartiality, and kindness in **the moral law and Jesus’ command to**
 23 **love our neighbors**. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament explicitly command
 24 love for our neighbor. Moses is very specific about what love of neighbor entails: “You shall
 25 not oppress your neighbor . . . You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to
 26 the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor. . . . You
 27 shall not hate your brother in your heart, . . . lest you incur sin because of him. . . . but you
 28 shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD” (Lev 19:13-18). Neighbor love, then,
 29 according to God’s moral law, exemplified in the fifth through tenth commandments, calls
 30 for impartial kindness and justice to be shown to all, an equal concern for the well-being of
 31 others. Moses grounds this behavior in God’s character (Leviticus 19:3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18)
 32 and our responsibility as believers to imitate him “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your
 33 God am holy” (Leviticus 19:2). And this neighbor love was not reserved for Israelites only.
 34 Moses explicitly extends it to foreigners: “When a stranger sojourns with you in your land,
 35 you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native
 36 among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt:
 37 I am the LORD your God” (Leviticus 19:33-34).

38
 39 Jesus reiterates this command in the New Testament (e.g., Mark 12:31, Luke 10:25-37).
 40 After summarizing the ethical requirements of the moral law of God for the believer’s life
 41 by saying: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and
 42 with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27),
 43 Jesus is met with the self-justifying question: “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29). In other
 44 words, the lawyer who queried Jesus was seeking a delimitation of the demands of neighbor
 45 love. Jesus answers with the story of the Good Samaritan, and makes it clear that the better
 46 question is “Am I a good neighbor?” Jesus’ application of the story shows that those who

1 obey God’s command to love neighbor don’t attempt to delimit the obligation of neighbor
2 love, but rather show mercy indiscriminately and even at significant personal cost (Luke
3 10:36-37). On this basis, Christians are enjoined by the moral law and by Jesus’ direct
4 exhortation to show love, care, concern for the well-being of, justice, mercy, and kindness to
5 all people, with impartiality.

6
7 The Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) exposition of the moral law, from Question 91
8 to 152, has much to teach us about this current discussion, and especially Questions 122-
9 152. We daresay that if the commands and prohibitions of this section of the Westminster
10 Larger Catechism had been but applied to our relationships with other and minority
11 ethnicities, it would have meant a death knell for racism among us. WLC 131 tells us of our
12 duty “to regard the dignity and worth of each other.” WLC 130 warns against an “inordinate
13 seeking of” ourselves and our “own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure.” WLC 132 condemns as
14 sin “the undervaluing of the worth, . . . and usurping pre-eminence one over another.”
15 Racism is rooted precisely in the failure to obey in these areas. WLC 135 and 136 especially
16 speak to our treatment of one another.

17
18 Q. 135. What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?
19

20 A. The duties required in the sixth commandment are all careful studies, and
21 lawful endeavors, to preserve the life of ourselves and others by resisting all
22 thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions,
23 temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of
24 any; by just defence thereof against violence, . . . by charitable thoughts, love,
25 compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild and courteous
26 speeches and behaviour; forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient
27 bearing and forgiving of injuries, and requiting good for evil; comforting and
28 succouring the distressed and protecting and defending the innocent.
29

30 If Bible-believing Presbyterians had carefully studied and lawfully endeavored “to preserve
31 the life of ourselves and others,” including mistreated ethnic minorities, “by resisting all
32 thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions, temptations, and
33 practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any” and defending others against
34 unjust violence as WLC 135 enjoins, the history of Presbyterianism in U.S. culture from
35 Reconstruction, through Jim Crow and the Civil Rights era would read differently. If we
36 today will relate to other and minority ethnicities with “charitable thoughts, love, compassion,
37 meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild, and courteous speeches and behaviour;
38 forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries, and
39 requiting good for evil, comforting and succouring the distressed, and protecting and
40 defending the innocent,” our testimony will adorn God’s sanctifying work in us and display
41 true love of neighbor. And WLC 136 furthermore forbids the “hatred,” “oppression” and
42 “whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.”
43

44 The Bible and our Westminster Confession of Faith ground our treatment of fellow
45 Christians as brothers and sisters, joint heirs, as blood-bought family in **the doctrine of the**
46 **communion of the saints**. Jesus commissioned his church to “make disciples of all nations”
47

1 (Matthew 28:19). The language of “all nations” (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη [panta ta ethnē]) highlights
2 the connection of Jesus’ great commission to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant
3 (Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4) and the Gentile mission of the church. The command to
4 make disciples from “all nations” indicates that Jesus intended us to go to all the peoples of
5 earth with the Gospel, and that he intended his church to include disciples from all peoples.
6 “Don’t just go to the Jewish people, but to all the Gentile peoples,” Jesus is saying. He
7 reiterates this in Acts 1:8 when he tells his disciples that they will be his witnesses “to the
8 end of the earth.”

