**Clergy United in Prayer, Protest, Peace +Justice**

*“This battle is not for you to fight;*

*take your position, stand still, and*

*see the victory of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.”*

*Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you.*

*~2 Chronicles 20:17*

We take our position, as clergy from across Boston and Massachusetts, united in prayer, protest and justice. We know that in the Lord, the victory is already won on our behalf. In the Lord, every human is of infinite worth, made in God’s image. In the Lord, we know that those who mourn will turn to dancing. In the Lord, we know that today those who slip out of accountability in our flawed judicial system will be judged by Almighty God. In the Lord, our victory is already won.

But this day, and until then, we unite in prayer, protest and a call for justice because God’s beloved cannot breathe. We unite in a common hope to unify our community and show that we are as clergy from various denominations and walks of faith, come together. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are consistently afforded less safety, less health, and less opportunity. Black people are being killed on American streets. Black people are being killed in their own homes. Black people are terrorized by the uncertainty of walking to the store, to school, and even into houses of worship. Nowhere is safe from the violence of white supremacy.

**We Pray:** for the families of the dead, especially those killed in recent weeks including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Amaud Abrey. We pray for the living, for every parent and child, every weary elder and fearful young person. We pray for the broken-hearted and those losing hope. We pray that God will turn the hearts on individuals to use their power in unjust systems.

**We Protest:** the corrosive, familiar violence of Boston, Massachusetts. We love our city on a hill and give God thanks that we have better community and police relationships than many cities, but we are not without our failings and flaws that cause enormous pain and violence. We remember the officer-involved shooting deaths of Jaymil Ellerbe, Kasim Kahrim, Terrence Coleman, and Isaac Rasheed Smith. We remember the resistance to police body cameras and an independent civilian review committee. We protest the racial profiling of residents trying to enter a store or simply their own homes. And we protest the obscene wealth inequity in this city that continues to trade on our reputation as the Hub of the Universe.

We cannot be a city on a hill when so many are trampled underfoot.

**We call for Justice:** for the swift charging and prosecution of those who are perpetuating violence on Black bodies and killing. We call for justice in our nation and in our neighborhoods, in the equitable distribution of resources that prioritizes those who have historically been denied access. We protest in a pandemic that exposes the massive injustice of unequal access to basic physical and mental health care communities of color have had to endure.

For any who claim to follow God, the pursuit of justice is our only option.

There will be no peace without the long overdue justice God’s people so dearly deserve.

#ClergyUnited Sunday May 31, 2020, Boston, Massachusetts

*Clergy United in Prayer, Protest, Peace and Justice: Ministers In Action, Baptist Ministers Conference of Boston, Black Ministerial Alliance, and Massachusetts Council of Churches For media inquiry, please contact Rev. Miniard Culpepper at 617-835-2608*