



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

May 29, 2020

Dear Saints,

The Church Of God In Christ condemns the vicious murder of George Floyd and the deadly violence perpetrated against people of color by law enforcement in America. Begging for his life, "please, I can't breathe," were the final words spoken by George Floyd, an unarmed, handcuffed, and subdued Black man killed Monday by police in Minneapolis. We are incredulous that a citizen being arrested on an alleged non-violent charge would be the subject of the type of brutality caught on video and witnessed by the world.

We offer our sincerest condolences to Mr. Floyd's family and the entire Minneapolis community. We pray that God will grant strength, comfort, and grace during this difficult season.

We ask how can Christians remain silent? Why are they not shouting to the rooftop? "This is wrong! This is outrageous! This must stop!"

The silence of people who should and could speak out against injustice is more painful than anything said by racists and bigots.

While we do not condone rioting or looting in response to this incident, we are mindful of the words of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ".....riot is the language of the unheard."

Officer Derek Chauvin ground his knee into the back of Mr. Floyd's neck and held it there for approximately eight minutes while other officers stood watching. Mr. Floyd's appeals for help all went unheard. Likewise, the appeals of African Americans across America seeking redress for the extrajudicial murder of Black people have gone unheard. Therefore, as Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ I must speak on behalf of the Church.

We unequivocally affirm that George Floyd was a Child of God, precious and valuable, that his life mattered, and that Black lives matter.

We unequivocally condemn the evil plague of white supremacy, racism, and anti-black bigotry.



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We denounce the complicity of those who call on the name of Christ in systems that oppress and kill Black and other non-white people while privileging the white majority.

We challenge and implore the city of Minneapolis, every city and town in America, and the faith community across the nation to work earnestly against the scourge of racially motivated hatred and violence so that the clarion cry of the Prophet Amos may come into fruition: "let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." **(Amos 5:24)**

The Jesus that we preach demanded that we love our neighbor, welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, minister to the sick, and care for the least of these. That mandate requires that we both express sadness and anger over the senseless and brutal murder of George Floyd, who asked for mercy, but was subjected to pain and death. We call for justice in his name and in the names of countless others who have met an untimely and unjust end.

In the name of the Almighty we must do what the Lord requires, "to do justice, love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God." **(Micah 6:8)**

Amen.

Sincerely,

Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.
Seventh in Succession
Presiding Bishop & Chief Apostle
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.



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