

A photograph of a wall constructed from numerous vertical wooden planks. The wall is covered with a quote by Martin Luther King Jr. in a serif font. The quote is arranged in two lines, with the second line indented to the right. The text is: "TRUE PEACE IS NOT MERELY THE ABSENCE OF TENSION; IT IS THE PRESENCE OF JUSTICE." At the bottom right, the name "MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR." is visible.

TRUE PEACE IS NOT MERELY THE ABSENCE OF TENSION;  
IT IS THE PRESENCE OF JUSTICE.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

FACING RACISM:  
*A VISION OF THE INTERCULTURAL  
COMMUNITY  
CHURCHWIDE ANTIRACISM POLICY*

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace  
with everyone  
Romans 12:18

Before any talk of *reconciliation*, according to theologian and minister Leonard Lovett, we need to begin with ***conciliation***, the process to “overcome the distrust or hostility.”

How do we go about doing this?

listening with the heart

being willing to set our own views aside and seek God’s

# Affirmations of Humanity



We are all created equal.

We are all made in the image of God.

God loves justice and hates injustice.

We are connected as the Body of Christ, when one part is hurting, we all hurt.



How can white churches repent for their complicity, repair the damage and reconcile with the larger world? Start simple, form study groups “so congregations can learn what’s going on across the world and within the congregation.”

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The Rev. Dr. Ben Boswell, senior minister of [Myers Park Baptist Church](#) in Charlotte, said he’s skeptical it’ll happen anytime soon.

**“I don’t think white people in America know what to repent for, or how to talk about race without being racist,”**

Kass Ottley, founder and CEO of [Seeking Justice Charlotte](#), suggested white people

**“need to take a really honest look and hear what black people are saying. And take the emotion out of it,”**

because “people feel blamed and its counterproductive. No one is pointing a finger at you, so don’t take it personally. That hinders people from speaking openly.”



# We are a Matthew 25 Church

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Matthew 25:31–46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities.

## **Building Congregational Vitality**

a community's vitality is primarily its spiritual strength and its capacity for purposeful mission

## **Eradicating systemic poverty**

There are structures in our society that all but guarantee that people living in poverty will stay that way. Systemic poverty refers to the economic exploitation of people who are poor through laws, policies, practices and systems that perpetuate their impoverished status.



# Dismantling structural racism

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## **Structural racism can show up in multiple ways, including:**

Housing discrimination that limits where people of color can live and steers them to rental markets rather than home ownership.

Laws and policies that deny people of color access to quality education, employment and adequate health care.

Food apartheid — areas deliberately devoid of quality, affordable fresh food.

Mass incarceration and criminal justice systems that disproportionately target people of color with lengthier sentences, “stop-and-frisk” laws, the over-policing of communities of color, the school-to-prison pipeline, etc.

Environmental racism — the dumping of hazardous waste, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of access to clean water that results in a range of serious health problems in communities of color.



# Creation

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In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters..

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."





# The Scandal of the Gospel: Jesus Loves Outsiders

From his birth in a stable, to a criminal's execution, Jesus is all about shaking up our preconceived notions. The strong are weak, and the weak are strong. Outsiders are insiders, and insiders are outsiders.





# What does the Lord require of you? To do Justice, Love Mercy and Walk Humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

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*This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, <sup>24</sup>but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.*

Jeremiah 9:23-24

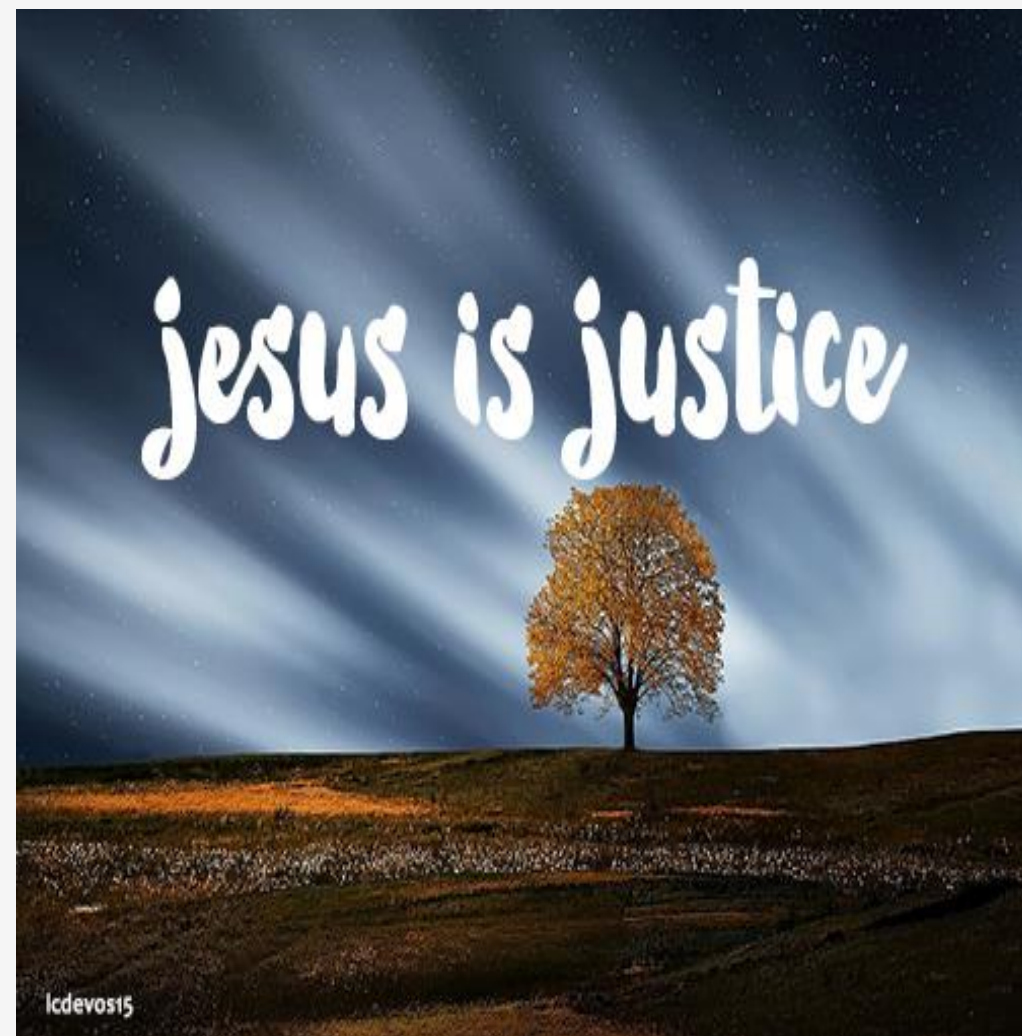
When, in the past has the Church worked for justice?

