

June 22, 2020

Letter of Solidarity and Accountability from White Deans & Presidents of ATS Member Schools and Affiliates in Response to [Black Presidents and Deans](#)

Dear Colleagues in the Association of Theological Schools,

We white deans and presidents join the Association of Theological Schools community in grief and outrage over the ongoing racism and anti-black violence in our country. We proclaim unequivocally: Black Lives Matter and No More Stolen Black Lives!

The recent murders of Black women and men occur within a history of racial violence by white people including the genocide of native peoples, the monstrosities of the slave trade, Jim Crow laws, lynching and white terrorism, mass incarceration, and an overarching mentality of colonization. The power and principality of whiteness and its systemic evils rest upon destructive and defective theologies that are antithetical to our core faith commitments.

We confess our complicity in perpetuating white supremacy. This confession must be backed by actions. The personal and collective work of antiracism is intellectual, spiritual, and embodied. As presidents and deans of theological schools, we must act to end racial violence and injustices in our nation, cities, institutions, and ourselves.

We write to be held publicly accountable and to hold each other accountable for anti-racist work in our institutions. We recognize that we have been slow to organize and add our voices to those of African American, Latino/a, and Asian descent presidents and deans. Our failure to speak is a measure of our complicity in white supremacy. We commit to: 1) following the lead of our colleagues of color in the Association of Theological Schools, pursuing in solidarity the work of racial justice; 2) decentering whiteness, unlearning white supremacy, and reimagining theological education; 3) shouldering the ongoing work of ridding our institutions of racism; and 4) confronting the damages of whiteness and dismantling its hold on our systems and structures as central to our collective work.

Sincerely,

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Peter L. Jones, Interim Dean, Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University Chicago

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Scott Woodward, President-Elect, Oblate School of Theology
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