

ASIAN AMERICAN LANGUAGE MINISTRIES (AALM) STATEMENT AGAINST RACISM

June 25, 2020

In the aftermath of police killings of unarmed Black people, AALM (Asian American Language Ministries) representing the twelve official Asian and Asian American Caucuses of The United Methodist Church, strongly condemn the brutal and avoidable murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and the unconscionable number of precious Black lives that have been lost as a result of racist violence.

We call the Church and our respective Caucuses to reclaim our rich Wesleyan tradition of Social Holiness and commit to oppose, and work towards dismantling and ending practices, traditions, and structural systems that uphold racism, white supremacy, and white privilege.

In this season of Pentecost we prophesy to the truth; we are convinced that we cannot close our eyes and remain silent to the widespread culture of racial discrimination and violence in the US and across the world. Like all pervasive forms of evil, we must bring systemic racism clearly into the light, so that we can repent from our own complicity and rise to condemn the extrajudicial killings of unarmed black individuals, guard the human dignity and rights of the vulnerable, and stand with victims who have been detained, surveilled, harassed, and scapegoated.

To be clear, as Asian-Americans, we must confront, confess, and repent of our own sin of racism and our own biases and complicity to racial injustice in our own communities. AALM is committed to sponsor anti-racism training and make relevant resources available to our Asian American communities.

This is a pivotal moment for Asian Americans to rise up and acknowledge our indebtedness to the struggle and contributions of African Americans that led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which in turn paved the way to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. The rights and benefits that Asian Americans now enjoy are an ongoing reminder of the sacrifices and struggles of African Americans in the United States. This calls on us to tackle the racism African Americans have faced in faithful and strategic ways by standing in solidarity with our African American brothers and sisters.

We urge our Asian and Asian American communities to stand in solidarity with our African American brothers and sisters and not be silent. Silence is complicity. It did not escape our attention that the police officer who stood by and did nothing while George Floyd was murdered, was Asian American. This scene was a metaphor for our cultural tendency to “not make waves,” and not speak out. We believe it is time for Asian American United Methodists to act. We will no longer remain silent and/or complicit.

We also strongly condemn all racist practices and structural systems that victimize and marginalize our own Asian and Asian American communities as we stand in faithful solidarity with the African American community to oppose the forces of hatred, evil and death.

There are 21 million Asian-Americans in the U.S.A. As the spread of COVID-19 and anti-Asian xenophobia led to significant increase in hate crimes targeting Asian-Americans, the support and solidarity we have felt from the Black and Brown communities remind us that we are not alone. Indeed, we have hope that, together, we will overcome violence, bigotry and build an anti-racist society.

We strongly appeal to AALM and to each of our twelve Asian/Asian American United Methodist Caucus churches and ministries to share this statement with your communities and use it for prayerful discernment, discussion, and action. “[The Lord] has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8 May we as Asian American followers of the Risen Lord and empowered by the Holy Spirit, courageously and prophetically unite against racism, stand for justice, and work towards building the beloved community where God’s Shalom prevail. Amen.

Signed by:

Cambodian National Caucus

Rev. Vathanak Heang, President
Formosan Caucus
Rev. Patrick Huang, Chairperson
Indian National Caucus of the United Methodist Church
Rev. Timothy Rathod, President
Korean Association of the United Methodist Church
Rev. Jae D. Lew, President
Lao and Thai National Caucus of the United Methodist Church
Rev. Sean Chanthasone, President
Middle Eastern United Methodist Caucus and Arabic Language Ministry Centers
Rev. Dr. Zaki Labib Zaki, President
National Association of Filipino American United Methodists
Rev. Edgar De Jesus, President
National Hmong Caucus of the United Methodist Church
Rev. Tsuker Yang, President
National Japanese American United Methodist Caucus
Rev. Karen Yokota Love, President
Pakistani United Methodist Caucus
Rev. Ayla Samson, President
Vietnamese National Caucus of the United Methodist Church
Rev. Hieu Phan, Chairperson