



CHICAGO BLACK METHODISTS FOR CHURCH RENEWAL, INC., of NORTHERN IL
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BENDING TOWARD JUSTICE!

A Statement of Chicago Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc., of Northern IL (B.M.C.R.)

George Floyd died pleading for his life. He died unable to breathe. He died with the knee of a white policeman on his neck cutting off his air supply. The horrific part of this is that George Floyd was hand-cuffed, hands behind his back, completely subdued, face down on the ground and unable to resist. This is why people all over the world are marching in protest to this awful visible act of murder. We all saw it. We all witnessed the death of yet another black man at the hands of a white police officer.

Racial injustice continues to exist throughout the United States. We are hurting, we are angry and enough is enough. It's one thing to have the good will of Jesus and share His love with all people, but we are tired of being sick and tired. So, we cry out together: *How long, O Lord? Will You forget me [us] forever? How long will You hide Your face from me [us]? How long must I [we] bear pain in my [our] soul[s] and have sorrow in my [our] heart[s] all day long? How long shall my [our] enemy be exalted over me [us]? Consider and answer me [us], O Lord my [our] God! Psalm 13: 1-3.*

Many of our members have asked "What is B.M.C.R.'s response to this terrible event? How will we address the continued discrimination and oppression of black and brown people?" We answer as follows:

1. Chicago B.M.C.R. advocates for and supports peaceful protests against the horrendous death and physical abuse of George Floyd and calls for "Justice NOW!"
2. We grieve the tragic, misguided and violent efforts that destroyed and looted our communities and businesses and fanned the flames of hatred, fear and distrust setting neighbor against neighbor.
3. We call upon Black United Methodist Pastors and congregations to join with B.M.C.R. in redirecting budgets and spending (economic power) to help rebuild and support black businesses and services they provide in our communities throughout Chicagoland.
4. B.M.C.R. has been invited to partner with Church and Society and the Northern Illinois Conference to provide mini-grants to black and brown business enterprises as they begin to rebuild.
5. We call upon all U.S. Congressional leaders to develop legislation that will create a humane system of policing that respects and protects the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness for all persons.
6. We call upon our elected officials to carry out their responsibilities on behalf of their constituencies in accordance with the oath they pledged to the Constitution of the United States of America.

7. We urge every individual to contribute toward uniting our people to continue to be the salt, light and presence of Jesus Christ, making the difference in their community and wherever they are.
8. B.M.C.R. is clergy and laity working together to “Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World!” “We can do all things through Christ Who strengthens us” when we join together as one.
9. We call upon clergy and laity to join with B.M.C.R. to help in its current outreach endeavors. We are being called upon as a resource with respect to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on seniors and the church. We are also doing our best to contribute to discussions to determine appropriate actions to take in response to the George Floyd/Black Lives Matter uprising. If you can share in any ZOOM meetings or conference calls, let us know as soon as possible. You may call 708-940-5315 or email us at chicagobmcr2@gmail.com. We need all the help we can get.
10. Rev. Tallulah Williams said, in ***Our TIME UNDER GOD IS NOW Reflections on Black Methodists for Church Renewal, 25th Anniversary publication:***

BMCR must seriously challenge and confront racism. BMCR is mandated by the gospel to fight for justice and liberation. BMCR must become hope for the Black community. BMCR must become hope for Black Methodists. BMCR must become hope for The United Methodist Church.

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ, let us be retooled and reset to march on till victory is won!

Submitted on behalf of Chicago Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc., of Northern IL

Rev. Dennis M. Oglesby, Jr. – President

June 9, 2020

Our Time Under God Is NOW!