



Statement on Police Violence against African Americans

Dear Westchester Jewish Community,

The murders of George Floyd this past week, Breonna Taylor in March, Ahmaud Arbery in February, and the other 1249 African American victims of police violence since 2015 reminds us that, until we recognize the image of God implanted within every human being and how each person is deserving of dignity and respect, our world will remain broken.

We extend our hands as allies in support of black men, women, and children and all who suffer from generations of racism, discrimination, and violence. We stand with you. We will not look away. We will listen to your stories with empathy and will amplify them until all Americans can live with dignity, equality, and safety. We commit to looking within to find our own flaws, not only striving to remove those flaws within ourselves but to remove them from within our society. We will be antiracists who work for policies, relationships, coalitions, and ideas that counter racism wherever it rears its ancient, ugly head.

We will lean into our Jewish values to join with all people of conscience to cry out in the face of racial injustice. We mourn with those of other faiths who yearn for peace and understanding. We pledge to partner with local civic and governmental groups to make real change. We beseech those moved to protest to do so nonviolently, in ways that lift up our highest shared ideals. And, we respect and appreciate the vast majority of law enforcement officials who work each day to make our nation safe for all who live within its borders.

The ancient rabbis asked, "Why did God create only one person, Adam?" They answered, "All people are descended from a single human being, Adam, so that no one can say, 'My ancestor is worthier than yours.'"

May all in our society learn to live the truth of this teaching quickly and in our days.

L'Shalom u'Vracha,
With Peace and Blessings,
The Executive Committee of the Westchester Board of Rabbis

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