

1 **RESOLUTION 2017 - 07**

2 **RESOLUTION to the 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**

3 **Resolution relating to Affirming the Eastern PA Conference Response to the
4 Northeastern Jurisdiction Call to Action**

5 **Presented by the Eastern PA Conference Commission on Religion and Race**

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7 **WHEREAS** Delegates and Bishops at the 2016 Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference
8 in Lancaster, PA, gave unanimous support to a Call to Action resolution calling for serious
9 endeavors by the jurisdiction and its annual conferences over the 2017-2020
10 quadrennium to examine, address and strive to remedy the causes and consequences of
11 institutional and interpersonal racism that obstructs our true discipleship and credible
12 witness as children of God and followers of Jesus Christ;

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14 **AND WHEREAS** our Eastern PA Conference Bishop and Jurisdictional Conference
15 delegates joined in that show of support and the commitment to pursue the Call to
16 Action goals;

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18 **AND WHEREAS** Bishop Peggy Johnson, the Cabinet of District Superintendents,
19 Connectional Ministries staff and various elected councils and committees have so far
20 engaged in efforts to enable intentional discourse and discovery about race, racism, racial
21 injustice, white privilege and the need for reconciliation;

22

23 **AND WHEREAS** those efforts—both new and ongoing—have so far included:

- 24 • Candid, informed remarks to district leaders by the Bishop and Cabinet members,
- 25 • Special presentations to Sessions of the Annual Conference,
- 26 • Interracial/intercultural dialogues and ministry activities sponsored by
27 districts and mission connexions,
- 28 • Teaching and training workshops to improve intercultural competency,
- 29 • Conversations with the Board of Ordained Ministry about the need to recruit
30 more African American candidates for ministry and addressing perceived
31 obstacles in the candidacy process,
- 32 • Initial conversations about possibilities for strengthening black churches and
33 creating a new faith community focused on engaging black youth and young
34 adults,
- 35 • News and persuasive opinion articles in our conference media, and
- 36 • The promotion, sharing and study of relevant print and video resources on race
37 and racism,
- 38 • Efforts among UM Women to promote the newly updated Charter for Racial
39 Justice,
- 40 • Planning and promotion of “Hearts on Fire,” a leaning and networking
41 symposium on social justice as social holiness, with a focus on racial justice,
42 scheduled for May 13, 2017;

43

44 **AND WHEREAS** all conference staff and clergy and laity appointed to churches or
45 assigned to key leadership roles are required to receive certified anti-racism training

46 and are offered the twice-yearly, conference-endorsed Changing Racism classes to
47 fulfill that requirement (Changing Racism, taught by Visions, Inc., is the successor to
48 Healing the Wounds of Racism training events that the conference initiated two
49 decades ago);

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51 **AND WHEREAS** Bishop Johnson has reported these many efforts to the NEJ
52 College of Bishops and Episcopacy Committee and gained much affirmation from
53 those bodies for our exemplary efforts;

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55 **BE IT, THEREFORE, RESOLVED** that the Eastern PA Annual Conference affirms the
56 unanimous support expressed for the NEJ Call to Action by our Bishop and
57 Jurisdictional Conference delegates in July 2016.

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59 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Eastern PA Annual Conference affirms the
60 dedication and ongoing efforts of many individuals, groups and churches in our
61 conference and its districts to respond to the NEJ Call to Action by beginning or
62 increasing their efforts to seek racial understanding, justice and healing, to confront
63 racism and white privilege, and to affirm the value of black lives, black churches, black
64 leadership and black communities.

65
66 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Eastern PA Annual Conference affirms that
67 much more needs to be done and accounted for in our conference and other conferences
68 during this quadrennium to respond to the important requests and worthy goals put forth
69 in the groundbreaking NEJ Call to Action resolution— goals that envision the
70 achievement of true racial justice, reconciliation, progress and healing, led by true
71 disciples of Jesus Christ committed to God's transforming work in the world.

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73 **Person responsible for presenting this resolution:** The Rev. Susan Worrell and Mrs.
74 Gladys B. Hubbard from The Eastern PA Annual Conference Commission on Religion
75 and Race