

# Be Thou my VISION 2020

*“A theology of glory  
calls evil good and good evil.  
A theology of the cross  
calls the thing what it actually is.”*

*~Martin Luther*

Dear people of the Northern Great Lakes Synod,

In 1518, Martin Luther wrote *The Heidelberg Disputation* where among other things he criticized the notion that a lack of suffering indicates the presence and blessing of God. Rather, said Luther, it is in suffering that God’s presence is not only most clearly seen, but that is where God is most fully present.

In this year of 2020, where so much is unclear, we cannot help but see the suffering of people of color in our country. Countless protests and demonstrations following the death of George Floyd, mostly peaceful, speak to the concern and even rage as injustice has not been challenged.

As Lutherans, we call a thing what it is. Racial bias and racism, white privilege and the ideology of white supremacy continue to undermine and harm people and our society in a multitude of ways. The truth is, as in any system, we are all complicit, either knowingly or unknowingly. One need not have malice in one’s heart or even strategic intention in order to benefit from a system that favors one person over another, one family over another, one neighborhood over another, one school over another, one race over another.

We have inherited a world with racial baggage and inequity. While no one alive today laid the foundation, we all have a responsibility to see what is now and do something about what we see.

To that end, I invite you to take another step in your own understanding of the systems at work and how people of color have a different experience of society. On the back of this page is a short list of easy resources. On our website, [nclsynod.org/anti-racism-resources](https://nclsynod.org/anti-racism-resources), is a much more comprehensive list, complete with study and discussion guides, movies, books, videos, and articles. Now is the time to understand more deeply the sin of racism, and as followers of Christ, do what we can to understand it and combat it, for the sake of ourselves and our neighbors.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Katherine Finegan

