



Seventh-day Adventist® Church

LAKE UNION HEADQUARTERS

The officers of the Lake Union are heartbroken over the recent tragic death of George Floyd, one of many unarmed African Americans who have died during an encounter with local law enforcement officers. This latest tragedy sparked a wave of protests across our nation, protests mostly made up of people expressing their pain and anger of seeing more people of color needlessly die at the hands of those whose role it is to serve and protect the people in their communities. Amadou Diallo, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile, Alton Sterling, Atatiana Jefferson, Ahmaud Arbery and now George Floyd are all names that are now sadly familiar to many African Americans, who have experienced additional trauma due to the increased exposure of black death.

As God's people, we are challenged to live the life expressed in Micah 6:8 – *“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.”* The question is how can we live this life of justice, mercy, and Christlike humility in the current context of pain and injustice? In this time of racial tension we would like to make the following suggestions to help us live out these principles:

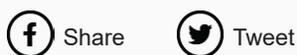
1. Mercy and humility are fruits of the Spirit that every Christian must live out, so when you hear a person of color express their pain, there can be no greater way to express these fruits than by saying to him or her these simple words. “I believe you.”
2. Doing justly is also a fruit of the Spirit so we invite everyone to do what you can within your sphere of influence to not tolerate racism or bigotry and to stand for biblical justice. Isaiah 1:17 and James 2:8-9 are verses that also clearly identify our duty to our fellow man: *“Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.”* *“If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”, you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.”*

is an unacceptable route for the Christian, be it the original act or those that follow in their wake. Scripture reminds us that the real struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. So we must stand firm with the full armor of God, which includes wearing the belt of truth, our feet shod with the gospel of peace, keeping as our main weapon the word of God and especially praying in the Spirit at all times (Ephesians 6:12-18).

We encourage all our members to stand for truth and justice by peacefully taking clear stands against racism, and being actively engaged in a healthy dialogue on race relations and cultural diversity. We call for all people to take time to be in earnest prayer for God's guidance and peace for our country through this difficult experience. Our prayers should include praying for all our minority communities, especially the African American community, so that in the midst of their angst and pain they can sense the healing touch of God. We should also pray for the men and women in uniform who are sworn to protect the communities they serve so that their work may testify to God's command to love our fellow man.

In this moment in time the following words by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are most appropriate to keep in mind, "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." It is our conviction that Jesus is making His appeal to Seventh-day Adventists to share the everlasting gospel by truly living out what the world needs to see – *"I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* (John 13:34-35)

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