

As most of us are aware, there is much turmoil in parts of our country, including our city, regarding the unfortunate events that have transpired with the arrest and death of George Floyd. We feel it is our duty to inform you what the Church of the Nazarene stands for and how we as Christians should respond in the aftermath.

Our Nazarene Manual states: (915) "The Church of the Nazarene reiterates its historic position of Christian compassion for people of all races. We believe that God is the Creator of all people, and that of one blood are all people created.

...We urge our churches everywhere to continue and strengthen programs of education to promote racial understanding and harmony. We also feel that the scriptural admonition of Hebrews 12:14 *Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.* should guide the actions of our people. We urge that each member of the Church of the Nazarene humbly examine his or her personal attitudes and actions toward others, as a first step in achieving the Christian goal of full participation by all in the life of the church and the entire community.

We reemphasize our belief that holiness of heart and life is the basis for right living. We believe that Christian charity between racial groups or gender will come when the hearts of people have been changed by complete submission to Jesus Christ, and that the essence of true Christianity consists in loving God with one's heart, soul, mind, and strength, and one's neighbor as oneself.

Therefore, we renounce any form of racial and ethnic indifference, exclusion, subjugation, or oppression as a grave sin against God and our fellow human beings. We lament the legacy of every form of racism throughout the world, and we seek to confront that legacy through repentance, reconciliation, and biblical justice. We seek to repent of every behavior in which we have been overtly or covertly complicit with the sin of racism, both past and present; and in confession and lament we seek forgiveness and reconciliation.

Further, we acknowledge that there is no reconciliation apart from human struggle to stand against and to overcome all personal, institutional and structural prejudice responsible for racial and ethnic humiliation and oppression. We call upon Nazarenes everywhere to identify and seek to remove acts and structures of prejudice, to facilitate occasions for seeking forgiveness and reconciliation, and to take action toward empowering those who have been marginalized.

(920) And, in keeping with these affirmations,

We resolve that members and congregations of the International Church of the Nazarene will:

4. Listen actively for and amplify the cries of the oppressed;
5. Denounce injustices and work humbly against the causes of injustice;
6. Act in solidarity with our sister and brother against whatever binds in order to move together toward freedom; and
7. Come alongside those who are vulnerable through godly practices that bring redemption, restoration, healing, and freedom."

Let us pray for all the families in mourning; pray for our law enforcement. Let us pray for healing in our communities and peaceful demonstrations. And let us seek opportunities to reach out to people groups who are affected, educate ourselves, listen to the experiences of others and stand in solidarity with those marginalized and oppressed.