9
10 The New Testament repeatedly celebrates the fact that Jesus’ redemptive work has brought
11 believing Jews and Gentiles, once separated by the ceremonial law, into one body, the
12 church. No passage states this more clearly than Ephesians 2:11-22:

13
14 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the
15 uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh
16 by hands -- remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated
17 from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise,
18 having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you
19 who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he
20 himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his
21 flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments
22 expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place
23 of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body
24 through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached
25 peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through
26 him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer
27 strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members
28 of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
29 Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being
30 joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are
31 being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

32
33 Paul indicates here that Christians of all ethnicities have been made heirs of the covenant
34 promises, have been brought into one body with all other believers, are members of the
35 family of God and part of the one holy temple that the Lord is building. All of this is the
36 result of the work of Christ. To deny the multi-ethnicity of the church is to deny an
37 accomplishment of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. It is a contradiction of what the Gospel
38 does in reconciling all believers “to God in one body through the cross” (Ephesians 2:16). A
39 policy of segregation in the church, or indifference to it, is thus inimical to the Gospel and to
40 the purposes of the saving work of Christ, since all who are united to Christ are united to all
41 who are united to Christ, no matter their ethnicity. The work of Christ creates the
42 communion of the saints, and the church visible is to bear witness to the reality of that
43 communion.

1 *WCF* 26.1-2 speaks directly to this:
2

3 I. All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by His Spirit, and by
4 faith, have fellowship with Him in His grace, sufferings, death, resurrection,
5 and glory: and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in
6 each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such
7 duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the
8 inward and outward man.
9

10 II. Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and
11 communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual
12 services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in
13 outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which
14 communion, as God offers opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who,
15 in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.
16

17 Racism in the church denies the reality of this communion of the saints, disrupts the unity of
18 Christ's body, resists one of the purposes of his redemptive work, tarnishes the witness of
19 the church, harms members of the body for whom we are called on in *WCF* 26.1 to perform
20 "such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and
21 outward man," and refuses to extend communion "unto all those who, in every place, call
22 upon the name of the Lord Jesus." Can you imagine the members of the Assembly of
23 Divines hearing that people who had subscribed these words (from *WCF* 26.1-2) as a
24 statement of their faith and theological commitments had argued for segregating the church
25 on the basis of race, had refused Christians from different ethnic minorities admission to
26 worship services, and were indifferent to the well-being (in church and society) of fellow
27 Christians who are ethnic minorities? They would have been horrified.
28

29 In sum, Racism fails to affirm, explicitly or implicitly, in belief and/or practice (1) that all
30 people, of every ethnicity, are fully human and made in the image of God, (2) that no
31 ethnicity is inherently superior to another, and (3) that the Bible provides no grounds for the
32 forced or institutional segregation of ethnicities. Racism is, of course, the sin of persons, but
33 it can become endemic to cultures and societies. When it becomes so, very often those who
34 are dominant in those cultures and societies are blind to its presence, pervasiveness, and
35 consequences.
36

37 Racism may manifest itself in belief, prejudice, and practice. Racist belief asserts the
38 superiority of one ethnicity over another or others, and hence attempts to segregate the
39 "superior" from the "inferior" ethnicity/ies. Racist prejudice makes sweeping negative
40 assessments of ethnicities from the standpoint of condescension and based on stereotypical,
41 preconceived and uncharitable opinion. Racist practice treats people inequitably and unjustly
42 because of ethnicity. Racism is condemned by our sole final authority in faith and practice,
43 the Holy Scriptures, and by our subordinate standards, the *Westminster Confession of Faith*
44 and Catechisms.
45

1 So, if racism is sin, serious sin, heresy, and not merely an issue of the past but a matter that
2 needs our current and ongoing attention, what should we do? What practical steps can we
3 take? An issue this controversial, a problem this big, can seem daunting and can leave us
4 feeling like there is nothing we can do. But there are important, simple things that any and
5 every believer can do to begin engaging this significant challenge.

6
7 As believers, we can learn, pray, acknowledge, relate, and commit. Here is what we mean by
8 those five things.

9
10 Most of us in the PCA churches of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley are white,
11 though we live in a state with a population that is 37% black (and the Jackson metropolitan
12 area is about 50% black). Denominationally, less than 2% of PCA pastors are black. We
13 don't have statistics on the ethnicity of our church membership in PMV, but ethnic
14 minorities are probably in the low single digits percentage-wise. One of the things that this
15 means is that we will have to make a deliberate effort to gain another perspective on this
16 issue outside of our own "bubble." Relatively few of us have close friends of other
17 ethnicities, especially in the context of our local churches. That means that understanding
18 the perspective of fellow Bible-believing Presbyterians, who are of a different ethnicity, and
19 with whom we have an actual relationship, on the issue of racial reconciliation, is a
20 challenge.

21
22 This means that the very first thing we have to do is want to learn. We don't know what we
23 need to know about this issue.

24 25 **1. Learn**

26
27 Read the PMV overture on "Confession of the Sin of Racism, and Commitment to Christian
28 Unity." Keep up with the other overtures on this issue coming to the PCA General
29 Assembly. Especially take the time to read the PCA General Assembly's "The Gospel and
30 Race: A Pastoral Letter" (2004).

31
32 Read the material mentioned in the PMV "Suggested Resources on Race and our History for
33 the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley." This will take a while. There is a lot to chew on.

