

Consider the Richmond Pledge
(January 2017 Food for Thought)

Where does racism start and stop? It can be both systemic and individualistic. It is in the past, the present and will be in the foreseeable future unless individually and collectively, we stand-up against its existence and its proliferation. The Richmond Pledge provides a place to stand-up both individually and collectively against racism.

The Richmond Pledge is based on a similar one adopted by some individuals from Birmingham Alabama. It was developed in Richmond by members of the Unitarian Universalist Church. It is a pledge to end racism starting with ourselves.

This is the Richmond Pledge to end racism:

I BELIEVE that every person has worth as an individual.

I BELIEVE that every person is entitled to dignity and respect, regardless of race or color.

I BELIEVE that every thought and every act of racial prejudice is harmful; if it is my thought or act, then it is harmful to me as well as to others.

Therefore, from this day forward I WILL strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice from my thoughts and actions.

I WILL discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity.

I WILL treat all people with dignity and respect;

I WILL commit to working with others to transform the Greater Richmond region into a place that treats people of all races, ethnicities, and cultures with justice, equity, and compassion,

and I WILL strive daily to honor this pledge, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort.

This Pledge is an individual commitment. This Pledge is consistent with our Baptismal Covenant through which we pledged with God's help to love our neighbors as ourselves and to respect the dignity of every human being. It reminds us that racism is harmful to ourselves and others. It requires us to be proactive and work with others toward this goal of ending racism. Taking the Pledge is a step along our journey to end racism.

At our January "Food for Thought" supper and dialogue, we will discuss the Pledge and other actions we might take to end racism. The supper will be on Wednesday, January 25th at 6:00 p.m. Mark your calendars.

You can sign The Richmond Pledge on-line at www.RichmondPledge.org . Cards with the Pledge are also available.