

GC2 SUMMIT ON MASS INCARCERATION

A CALL TO FAITH IN ACTION

PREAMBLE



WE AFFIRM A COMMITMENT TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE GOSPEL OF THAT KINGDOM.

LAMENTS AND AFFIRMATIONS

WE LAMENT THAT THE INVISIBILITY OF INCARCERATED AND FORMERLY INCARCERATED PEOPLE HAS CAUSED US TO NEGLECT THE INCARCERATED AND THEIR FAMILIES.

WE AFFIRM THAT WE ARE CALLED TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO ARE IN PRISON AND JESUS IDENTIFIED HIMSELF WITH THE PRISONER IN THE GOSPELS (HEBREWS 13:4; MATTHEW 25:34-45).

WE LAMENT THE SOCIETAL MARGINALIZATION OF FORMERLY INCARCERATED PEOPLE AND WAYS IN WHICH THE CHURCH HAS BEEN COMPLICIT IN THAT MARGINALIZATION.

WE AFFIRM THAT THAT KINGDOM GOSPEL INCLUDES LOVING BOTH GOD AND NEIGHBOR WHICH INCLUDES THE INCARCERATED, FORMERLY INCARCERATED, AND THEIR FAMILIES. (LUKE 10:25-37).

WE LAMENT SYSTEMIC FAILURES IN OUR JUSTICE SYSTEM THAT DISCRIMINATES AGAINST THE POOR AND PEOPLE OF COLOR.

WE AFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE THROUGH EXPOSING AND OPPOSING ALL THAT OPPRESSES AND EXPLOITS THE POOR AND PEOPLE OF COLOR (PSALM 31:9; ISAIAH 1:17; AMOS 5:14).

WE LAMENT A LEGAL SYSTEM THAT INCLUDES RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE THAT LACKS THE REHABILITATION AND RESTORATION NECESSARY TO AFFIRM THE IMAGE OF GOD IN INCARCERATED AND FORMERLY INCARCERATED YOUTH AND ADULTS.

WE AFFIRM THAT GOD IS MERCIFUL, JUST, AND WHO SEEKS TO RESTORE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AND OTHERS (JAMES 2:13; GALATIANS 6:7; REVELATION 22:12; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:18; GALATIANS 6:1).

WE LAMENT A SOCIETY THAT PERPETUATES CONDITIONS THAT PREPARE PEOPLE TO BECOME INCARCERATED.

WE AFFIRM A MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH THAT DOES NOT REGARD CORRECTIONAL MINISTRY (COMPASSIONATE CARE AND JUSTICE) AS OPTIONAL OR EXCEPTIONAL (LUKE 4:18-19; PSALM 33:5).

WE LAMENT THAT OUR FAITH HAS, AT TIMES, EXPRESSED A DICHOTOMY BETWEEN GOSPEL AND JUSTICE.

WE AFFIRM AN OPENNESS TO GOD AND HIS WORD THAT CAN ALWAYS LEAD US TO GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND FAITHFULNESS IN OUR PRACTICE OF KINGDOM MINISTRY. (2 CORINTHIANS 5:16-20; MICAH 6:8).