34
35 Seek to learn from Reformed, African American perspectives on these issues. Talk to black
36 PCA ministers, elders, and members. Tell them you want to learn from them. Listen. Go
37 online and listen to their sermons. Read Reformed, black writers on the internet. Here are
38 four places you can go online to do this.

39
40 Ellis Perspectives <http://www.ellisperspectives.com/> Dr. Carl and Karen Ellis. Dr. Ellis is a
41 black PCA minister, teaches for RTS, and his wife Karen is an expert in the persecuted
42 church.

43
44 The Front Porch <http://thefrontporch.org/> Where black Reformed ministers talk about the
45 Bible, the Black Church, Culture/Ethnicity, Family, God, the Gospel, Leadership, Missions,
46 Preaching, Salvation, Shepherding, Theology, Women and Worship.

1 The Reformed African American Network <https://www.raanetwork.org/> Here you will
2 encounter the voices of many younger, black, Reformed people (and others committed to a
3 multi-ethnic church) talking about the Bible, church, race, culture and current events.

4
5 Pure Church <https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/thabitianyabwile/> This is the blog of Thabiti
6 Anyabwile, a black pastor of Anacostia River Church in southeast Washington, DC.

7
8 For pastors, elders, and church members wanting to dig deep into a biblical understanding of
9 race and to get perspective on how racialized our society has been and is, three books would
10 provide a huge help.

11
12 J. Daniel Hays, *From Every People and Nation: A Biblical Theology of Race* in New Studies
13 in Biblical Theology, edited by D.A. Carson (IVP Academic, 2003).

14 This is a book written by a conservative, Bible-believing scholar and edited by a renowned
15 evangelical theologian. It is a study of the Bible's teaching on ethnicity in the sweep of
16 redemptive history (from Genesis to Revelation) and it convincingly shows that God's grand
17 saving plan finds its culmination in the one people of God, at the consummation of history,
18 depicted as a multi-ethnic congregation, gathered together in the worship of the one, triune
19 God, around his throne. When you realize that this is where the history of the people of God
20 is going, it changes your understanding of the here and now.

21
22 Jarvis J. Williams, *One New Man: The Cross and Racial Reconciliation in Pauline Theology*
23 (B&H Academic, 2010).

24 Dr. Williams is a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, and
25 teaches for Reformed Theological Seminary as well. In this book Dr. Williams, who is
26 African American, argues that Christ's death for our sin is God's only solution to racial
27 hostility and the only provision for racial reconciliation. This is precisely what most of the
28 founding fathers of the PCA thought and taught. This book will help you understand what
29 the gospel says about race and race relations, which is hugely important since we often
30 allow cultural prejudices to shape our understanding of race instead of scripture.

31
32 Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the*
33 *Problem of Race in America* (Oxford University Press, 2001)

34 Dr. Mike Campbell, former Senior Pastor of Redeemer Church (PCA), Jackson, MS,
35 recommended this book to the faculty of RTS to read a few years ago. The RTS Jackson
36 faculty read and discussed it, with much profit. It attempts to explain why white evangelicals
37 in general don't view racism and racial reconciliation the way black Christians do. It is very
38 illuminating on that front. Emerson and Smith are respected sociologists and are fair-minded
39 in the way they present their case. You don't have to agree with everything in the book to
40 benefit greatly from its perspective. For instance, if you don't understand the difference
41 between "racist" and "racialized" you are probably blind to important presuppositions you
42 are bringing to this discussion.

43
44 In all of this, we should aim to better understand our presuppositions, our history and our
45 context. If we are unaware of our presuppositions, lack knowledge of the history of racism

1 in the churches, and have failed to scrutinize how our context may have unwittingly
2 influenced our attention to and understanding of how the Bible speaks to this issue, we will
3 be hampered in our consideration and discussion.

4
5 **2. Pray**

6
7 There is nothing more important we can do than to pray. Racial reconciliation is impossible
8 in our own strength. Only God and the Gospel can avail. And that means we need to pray. In
9 prayer we acknowledge our own powerlessness, but at the same time acknowledge God's
10 power to act, save and change.

11
12 The following prayer suggestions assume our social and geographical location, in
13 Mississippi and Louisiana, in the Southeastern United States in the early years of the 21st
14 century, with all the history of racial conflict that entails. Hence, these suggestions will
15 focus more on black-white relations in our churches, than on other ethnicities (though much
16 will be transferable to prayer in other situations and for other peoples). These prayers also
17 take into consideration that most of us in PCA churches in Mississippi and Louisiana are
18 white, and they ask us to bear in mind fellow believers who are not.

19
20 Praise God as the one true God, creator of all humanity, maker of every person of every
21 tribe, tongue, people and nation, in His own image.

22
23 Praise God for his saving plan to make out of all peoples and nations, one people, a people
24 for himself.

25
26 Praise God that at the consummation of human history, men and women and boys and girls,
27 from all the world in every corner, from every tribe, tongue, people and nation, who have
28 been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, who have believed the Gospel and trusted Christ,
29 who have been saved by sovereign grace, adopted into God's household, made members of
30 Christ's body, will worship God and the Lamb, forever,

31
32 Praise God that in some measure the church visible now bears witness to that future reality.

