

Plymouth Congregational Church

Racial Justice Initiative

Definitions:

Racism:

Personal Racism = dislike or hate of people because of their ethnicity, skin color, or other distinguishing human characteristic. Biases keep racism alive!

Institutional/Structural/Systemic Racism = encompasses our economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources and power between white people and people of color.

Racism is a structure not an event.

White Racial Frame:

The frame whites have used for centuries to justify the oppression of non-whites. Seen comprehensively, all the mental images, prejudiced attitudes, stereotypes, sincere fictions, emotions, racist explanations, and rationalizations that link to systemic racism make up a white racial frame.

The White Racial Frame is embedded deeply in the dominant U.S. culture and all institutions; it sees whites as superior and people of color as inferior.

White Fragility:

Is the State in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. Racial stress results from an interruption to what is racially familiar. White fragility makes it very difficult to discuss racism and perpetuates White Supremacy.

White fragility finds its support in and is a function of white privilege, fragility and privilege result in responses that function to restore what is lost when whites are challenged about racism.

White Supremacy:

White Supremacy is a sociopolitical economic system of domination based on racial categories that benefits those defined and perceived as white.

White privilege is a result of White Supremacy enjoyed by many, but not all, whites.