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**United Church of Christ Witnessing
“A White Supremacist Free Zone”**

Leviticus 19.4 says, “Do not turn to idols or make cast images for yourselves: I am the Lord your God.”

We exist in a world where there is idol worship. An idol is an object made into something of extreme devotion; a person or thing that is declared sacred or holy; a representation of an object or person as something with perceived powers; a false god; something that great reverence is placed upon and is the object of worship. Many things that surround us are idols.

For our purposes here we are focused upon the idol called white supremacy. Being white does not possess any inherent superiority other than the superiority that is bestowed upon the concept by force, laws, myth, institutions and ethos. Being white has no power other than the powers maintained through brute force, the establishment of laws and traditions that maintain institutions, and the accepted narratives used to advance and affirm so-called superiority.

As people of faith, rooted in the gospel of justice, we are admonished to tear down the idols that keep us from the simple but true worship of God. Jesus teaches his followers, in the wisdom words of old, to “love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind and to love your neighbor as yourself.” We are taught to strip away the things that hinder us in relating to one another with respect, regard and sacred love. We are being taught to rid ourselves of the idols created by human beings for the purposes of control and power. Racism and white supremacy are some of those idols constructed for the purposes of power and greed.

In this historic moment we are faced with the idols of white idolatry, racism, hatred, and greed. Hatred has been nurtured and fostered in these last few years to such a degree that if we thought we were rendering it to a relic of

the past we were sorrowfully mistaken. White idolatry has been elevated to levels of such a grave danger, and its worshippers have been aggressively engaged in a crusade to raise up the idols that it is apparent that something must be done differently to challenge white idolatry. We are proposing a witness that will help to challenge the resurgence and comfort of the idolizing of whiteness.

“Black Lives Matter” has become a mantra attempting to stir awake the white community and invite non-Black allies to stand in solidarity with the struggles of Blackness, but in spite of the declaration that “Black Lives Matter,” the atrocities of white Idolatry, racial profiling, and extra-judicial killings continue. Black Lives Matter banners have been ripped down and vandalized at white houses of worship, and white idolatrous groups have attacked Black houses of worship for bearing the banners and these acts makes it apparent that to declare “Black Lives Matter” is not enough! While we genuinely appreciate expressions of solidarity and witness, whites in all their liberal and progressive ideology and theology have not effectively challenged the infrastructure or comfort of white idolatry. It is important that if white idolatry is to be challenged, given that it is a white problem, whites must put some skin in the game and take on a different kind of commitment and posture. Though it is important for non-Black allies to express solidarity, it is more important that white communities and houses of worship challenge the white community, and white enclaves with expressions that will bring discomfort, cause congregations and people to truly grapple with whiteness and white idolatry by declaring in banners and other public expressions in communities where whites live and worship that this is “A White Supremacist Free Zone.”

When you think about where United Church of Christ congregations exist, it is generally in white neighborhoods – suburban, urban and rural – and those white enclaves where the bulk of UCC congregations exist have a tokenistic color mix at best. Therefore, for the white community and white congregations to begin the deconstruction of white idolatry it must be forced into the discussion, making well-meaning white institutions and people to grapple with their own communities and the aid and comfort offered to white idolatry. To raise the issue, and to make the issue not about Blacks but about whites is how white idolatry/supremacy is challenged and stands any chance of being deconstructed.

This call for houses of worship, white United Church of Christ congregations, UCC congregations and institutions in general to declare

their communities and settings as “A White Supremacist Free Zone” is to take away the quiet existence of racism and white idolatry and forces the issue into the communities in which UCC houses of worship exist. “A White Supremacist Free Zone,” publicly expressed forces the discussion and takes away the comfortable existence of white idolatry.