

**Statement of the SEJ College of Bishops
August 2017**

"The things, good Lord, that we pray for, give us grace to labor for." - Thomas More, UMH, 408

Serving with you in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, we grieve the violence in Charlottesville. We renew our baptismal covenant to trust and serve Christ, to resist evil, and to honor all in the human family.

We share with you our resolve to name, resist and dismantle racism in our churches, in our communities and in the world. As Paul writes in Ephesians 2:14, we pray that the dividing walls of hostility come down so that in every place Christ becomes our peace.

At the 2016 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, a mission initiative for our region was embraced. That plan identified anti-racism as an essential focus of our shared mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Each of us is working with clergy and laity to build anti-racist commitment in our episcopal areas.

We would like to communicate with you the strategic anti-racist work across the jurisdiction. We will share with you the stories of the work of one of our Annual Conferences each month for the next year. Our desire is not simply to pray but to also demonstrate the work the United Methodist Church is doing to confront racism. It is our prayer that this sharing will increase courage and strengthen community in every place in the Southeastern Jurisdiction.