## **Belhar Confession.**

Apartheid is the human context for the Confession of Belhar, yet it is never mentioned in the confession. Rather, Belhar lifts up the heart of the Gospel as a bringer of hope for the human condition. Belhar presents a Christian view of racism, separation, and suffering by those who had experienced the realities of these evils. It demonstrates that confessional affirmations can arise from social ethics. Belhar has three central points: Unity, Reconciliation, and Justice.

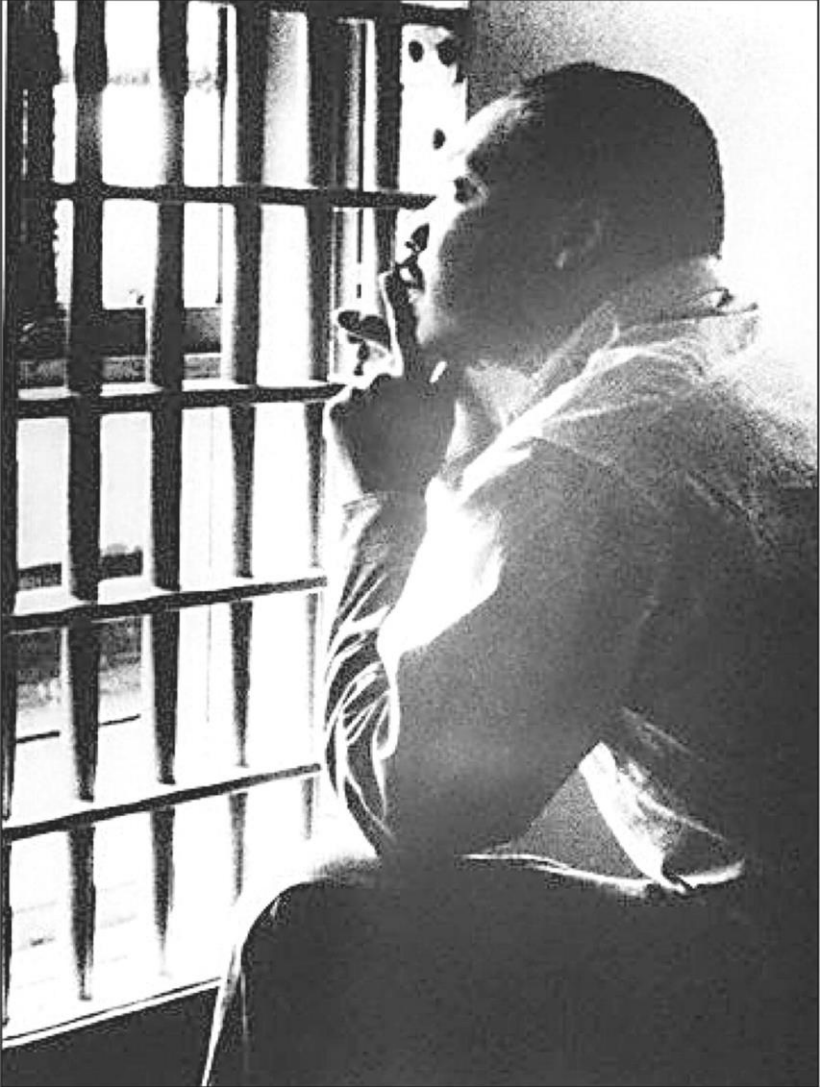
## **Declaration of Barmen**

The Barmen Declaration of 1934 was a call to resistance against the theological claims of the Nazi state.



# Letter from a Birmingham Jail

# Martin Luther King



Homework... read the Letter From a Birmingham Jail

The Letter from Birmingham Jail, also known as the Letter from Birmingham City Jail and The Negro Is Your Brother, is an open letter written on April 16, 1963, by Martin Luther King Jr. It says that people have a moral responsibility to break unjust laws and to take direct action rather than waiting potentially forever for justice to come through the courts.

What are the key points?

Is the letter relevant today? How or How not?