33
34 Thank God for your African American brothers and sisters in Christ, and for every ethnicity
35 that is part of the church visible. "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his
36 sight."

37
38 Thank God that there is a reawakening of Reformed Theology in the African American
39 community.

40
41 Thank God that he is raising up outstanding African American Reformed preachers in our
42 generation.

43
44 Thank God for the increasing ethnic diversity in the PCA that has grown up because of the
45 power of the Gospel, the work of the Spirit and our union with Christ.

1 Thank God that our denomination's founding fathers wanted a church for all peoples and
2 that as the PCA approaches fifty years old we are closer to that aspiration than we were in
3 1973.

4
5 Confess whatever your own personal and congregational sins and failures may be, whether
6 by omission or commission, pertaining to loving our African American brothers and sisters
7 in Christ.

8
9 Grieve and lament that the evangelical branch of the Presbyterian tradition from which we
10 come fell so short of the Bible and Reformed Theology in our treatment of people of
11 different ethnicities, especially African Americans, even in the church: barring them from
12 worship attendance and church membership, misusing and twisting the Bible to support
13 racial segregation; failing to show solidarity with and support for African American brothers
14 and sisters in Christ as they endured various kinds of discrimination and duress in the Civil
15 Rights era.

16
17 Grieve the consequences of this for our own day and ask the Lord to open your eyes to
18 blindspots and behavior that continue to cause us to fall short of our biblical duties towards
19 fellow believers of different ethnicities, especially African Americans.

20
21 Ask that God, by grace, would grant an extraordinary work of racial healing and
22 reconciliation among believers, and that our past failures would not hinder present ministry.

23
24 Ask God that by the Holy Spirit he would break down barriers that separate us from one
25 another and create the unity that ought to be exhibited within the body of Christ.

26
27 Ask God that the real, biblical, Gospel, Holy Spirit-wrought, racial reconciliation in our
28 church might be a powerful witness to the culture around us that would cause even
29 unbelievers to say: "surely God is among them."

30
31 Ask God to bless the ministries of faithful, Bible-believing African American pastors,
32 especially PCA pastors, as well as those of other ethnic minorities.

33
34 Ask God that your words, actions, and attitudes would be encouraging to your African
35 American brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as to other ethnic minorities.

36
37 Ask God to grant his heart and help to the PCA and other solid biblical churches so that we
38 would do a better job of reaching out to African Americans, and other ethnic minorities,
39 with the Gospel.

40
41 Ask God to so work in us congregationally by his sanctifying Holy Spirit that ethnic
42 minority attenders and members of our churches will feel welcome, loved, at home and part
43 of the family.

44
45 Ask for God to raise up more African American (and other ethnic minority) pastors,

1 missionaries, church planters, seminary and college professors, campus ministers, elders,
2 deacons, women in the church leaders, and ministerial candidates in the PCA. Pray for
3 minority leadership at the congregational, presbytery, and denominational levels.

4

5 Our Father,

6

7 You are the one, true God who made the world and everything in it, Acts 17:24-26

8 You are the Lord of heaven and earth,

9 You give to all mankind life and breath and everything.

10 And you made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth

11 You made us to seek you and worship you, Acts 17:27; John 4:23

12

13 But we sought ourselves instead and worshipped the creature rather than the Creator,

14 And so we were estranged from You, Romans 1:25 Genesis 11:8-9

15 And estranged from one another, like the people of the plain of Shinar.

16

17 Yet in your grace, you not only created, called and saved your people Israel, but also

18 promised that your covenant with Abraham would mean blessings for all the families of the

19 earth. Genesis 12:3

20

21 Through Jesus Christ you brought the blessings of Abraham to the Gentiles, Gal. 3:13-14

22 And you made Jew and Gentile into one new man, your people, your church.

23 Ephesians 2:11-22, 3:6

24

25 And at the end of time, a multitude none can number,

26 from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation

27 will all be your people

Revelation 7:9-12

28 in one body worshipping the one true God,

29 through one savior, Jesus Christ,

30 by the power of one Holy Spirit.

31

32 Grant that we would long for that, and look like that more. Now.

33

34 In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

35

36 3. Acknowledge

37

38 If we do not acknowledge that racism is a problem and we do not aspire to racial
39 reconciliation and Gospel unity, it won't happen. We can learn all we want, but if we don't
40 see our sin and need in this area, if we don't buy in to its importance, if we aren't ready to
41 make changes, it won't matter much whatever else we do.

42

43 Acknowledgement not only means owning up to our part of the problem, and that a problem
44 exists, and that it is important, but also recognizing how big the challenge is. Racial
45 reconciliation has not been, is not, and will not be an easy thing. Only the Gospel is big
46 enough to address it.

47

1 And acknowledgement doesn't come easy for many evangelical Christians, for a variety of
2 reasons. As we have already noted, many evangelical Christians view today's discussions of
3 racism as just another example of political correctness being foisted on the church.
4 Sociologists Emerson and Smith noted in their book *Divided by Faith* that most evangelicals
5 think of racism as a thing of the past. Hence, when the subject is introduced some respond
6 by saying "It's time to move on."

