

Open Letter to Friends in Christ:

RE: Anti-Asian Violence in the U.S.

How long will we tolerate people living in fear of systemic racism, xenophobia and white supremacy in this country?

It is well past time to engage in honest conversation about your family origin. Nearly all of us, or our ancestors, came to this country from somewhere else. If not us, then our parents or grandparents, or great-great grandparents, came to this land from some other place due to persecution, political strife, or poverty and privation. Some came to reunite with families that had traveled here ahead of them.

Without roots, trees cannot survive, even in this beautiful, fertile land. So now is a critical time to explore our ancestries to discover our immigrant roots. In this way, all of us, early-comers as well as latecomers, can faithfully express our thanks for finding a place to land in this world full of turmoil.

It is well past time to teach United States history more honestly. We must tell the truth about the brutality of our past treatment of Native Americans and Africans brought by force to this country. Ignorance seems to rule our politics and social arguments today. This condition is embarrassing and destructive. We, with our Lord Jesus Christ, must live in the truth.

It is well past time to take an honest appraisal of our own positions in this world and our own attitudes. We must face our privileges and biases directly, fairly and honestly. We must work to align our daily practices with our statements. From top to bottom in our Church, this annual conference, our local congregations, our neighborhoods, our workplaces, our homes and ourselves, we need to make an honest appraisal and then take concrete actions. Changing attitudes is not enough if our institutional and personal behaviors do not change.

It is well past time to reject the notion that any of us or any ethnic communities are independent. We are all interrelated. The wellbeing of any one group affects the wellbeing of all groups. God created every human being in his image to reflect the uniqueness of human potential for participating in the whole creation.

One of my favorite songs has the lyrics: "This land is your land, this land is my land; this land is our land together!" Can we live this out? After all, it is God's land for everyone.

Peace,

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