

March 20, 2018

Steve Schewel, Mayor, City of Durham  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, North Carolina 27701

Wendy Jacobs, Chair, Durham County Commissioners  
Durham County Government  
200 East Main  
Durham, North Carolina 27701

Dear Mayor Schewel, Chairperson Jacobs, City and County Commissioners,

The Session of First Presbyterian Church and the Racial Equity Task Force of First Presbyterian Church would like to express our support of the newly established City-County Commission on Confederate Monuments and Memorials.

We believe that the work of this Commission is critical for several reasons. First, these monuments continue to cause pain and distress for those who are affected by our history of systemic and institutional racism. Second, actions by the Commission will allow for legal removal of statues, thereby eliminating the need for citizens to participate in acts of civil disobedience and preventing possible personal injury to citizens or police. Third, recommendations by the Commission will determine whether the law passed in 2015 will allow for legal removal through the Historical Commission or whether further legal action will be required to allow municipalities to exercise their rights to determine what is best for their communities.

In addition to removal of statues, we also agree with the importance of taking an inventory of all monuments, memorials, and murals, as well as exploring ways to recognize people, events, and locations that are missing from Durham's historical narrative.

We strongly support this effort to heal the wounds of many in our community and to raise up those whose voices have not been heard.

Sincerely,

Mindy Douglas, Pastor  
First Presbyterian Church

Kathy Krahenbuhl, Chair  
Racial Equity Task Force

Jane Williams, Chair  
Service and Mission Committee