7
8 But we also need to realize and acknowledge how hard this discussion is for our African
9 American brothers and sisters in the church. They too, are often "tired" of this conversation,
10 but not for the same reason many white evangelical Christians are. Black Christians are
11 "tired" of having to justify the validity and relevance of the conversation in the first place,
12 and are often deeply discouraged by how little their white brothers and sisters seem to have
13 thought or cared about it, or to have realized the dramatic effect racism has had upon their
14 lives.

15
16 Let's be honest and admit how big a challenge all this is. All you have to do to show how
17 difficult the discussion is is to bring a group of black and white Bible-believing Reformed
18 Christians into a room and say the words: social justice, systemic racism, white privilege,
19 mass incarceration, police brutality, racial profiling, gentrification, spirituality of the church,
20 – and prepare for the whirlwind! The point is not that there is one right view of these things
21 (one quickly learns that there is not one "black view" of these things, even among PCA
22 African Americans). The point is this: even among people with shared Reformed theology,
23 our social and cultural experiences are so different, and our perspectives so varied, that
24 constructive conversation is very difficult on many subjects, especially at first, and requires
25 a long season of trust-building and personal relationship (which leads to our next point).

26
27 The problem is real. The solution is not easy. Only God and the Gospel can prevail.

28 29 **4. Relate**

30
31 Make friends. Do not underestimate the power of friendship. This whole discussion will
32 remain abstract until you meet and befriend a person whom you come to care about, who is
33 different from you, and who can give you a perspective on this issue different from your
34 own. For white PCA Christians, that is going to mean establishing interracial friendships.

35
36 Start with deliberately seeking to cultivate friendships with Reformed and PCA African
37 American Christians. Then reach out to other Bible-believing black Christians. Then seek to
38 be a better friend to African Americans in your neighborhood, work, and community.

39
40 Maybe there's someone in your church who is of a different race. You know each other, but
41 you've never spent significant time together or had a serious conversation. Why not invite
42 that person out to coffee, or to breakfast or lunch, or have their family over for dinner? This
43 is a natural, organic way to deepen a relationship you already have.

44
45 Be intentional. We don't naturally gravitate toward those who are different from us. We

1 naturally gather in similar groups. We have to do something unnatural, or rather, supernatural
2 to break the cycles of social sameness that hinder racial reconciliation. Think like a missionary
3 or a church planter or a campus minister. All these folks are deliberately on the look out to
4 try to make friendships and connect with people for the sake of the Gospel and ministry.
5 Apply that attitude and approach to interracial friendships.

6
7 Pastors, consider entering into a friendship with a pastor of a different ethnicity. Get together
8 for coffee and meals, and discuss substantial issues. Pray for one another. Get to know each
9 other's families. Swap pulpits, where appropriate and possible.

10 11 **5. Commit**

12
13 Commit to this issue as a part of your personal and congregational sanctification. Determine
14 to grow in your cultural intelligence regarding ethnic minorities. Learn from godly Christians
15 who are already engaged in racial reconciliation and demonstrating Christian unity.

16
17 Pastors and elders may want to consider asking people from ethnic minorities in your
18 community their impression of the reputation of your church regarding racism, neighbor
19 love and impartiality.

20
21 Pastors and elders may want to examine patterns, language, and culture within our churches
22 that erect barriers to other races.

23
24 With pastoral prudence and sensitivity, pastors and elders may want to consider preaching
25 and teaching in our churches concerning racism, highlighting the biblical doctrines that
26 inform the Christian view, but clearly anchoring the study in Scripture.

27
28 Establish a minority scholarship for those preparing for the Gospel ministry in the PCA, for
29 both college and seminary education (since both are required for PCA ordination and since
30 many ethnic minorities lack the resources for them).

31
32 Consider and cultivate interns from ethnic minorities to be disciplined for ministry, as you
33 would any other ministerial candidate or person with potential for service in the church.

34
35 Be intentional with discipling minority members for church leadership.

36
37 Endeavor to prepare African American (and other ethnic minority) pastors, missionaries,
38 church planters, seminary and college professors, campus ministers, elders, deacons, women
39 in the church leaders, and ministerial candidates in the PCA.

40
41 Think carefully about the hiring practices of your church. For instance, is one type of
42 employee typically from an ethnic minority? What message do you intend to send: to the
43 employee, to the members, to visitors, to the watching world?

44
45 Deliberately reach out to and evangelize people of other and minority ethnicities within our
46 communities, near our churches, and within the areas covered by our regional church, the
47 presbytery.

