

From the Office of Public Witness, PC(USA), Friday, May 29, 2020



Action Alert

From the Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness

Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries

Raising A Prophetic Voice through the Social Justice Policy of Presbyterians since 194

The Presbyterian Church U.S.A, Office of Public Witness, is outraged by the senseless murder of [George Floyd](#) by a Minneapolis police officer. Derek Chauvin, the arresting officer, forced Floyd to the ground and placed his knee on his neck until he was dead. For several minutes, the officer refused to relent as people in the crowd were pleading with him to stop, and Floyd echoed Eric Garner saying, "I can't breathe."

"To watch this man die at the hands of a police officer whose sole authority resides in the motto, "to protect and to serve," demands action. It makes understandable the outrage demonstrated in the fires started as the only voice people in power and authority seem to understand. Now they want to listen. Now they want peace" says Rev. Jimmie R. Hawkins, Director of the Office of Public Witness

This incident adds to the many occurrences of brutality against the Black community. On February 23rd, 2020, [Ahmaud Arbery](#), an African American man, was fatally shot by two white men in Georgia. On March 13th, 2020, [Breonna Taylor](#), an African American woman, was fatally shot by police in her Louisville, Kentucky apartment. George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and many others are all victims of the racism, white supremacy, and police brutality that are embedded in the fabric of this country.

This, in the midst of this of a pandemic where Black people, [only 13 percent](#) of the population, account for [23 percent](#) of COVID-19 deaths, points to a larger systemic disregard for Black bodies. The racism, white supremacy, and anti-Blackness so prevalent within our country must end!

Racism is a [sin](#) against humanity. Our sacred text tells us that **ALL** humans are made in [God's image and likeness](#). As people of faith, we must honor the inherent value and dignity of all people and seek justice when that value and dignity is attacked. We are calling on Presbyterians to take action and ["stand against racism in all its myriad forms."](#) We urge you to:

1. Petition the President of the United States to proclaim a national day of "Mourning Against Racial Injustice" on June 19th, the traditional day of celebration for African Americans over the end of slavery, where flags will be flown at half-mast.
2. Contact your member of Congress demanding legislation that defines racialized police violence as a hate crime.