

# CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

WHEREAS, the Northern Plains historically welcomed a broad and diverse base of ethnic, cultural and religious heritages for its settlement and already was home to a number of distinctive native indigenous cultures;

WHEREAS, the Northern Plains has sought to live out the pioneer spirit in which people are judged not by their background, but by the quality of their character and their contributions to their community and the broader society;

WHEREAS, Northern Plains communities should be places where each person's heritage, culture and religion can be upheld with dignity and respected, and where people of all backgrounds can raise their families and build their dreams without fear or intimidation;

WHEREAS, human rights should compose the essence of our state's and nation's ideals concerning democracy, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights;

WHEREAS, the future prosperity of the Northern Plains is dependent upon developing opportunities that fully utilize the broad base of talents, skills, aspirations and hopes of all its people;

WHEREAS, the future of the Northern Plains will also be shaped by its continued capacity to welcome people of all ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;

WHEREAS, racism, prejudice and stereotyping are deeply embedded in the Northern Plains' economic and social fabric, and continue to impede minorities and the broader society from reaching the full potential of human endeavor and possibilities;

WHEREAS, periodic acts of violence, vandalism, intimidation, discrimination, and name-calling are outgrowths and evidence of such racism, prejudice and stereotyping;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northern Plains Conference of the United Church of Christ calls upon public and private authorities at the local, state and federal levels to develop programs to confront and overcome both institutionalized and individual racism, prejudice and stereotyping;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northern Plains Conference of the United Church of Christ calls upon local, state and federal authorities to prevent and to prosecute bias-motivated crimes and acts against individuals and groups;

AND NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Northern Plains Conference of the United Church of Christ rejects and condemns bigotry, racism and religious or cultural intolerance, and calls for replacing such negativity with dignity and respect for all human beings, their ethnicities, cultures and religions.

Respectfully submitted:

Karl Limvere, Pastor, Zion United Church of Christ, Medina, ND