- 1 Show church members what personal loving interracial friendship and hospitality look like
- 2 by hosting members, attenders, and friends of all ethnicities in your home.
- 3
- 4 Read publications by authors of other ethnicities, especially Bible-believing and Reformed
- 5 authors from other and minority ethnicities.
- 6
- 7 Don't exclude or discourage, on the basis of ethnicity, any person from membership, privilege,
- 8 or responsibility, including leadership, in any church or in the presbytery.
- 9
- 10 Don't discriminate, on the basis of race, against a Christian participant in worship services,
- 11 or other services or functions of the church (including weddings).
- 12
- 13 Don't tolerate racist attitudes, language, and practices among the membership of the church.
- 14
- 15 Don't expect that we will agree about everything (like church music!), with fellow Christians
- 16 from ethnic minorities, even within the PCA.
- 17
- 18 So, learn, pray, acknowledge, relate, and commit. These pastoral suggestions are offered in
- 19 the spirit of "stirring one another up to love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24). Your
- 20 presbytery writes as fellow elders, brothers, and members of the congregations of PMV.
- 21 May the Lord himself grant us Gospel unity, racial reconciliation, and enable us to bear
- 22 fruit in keeping with repentance (Matthew 3:8).
- 23
- 24 The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley
- 25 May 3, 2016
- 26 French Camp, Mississippi

Attachment 2

Suggested Resources on Race and our History
for the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley

Important Online Resources:
Race and Church

Thabiti Anyabwile, “Jonathan Edwards, Slavery, and the Theology of African Americans,”
<https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/justintaylor/files/2012/02/Thabiti-Jonathan-Edwards-slavery-and-theological-appropriation.pdf>

Thabiti Anyabwile, “Bondage or Freedom? Questions in Early American Theology,” The John L. Girardeau Lectures, First Presbyterian Church (ARP), Columbia, SC

<http://www.firstprescolumbia.org/om-girardeau>

Lecture 1 Audio - “Reformed Theology and the Status Quo”

Lecture 2 Audio – “Reformed Theology and Social Change”

Otis Westbrook Pickett, *Race and the American Church*, Reformation21

Part 1 <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/race-and-the-american-church-1.php>

Part 2 <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/race-and-the-american-church-part-ii.php>

Part 3 <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/race-and-the-american-church-part-iii-1.php>

Part 4 <http://www.reformation21.org/featured/race-and-the-american-church-part-iv.php>

Part 5 <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/race-and-the-american-church-part-v.php>

Part 6a <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/race-and-the-american-church-part-vi.php>

Part 6b <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/americans-also-supported-a-physical.php>

Dr Pickett’s Lament for Charleston <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/for-such-a-time-as-this.php>

Dr. Pickett is native of Charleston, SC, from a long line of low-country South Carolinians. He is a PCA member (at Redeemer Church in Jackson) and Assistant Professor of History and Political Science at Mississippi College, Clinton, MS. He is a graduate of Clemson University, Covenant Theological Seminary and the University of Mississippi. He loves the South, Southern History and Southern Presbyterianism. These articles offer a sympathetic, but honest assessment of the history of race and the American Church.

Jemar Tisby, “The Image of God in the African American Experience”

<https://jemartisby.com/2015/01/07/the-image-of-god-in-the-african-american-experience/>

Jemar Tisby, Trillia Newbell, and Thabiti Anyabwile, “Doing Racial Harmony,” TGC

National Conference <https://www.raanetwork.org/tgc-2015-doing-racial-harmony/>

Matthew Tuininga, *Presbyterians and the Political Theology of Race*, Reformation21

Part 1 <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/presbyterians-and-the-political-theology-of-race-part-1-cultural-captivity.php>

Part 2 <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/presbyterians-and-the-political-theology-of->

1 [race-part-2-old-testament-politics.php](#)

2 Part 3 [http://www.reformation21.org/articles/presbyterians-and-the-political-theology-of-](http://www.reformation21.org/articles/presbyterians-and-the-political-theology-of-race-part-3-gospel-politics.php)
3 [race-part-3-gospel-politics.php](#)

4 Review of Carolyn Renée Dupont, *Mississippi Praying: Southern White Evangelicals and*
5 *the Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1975* [http://www.reformation21.org/articles/mississippi-](http://www.reformation21.org/articles/mississippi-praying.php)
6 [praying.php](#)

7 Dr. Matthew J. Tuininga is Assistant Professor of Moral Theology at Calvin
8 Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI.

10 **The Spirituality of the Church**

11
12 Adam S. Borneman, *Presbyterians, Civil Rights, and the Spirituality of the Church: A Brief*
13 *Historical Survey* in *Political Theology Today: A forum for interdisciplinary and*
14 *interreligious dialogue*, October 9, 2013

15 [http://www.politicaltheology.com/blog/presbyterians-civil-rights-and-the-spirituality-of-the-](http://www.politicaltheology.com/blog/presbyterians-civil-rights-and-the-spirituality-of-the-church-a-brief-historical-survey/)
16 [church-a-brief-historical-survey/](#)

17 Borneman is pastor of Second PC(USA) in Birmingham, AL, and a graduate of Samford
18 University and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

19
20 David Coffin, Annotated Bibliography on the Spirituality of the Church

21 <http://www.newhopefairfax.org/files/spiritualityofchurchreadings.pdf>

22 Audio Lectures on the Spirituality of the Church

23 Lecture 1 <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=102411131389>

24 Lecture 2 <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=1024111321204>

25 Dr. David Coffin's annotated bibliography and audio lectures feature an approach to the
26 spirituality of the church, from a perspective sympathetic to 19th Old School American
27 Presbyterian divines.

