



June 4, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

It has now been over a week since the death of George Floyd at the hands of a white police officer in Minneapolis.

We have seen this before. And, as leaders in a predominantly white denomination, our responses are all too familiar.

We write letters and make public statements. We hold vigils and pray for reform. We urge our clergy and people to become better educated concerning the realities of institutional racism and implicit bias. We reach out to black community leaders and express our sorrow and our solidarity.

Then, gradually, we get busy with other things, until the next murder, the next video, the next spasm of racial violence, when we repeat the cycle.

And nothing changes.

We are heartbroken and angered by this pattern, by our complicity in it, above all by the thought that we might let this moment pass us by without responding with vigor, zeal and persistence to its challenge.

We are determined, with God's help, not to let this happen again. And yet, we need the participation of our communities in Christ to join in the movement of transforming our society with its sinful way of oppression, into Jesus' loving, liberating and life-giving Way of Love. Our baptismal promises compel us to act.

As bishops of Province III of the Episcopal Church, we resolve:

**To seek, first,** the guidance and wisdom of people of color as we look for ways to dismantle racism in our dioceses.

**To formulate a plan**, each in our context, to build relationships with leaders in the black community offering our support, committing to partnership, and working together to address racial injustice in our localities.

**To offer ongoing support** to leaders in communities of color, local politicians and local law enforcement, in building a healthy culture in our police departments, ensuring safety for all our citizens and fostering trust between police and people in all our neighborhoods.

**To name the reality** of systemic racism in our own dioceses and local contexts, and to recognize and address the white privilege imbedded in our Episcopal Church culture.

**To be fervent in prayer** for the coming of the day when all of God's children are free.

In all of this, we pledge ourselves to the work of overcoming the sin of racism. We ask for the prayers of our fellow bishops, and of all the people of God, that this resolve may remain strong for as long as it takes to bear fruit. May God help us all.

Faithfully in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. Mark Bourlakas  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson  
Assistant Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Kevin S. Brown  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Delaware

The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff  
Bishop Suffragan and Ecclesiastical Authority  
Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Daniel G.P. Gutiérrez  
Bishop  
The Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

The Rt. Rev. Susan B. Haynes  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Robert W. Ilhoff

The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klus  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Chilton Knusde  
Assisting Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Washington

The Rt. Rev. Santosh K. Mar  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Dorsey W. M. M  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh

The Rt. Rev. Kevin Nichols  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem

The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe  
Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina

The Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor

Assisting Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

Bishop  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

FOR CHRIST. FOR THIS TIME. FOR ALL TIME.

