

South Carolina Christian Action Council

PRESS RELEASE

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STATE ECUMENICAL AGENCY DENOUNCES RACIST AND HATE FUELED TERRORISM IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

South Carolina Christian Action Council rejects racism and calls for the repeal of the Heritage Act enacted by the SC Legislature in 2000.

(Columbia, SC. August 17, 2017) — For more than six decades, the South Carolina Christian Action Council has been a voice of reasoned and spiritual conscience for faith based advocacy on matters of equity, justice and human rights for all citizens and faith groups of in South Carolina. Using the Holy Scriptures of our member denominations as a guide, we are reminded of the injunction recorded in Micah, “to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.” This scripture reminds us to celebrate, what former SCCAC board member and African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) Bishop Fredrick Calhoun James calls, “the diversity of our unity and the unity of our diversity.”

It is in that spirit that we address the acts of racial and hate filled terrorism that occurred in Charlottesville, Virginia, when on August 12, 2017, hate groups wearing helmets and body armor carrying baseball bats, brass knuckles, and fire arms descended on the city of Charlottesville, sparking a series of violent confrontations that culminated in the death of three persons and dozens more injured.

These events mark the most recent chapter in our nation’s troubling history when it comes to matters of race, class, and culture, and fly in the face of our scriptural admonition to “reason together.” Actions conducted by hate groups in Charlottesville are plainly meant to inflame divisive racial fears and generate racial and cultural animosities. Their proclaimed desire to generate a “race war” is reprehensible. It is especially troubling that their actions have been bolstered by many officials elected to ensure the vision of America as “one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.”

In response to these developments, the South Carolina Christian Action Council strongly:

1. Rejects racism and reject all forms domestic of terrorism including the actions of white supremacist and other violent groups;

2. Encourages all peoples to engage in constructive cross cultural conversations about race and conduct concrete action to lead to racial justice and healing in all arenas of public and private life;
3. Calls upon those - who understandably revere their ancestors who fought for the Confederacy - to consider how their heritage can best be respected and preserved, and face the uncomfortable reality that their revered symbols of heritage have been demeaned and irrevocably adopted by those who deal not in heritage, but in racial hatred.
4. Calls upon the South Carolina General Assembly to repeal the Heritage Act enacted in 2000 in order that local municipalities could then decide for themselves how our shared heritage can be embraced in ways that bring dignity to all citizens.

The tragic events that occurred in Charlottesville, Virginia are no less reprehensible than the racially inspired slaughter of nine souls after Bible Study at “Mother” Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. We call upon all people of faith and of good will to reject racism and domestic terrorism in all insidious and diabolical forms; to engage in constructive conversations and positive actions that lead to racial justice and healing; to challenge those in elected office aggressively to work to find common ground instead of fostering division.

The South Carolina Christian Action Council continues its long and faithful work for unity and justice. For more information and to support the Council: www.sccouncil.net

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