28
29 Kenneth Taylor, *The Spirituality of the Church: Segregation, The Presbyterian Journal, and*
30 *the Origins of the Presbyterian Church in America, 1942-1973*, *Reformed Perspectives*
31 *Magazine*, Volume 9, Number 34, August 19 to August 25, 2007 (Third Millennium
32 Ministries)

33 http://thirdmill.org/newfiles/ken_taylor/ken_taylor.church.spirituality.html

34 This article was published in Richard Pratt's online magazine. Mr. Taylor, the author, taught
35 history at Piedmont College, specializing in the intersection of race, religion, and southern
36 history. He is a communicant at St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church, Athens, Georgia.

37
38 Matthew Tuininga, *Rightly Defining the Spirituality of the Church*, *Reformation21*

39 [http://www.reformation21.org/articles/the-kingdom-and-its-righteousness-rightly-defining-](http://www.reformation21.org/articles/the-kingdom-and-its-righteousness-rightly-defining-the-spirituality-of-the-church.php)
40 [the-spirituality-of-the-church.php](#)

1 **PCA History and Race**

2
3 Sean Michael Lucas, *Race and the Roots of the PCA*, Reformation21

4 Part 1 <http://www.reformation21.org/blog/2015/02/race-and-the-roots-of-the-pres.php>

5 Part 2 <http://www.reformation21.org/blog/2015/02/race-and-the-roots-of-the-pres-1.php>

6 Part 3 <http://www.reformation21.org/blog/2015/02/race-and-the-roots-of-the-pres-2.php>

7 Part 4 <http://www.reformation21.org/blog/2015/02/race-and-the-roots-of-the-pres-3.php>

8 Part 5 <http://www.reformation21.org/blog/2015/02/race-and-the-roots-of-the-pres-4.php>

9 Dr. Lucas is senior minister of the historic First Presbyterian Church, Hattiesburg, MS, and
10 Professor of Church History, Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, MS. He is a
11 graduate of Bob Jones University and Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia
12 (Historical and Theological Studies: American Reformed Tradition). He also served as Chief
13 Academic Officer and associate professor of church history at Covenant Theological
14 Seminary, St. Louis, MO.

15
16 David Peterson, *Southern Presbyterian Conservatives and Ecclesiastical Division: The*
17 *Formation of the Presbyterian Church in America, 1926-1973*, Master's Thesis, University
18 of Kentucky, 2009

19 http://uknowledge.uky.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1078&context=gradschool_theses

20 This thesis argues that “Disgruntled by a liberal-moderate coalition that held power [in the
21 PCUS], many conservatives withdrew and created the Presbyterian Church in America
22 (PCA) in 1973, the first major division of a Southern denomination. The PCA was not solely
23 founded because of racial disagreements or any single cultural debate; rather decades’ long
24 theological disagreements regarding the church’s role in society fueled separation along with
25 several sharp social controversies.”

26
27 R. Milton Winter, *Division & Reunion in the Presbyterian Church US: A Mississippi*
28 *Retrospective*, *Journal of Presbyterian History* 78:1 (Spring 2000)

29 <http://history.pcusa.org/sites/default/files/08Winter.pdf>

30 This journal article argues that “Mississippi mirrored the tensions within Southern
31 Presbyterianism during an era of civil rights agitation, theological reassessment, and a
32 conservative secession to form a separate Presbyterian Church in America.” Dr. Winter
33 (who did his PhD in history at Union Seminary in Richmond, VA), is a PC(USA) pastor in
34 Holly Springs, cousin of Mississippi Governor William Winter (himself an elder at Fondren
35 PC(USA) in Jackson), and attended First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS for a season in
36 the early 1970s.

37
38 **Reformed, African American Perspectives on Theology, Culture, Church and Society**

39
40 Ellis Perspectives <http://www.ellisperspectives.com/>

41 The website of Dr. Carl and the-soon-to-be Dr. Karen Ellis. Carl is currently the Associate
42 Pastor for Cultural Apologetics at New City Fellowship, and teaches at Redeemer Seminary
43 in Dallas and Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson. Dr. Ellis was Dean of
44 Intercultural Studies at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, PA and studied
45 under Francis Schaeffer at LÁbri in Switzerland. Karen Angela Ellis, is pursuing her PhD

1 and works alongside her husband, exploring the zones where identity, human rights and
2 theology intersect. She has performed, spoken and lectured in Eastern Europe, Canada, the
3 Caribbean, Indonesia and in South America. In her twenty year career, she has been seen in
4 classrooms, conferences, on radio, television, film and onstage. Karen holds a Master of
5 Arts in Religion from Westminster Theological Seminary, and a Master of Fine Arts from
6 the Yale School of Drama.

7
8 The Front Porch <http://thefrontporch.org/>

9 “Conversations about biblical faithfulness in African-American churches and beyond.”
10 Topics covered include: The Arts, The Bible, The Black Church, Culture/Ethnicity, Family,
11 God, The Gospel, Leadership, Missions, Preaching, Salvation, Shepherding, Theology,
12 Women and Worship.

