

Personal Resolution on Civil Rights Remembrance

Whereas, last year and this year mark significant anniversaries in the Civil Rights movement: 2014 was the sixtieth anniversary of the United States Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education* and the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil Rights Act and Freedom Summer, and 2015 was the fiftieth anniversary of the Voting Rights Act and the Selma-to-Montgomery March; and

Whereas, many of our conservative Presbyterian churches at the time not only failed to support the Civil Rights movement, but actively worked against racial reconciliation in both church and society; and

Whereas, the 30th General Assembly adopted a resolution on racial reconciliation that confessed its covenantal, generational, heinous sins connected with unbiblical forms of servitude, but failed to deal with the covenantal, generational, heinous sins committed during the much more recent Civil Rights era (cf. Daniel 9:4-11); and

Whereas, the 32nd General Assembly adopted a pastoral letter on “the Gospel and Race” that was produced under the oversight of our Mission to North America committee, but that also failed to acknowledge the lack of solidarity with African Americans which many of our churches displayed during the Civil Rights era; and

Whereas, our denomination’s continued unwillingness to speak truthfully about our failure to seek justice and to love mercy during the Civil Rights era significantly hinders present-day efforts for reconciliation with our African American brothers and sisters; and

Whereas, God has once more given our denomination a gracious providential opportunity to show the beauty, grace and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ by showing Christ-like love and compassion towards the greater African American community;

Be it therefore resolved, that the 43rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America does recognize and confess our church’s covenantal and generational involvement in and complicity with racial injustice inside and outside of our churches during the Civil Rights period; and

Be it further resolved, that this General Assembly recommit ourselves to the task of truth and reconciliation with our African American brothers and sisters for the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel; and

Be it finally resolved, that the General Assembly urges the congregations of the Presbyterian Church in America to confess their own particular sins and failures as may be appropriate and to seek to further truth and reconciliation for the Gospel’s sake within their own local communities.

TE Sean M. Lucas

TE J. Ligon Duncan III