

# RocACTS

## Rochester Alliance of Communities Transforming Society, Inc.

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church  
Baber AME Church  
Baha'i Assembly of Rochester  
The Cathedral Community  
Church of the Ascension  
Church of the Assumption  
First Unitarian Church of Rochester  
First Universalist Church of Rochester  
Friends of St. Bridget's  
GRCC/Faith In Action Network  
Interfaith Alliance of Rochester  
Jefferson Ave Faith Communities  
(Trinity Emmanuel Presbyterian  
Church & Graves Memorial  
C.M.E. Church)  
Lutheran Church of Incarnate Word  
New Vision Community Church  
Open Arms Christian Fellowship  
Ministries  
Peace of Christ Parish  
St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish  
St. Mary's Church, Downtown  
St. Joseph's Church, Penfield  
Sisters of Mercy  
Sisters of St. Joseph  
TiLC Ministries  
1199 SEIU United Healthcare  
Workers East

May 27, 2020

Dear Friends:

It is with great sorrow and despair that we learned about the death of a man identified as George Floyd in Minneapolis, under the knee of a white police officer, on Monday, May 25, the national Memorial Day holiday of remembrance.

Maybe you can watch the video here at <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/man-dies-after-pleading-i-can-t-breathe-during-arrest-n1214586>. If you can't view this recording of a killing, the article describes the documentation of Mr. Floyd's death. Another black man's life, literally crushed out of him. Already handcuffed and on the ground, Mr. Floyd begs for his breath, for his life, as do the people around the scene. Yet, this arrest leads to his needless death.

We are heartbroken. We represent the Criminal Justice Task Force of RocACTS, a community organization in Rochester, New York dedicated to dismantling structural racism and focusing on education, poverty and jobs, and criminal justice, and the Criminal Justice Ministry First Unitarian Church in Rochester, along with many similarly dedicated individuals and organizations. It is our human responsibility to stand with the heartbroken community, family and nation as we witness yet another incomprehensible event in the long history of injustice, abuse and excessive force wielded against black men, women and children by authorities sworn to serve and protect and by vigilantes who take matters into their own weapon holding hands.

We say, how can this happen again? We cry out in protest. We agonize in our hearts. And it happens again, senselessly, heartlessly, wrongfully. We weep with the family, with the community, and with each other. We say, again, not one more time, knowing this is not the last time we will witness such brutality.

We offer our condolences to Minneapolis, to Mr. Floyd's family and friends, and to all who grieve this senseless loss. We support the decision by the Chief of Police, Medaria Arradondo, to terminate the employment of four involved officers and to pursue an ongoing investigation. We, along with you, demand justice. We demand change. We demand an end to the insanity that allows a public servant to ignore a man's dying pleas.

In solidarity and for peace,

Gayle Harrison, PhD  
President, RocACTS

Kathleen FitzPatrick and Shanique Byrd, Co-Chairs, RocACTS Criminal Justice Task Force,  
Penny Townsend-Quill and Roberta Buckle, Co-Chairs, Criminal Justice Ministry, First Unitarian Church, Rochester, NY

RocACTS is a federation of the Faith in Action Network

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