13
14 The Reformed African American Network <https://www.raanetwork.org/>

15 “The mission of the Reformed African American Network is to fuel modern reformation in
16 the African American community and with a multi-ethnic mindset by providing biblically-
17 faithful resources, by connecting Christians who adhere to Reformed doctrines—especially
18 African Americans, and by building theology in community from a Reformed and African
19 American perspective as well as with others from diverse ethnic backgrounds.”

20
21 Pure Church <https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/thabitianyabwile/>

22 This is the blog of Thabiti Anyabwile, pastor of Anacostia River Church in southeast
23 Washington, DC, council member of The Gospel Coalition, plenary speaker for Together for
24 the Gospel.

25
26 **Books and essays:**

27
28 Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Decline of African American Theology: From Biblical Faith to*
29 *Cultural Captivity* (IVP, 2007)

30
31 Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering*
32 *African-American Pastors* (Crossway, 2007)

33
34 Thabiti Anyabwile, *Reviving the Black Church: New Life for a Sacred Institution* (B&H,
35 2015)

36
37 James Bannerman, *The Church of Christ* (Banner of Truth, reprint, 1868), Vol. 1, pp. 94-
38 275.

39
40 Anthony Carter, ed., et al, *Glory Road: The Journeys of 10 African-Americans into*
41 *Reformed Christianity* (Crossway, 2009)

42
43 Anthony Carter, *On Being Black and Reformed: A New Perspective on the African-*
44 *American Christian Experience* (P&R, 2003)

45 Anthony J. Carter (M.A.B.S., Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando) is cofounder of

- 1 the Black Alliance for Reformed Theology, its director of ministry, and editor of its online
2 journal, *Vinedresser*. He is assistant pastor for preaching and teaching at Southwest
3 Christian Fellowship, Atlanta.
- 4
- 5 Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?: Making Sense of*
6 *Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Crossway, 2011)
- 7
- 8 Carl Ellis, *Free at Last! The Gospel in the African-American Experience* (IVP, 1996)
- 9
- 10 Carolyn Renee Dupont, *Mississippi Praying: Southern White Evangelicals and the Civil*
11 *Rights Movement, 1945-1975* (New York University Press, 2013), 181-198.
- 12
- 13 Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the*
14 *Problem of Race in America* (Oxford University Press, 2001).
- 15
- 16 J. Daniel Hays, *From Every People and Nation a Biblical Theology of Race* (IVP Academic,
17 2003)
- 18
- 19 Stephen R. Haynes, *The Last Segregated Hour: The Memphis Kneel-Ins and the*
20 *Campaign for Southern Church Desegregation* (Oxford University Press, 2012)
- 21 Stephen Haynes is Professor of Religious Studies, Rhodes College, and the author
22 of many books, including *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American*
23 *Slavery*.
- 24
- 25 Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* in *Annotations on a Letter*
26 *that Changed the World from a Birmingham Jail* by Peter Lillback (Providence
27 Forum Press, 2013)
- 28
- 29 Bryan Lorritys, *Letters to a Birmingham Jail: A Response to the Words and Dreams*
30 *of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Moody, 2014)
- 31
- 32 Sean Michael Lucas, *For a Continuing Church: The Roots of the Presbyterian*
33 *Church in America* (P&R, 2015).
- 34
- 35 Sean Michael Lucas, "Owning the Past: The Spirituality of the Church in History, Failure,
36 and Hope," *Reformed Theological Seminary Journal*, 1.1 (2016) forthcoming.
- 37
- 38 Charles Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights* (Princeton
39 University Press, 2008).
- 40
- 41 John Piper, *Bloodlines: Race, Cross and the Christian* (Crossway, 2011)
- 42 "Sharing from his own experiences growing up in the segregated South, pastor John
43 Piper thoughtfully exposes the unremitting problem of racism. Instead of turning finally
44 to organizations, education, famous personalities, or government programs to address
45 racial strife, Piper reveals the definitive source of hope—teaching how the good news

1 about Jesus Christ actively undermines the sins that feed racial strife, and leads to a
2 many-colored and many-cultured kingdom of God.”

3
4 Peter Slade, *Open Friendship in a Closed Society: Racial Reconciliation in Mississippi*
5 *after the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford University Press, 2009).

6
7 Guy Waters, *How Jesus Runs the Church* (P&R,), especially pages 66-70.

8
9 Jarvis Williams, *One New Man: The Cross and Racial Reconciliation in Pauline Theology*
10 (B&H Academic, 2010)

11
12 **PCA Documents** (available at
13 <http://www.pcahistory.org>):

14 2002 Declaration on Racial Reconciliation

15 2004 Pastoral Letter on the Gospel and

16 Race 2015 Duncan/Lucas Personal

17 Resolution

18 2016 Overtures: <http://www.pcaac.org/general-assembly/overtures/>.

19
20 **Articles on PCA Personal Resolution**

21 Sean Michael Lucas in *ByFaith Magazine*: [http://byfaithonline.com/grace-](http://byfaithonline.com/grace-race-and-the-pca/)
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