The vision of the PacNWC is to be a mosaic of churches working interdependently to transform lives and communities. Historically, we as Covenanters have affectionately and purposefully referred to ourselves as Mission Friends. We experience a familial connection as a family of faith with a common history.

As the mission has gone deeper and further into our changing demographics over the decades, we find ourselves today at a place and time here in the Pacific Northwest where our diversity has grown. Our sense of shared mission, and family, has developed. From our Swedish roots to our reality today that 27% of our churches are multi-ethnic or ones that speak Chinese, Korean, Nepali or Spanish. As our mission expands, it is necessary to understand the history and power of what Michael Emerson and Christian Smith define in Divided by Faith as a racialized society. This is a society whereby race matters profoundly for differences in life experiences, life opportunities and social relationships.

As we center our mission on scripture, we are life-long students of the timeless truths of God’s word. We must also be lifelong students of the context that God sovereignly places us in and calls us to live out his mission. Part of our mission context today is what it means to live and minister in a racialized society.

We celebrate the beautiful ways God has grown us and the powerful ways God has already used us. This document is to corporately recognize as a conference that racism has established a stronghold in our nation and caused racial division, displacement, and destruction. This land's legacy of racial violence and terror has profoundly impacted the people who once occupied the land where our conference resides. As racism unfolded within our region, Covenant churches and the Church at large remained silent as our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) neighbors were abused and dehumanized, which led to unjust treatment and unjust systems being perpetuated. We confess our complicity and commit to doing better in the spirit of Mission Friendship and being family,

The following is a brief recounting of the history of racial injustices in the Pacific Northwest.

- We acknowledge that the Duwamish are the original inhabitants of the land the Pacific Northwest Conference office sits on. Our churches are also on the land of many other nations and tribes. We encourage our churches to know their origin. We built our conference and our churches on Indigenous land. White settlers and the government
forced them off their land, broke treaties, separated children from their parents and added to the greatest genocide ever in the history of North America.

- We acknowledge that when the state of Oregon joined the Union in 1859, its constitution prohibited Black people from living within its borders. White voters successfully advocated for racist legislation, and racism became law.

- On November 3, 1885, in Tacoma, Washington, all Chinese descendants were rounded up and forced to leave the city. The next day Chinese businesses, shops, and lodgings that formed the Chinese settlement along the city's waterfront were looted and burned down. Tacoma became a national model for driving Chinese residents out of cities, becoming known as "The Tacoma Method." This occurred during a time when our country, for the first and only time, out-lawed the immigration of a specific group of people through The Chinese Exclusion Act 1882.

- We acknowledge that our region has a long history of restrictive housing covenants that prevented Asians, Black, Indigenous, and Latino Americans from purchasing property in the Pacific Northwest contributing to significant disparities in generational wealth and well-being.

- We acknowledge that while the Southeast is a haven for the KKK, White supremacist and nationalist groups, these ideologies and organizations representing them have been active in the Pacific Northwest and detrimental to healthy diversity in this geographic area.

We know that racism is a lie that originates from the Father of Lies. It is a distortion of the truth of the imago Dei (the image of God) declared in Genesis 1:27: "God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." As we pursue reconciliation and biblical justice, the imago Dei roots us in the biblical truth that all human beings are created equally in God's image and, as a result, all have intrinsic value and infinite worth.

Racism is a sin that divides what God created to be united, and the disunity it makes prohibits us from enjoying the communion God created for us to enjoy together. We are to resist the powers, principalities, and spiritual wickedness, according to scriptures. Ephesians 6:12 reads, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." We struggle against spiritual wickedness and the ideologies of racial supremacy and racial/ethnic purity. As we strive towards God's will “to be done on earth as it is in heaven”, we pray Psalm 139:23-24 without ceasing: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Therefore, We – the PacNWC - asks for forgiveness for a history of racism that has been present since our inception in 1890. We lament that our silence and inaction has contributed to racial
hatred and division within our region. We repent in the name of Jesus Christ and ask for God's wisdom to lead us on the path of reconciliation and transformation.

We - the PacNWC - commit to loving mercy, doing justice, and walking humbly with God. We seek to serve as ambassadors of reconciliation and co-laborers with Christ’s restorative interpersonal and societal work. We believe the Holy Spirit will continue to transform us and renew our minds so that we can fully and freely participate in the mission of God and understand what his will is for us (Romans 12:2). In this, we will become an interconnected Body that demonstrates to the world that a different way is possible, that we serve a God who is able and actively reconciling even the deepest divides.

Finally, as the hands and feet of Christ, we commit to demonstrating love and proclaiming God's word in a world that desperately needs it. We commit to this work as local churches and as a family of churches. We will also seek to be in relationship with other churches and leaders in our communities toward the vital and long work of racial righteousness. Guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we will flourish, experience shalom, and become the beloved community.