**EPC ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE:**

**AN INVITATION TO THE CONGREGATION**

In June 2020, EPC formed a new committee – the Anti-Racism Committee – in response to the killing of George Floyd and the national discussion about it and the long-term systemic racism in our country. Peggy McCurdy was instrumental in getting this committee underway and served as our chair until January 2021 – thank you, Peggy!

For the past 16 months, the committee has focused on educating ourselves and having deep and robust discussions about our experience (or lack thereof) with how pervasive racism still is – in people, communities, and institutions. We read, and read, and read. We watched videos and discussed. We created a comprehensive bibliography of resources. (We didn’t realize how much history we either didn’t know or had forgotten.) We examined our own hearts (and actions), had some anguished moments, and even shed a few tears. We respected each other’s feelings and opinions and created a “space” focused on love and understanding. An important step we took was to create a statement on EPC and racism – adopted by the Session in September 2020, we made this a guiding document for our important work. The statement is on the EPC website under the “I’m New” tab, along with the bibliography.

This year, we created a Mission Statement to further focus our efforts, both for us as committee members and for the congregation:

**EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT:**

*The EPC Anti-Racism Committee is focused on bearing witness to the truth – that racism, both individual and systemic, exists and that we can make a difference through education, engagement, and action by following Christ’s example. We are committed to listen, to learn, and to work toward the goal of effecting change in ourselves, EPC, and the world beyond. We invite you on this journey.*

The last sentence is extremely important: **We invite you on this journey**.

Because of COVID restrictions, we’ve met by Zoom for 16 months. We’ve also not had the opportunity to gather with you, the congregation, and share our work and our next steps. We plan to hold a gathering event in January 2022 – in person, we hope – to involve you in our work. Because we do need you and want you on this journey.

Here are the members of our committee. Some have been with us from the beginning, and continue on. Others are on the committee, but inactive or in a limited role. Getting involved is not an all-or-nothing proposition – please consider whether you can jump in for special events, a limited time, or all the time! We invite you to contact any of the members if you have thoughts, questions, or an interest in joining.

**Al Stacer and Lucy Gratton, Co-Chairs**

**Active Members:** Anne Lawing, Bill Chittick, Dennis Yarman, Jeanine Fulton, Kathe Gowland, Linda Redman, Marva Bryan, Peggy McCurdy, Ruth Parker, Sally Jackson, Shelley Lee

**Limited or Inactive:** Alice Day, Caleb Clark, Caroline Thompson, Henrietta Kisseih, Beth Heckman, Kelly Gunter, Mary Ann Howard, Mark Sauls, Sarah Sauls, Sheila Thompkins