May 29, 2020

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8).

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) reaffirms its commitment to combating racism and white supremacy following the recent murders of Black Americans. Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Dreasjan (Sean) Reed, and George Floyd were our neighbors. Ahmaud Arbery was chased down, shot, and killed by a retired police officer and his son while jogging in Brunswick, Ga. (Feb. 23, 2020). Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old emergency medical technician, was shot eight times by Louisville Metro Police Department officers who entered her apartment while serving a "no-knock warrant" (March 13, 2020). Dreasjan (Sean) Reed, a 21-year-old from Indianapolis died after being shot at least eight times by an Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department officer (May 6, 2020). George Floyd was killed by police in Minneapolis while begging for his life, a block away from Calvary Lutheran, an ELCA congregation (May 25, 2020). As the Conference of Bishops, we condemn the white supremacy that has led to the deaths of so many unarmed Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color in our country. We grieve with, pray for and stand in solidarity with the families and friends of all whose loved ones have been and continue to be victims of injustices run amok, racist violence and the insidious venom of white supremacy.

The ELCA’s social policy resolution, “Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric,” adopted by the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, states: “As persons called to love one another as God has loved us, we therefore proclaim our commitment to speak with one voice against racism and white supremacy. We stand with those who are targets of racist ideologies and actions.” As church, together we must work to condemn white supremacy in all forms and recommit ourselves to confront and exorcize the sins of injustice, racism and white supremacy in church and society and within ourselves as individuals and households.

On May 21, the ELCA Southeastern Synod hosted a webinar: “Becoming the Body of Christ – Condemning White Supremacy” in response to the killing of Ahmaud Arbery. This is one of many strategic opportunities happening across this church to address white supremacy and racist rhetoric. On June 17, we will gather again as church to commemorate the Mother Emanuel 9 and to repent of racism and white supremacy. An online ELCA prayer service, including leaders from across the church and Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as preacher, is being planned for June 17, 2020, marking the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9. We encourage congregations to reaffirm their commitment to repenting of the sins of racism and dismantling white supremacy that continue to plague this church by marking this day of penitence with study and prayer leading to action.

https://www.elca.org/emanuelnine

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Deacon Sue Rothmeyer  
Secretary

The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew  
Bishop, New Jersey Synod  
Chair, Conference of Bishops

The Rev. Thomas M. Aitken  
Bishop, Northeastern Minnesota Synod

The Rev. Abraham D. Allende  
Bishop, Northeastern Ohio Synod

The Rev. Jon V. Anderson  
Bishop, Southwestern Minnesota Synod

The Rev. James A. Arends  
Bishop, La Crosse Area Synod

The Rev. Daniel G. Beaudoin  
Bishop, Northwestern Ohio Synod

The Rev. Susan J. Briner  
Bishop, Southwestern Texas Synod

The Rev. Shelley M. Bryan Wee  
Bishop, Northwest Washington Synod

The Rev. Michael L. Burk  
Bishop, Southeastern Iowa Synod

The Rev. Susan Candea  
Bishop, Central States Synod

The Rev. H. Jeffrey Clements  
Bishop, Northern Illinois Synod

The Rev. Barbara J. Collins  
Bishop, Upper Susquehanna Synod

The Rev. Yehiel Curry  
Bishop, Metropolitan Chicago Synod
The Rev. Patricia A. Davenport  
Bishop, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod

The Rev. Suzanne D. Dillahunt  
Bishop, Southern Ohio Synod

The Rev. James S. Dunlop  
Bishop, Lower Susquehanna Synod

The Rev. Paul T. Egensteiner  
Bishop, Metropolitan New York Synod

The Rev. Paul D. Erickson  
Bishop, Greater Milwaukee Synod

The Rev. R. Guy Erwin  
Bishop, Southwest California Synod

The Rev. Katherine A. Finegan  
Bishop, Northern Great Lakes Synod

The Rev. William O. Gafkjen  
Bishop, Indiana-Kentucky Synod

The Rev. Michael K. Girlinghouse  
Bishop, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod

The Rev. William J. Gohl  
Bishop, Delaware-Maryland Synod

The Rev. James W. Gonia  
Bishop, Rocky Mountain Synod

The Rev. Erik K. Gronberg  
Bishop, Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod

The Rev. Constanze Hagmaier  
Bishop, South Dakota Synod

The Rev. Lorna H. Halaas  
Bishop, Western Iowa Synod
The Rev. Regina M. Hassanally
Bishop, Southeastern Minnesota Synod

The Rev. James E. Hazelwood
Bishop, New England Synod

The Rev. Mark W. Holmerud
Bishop, Sierra Pacific Synod

The Rev. Robert F. Humphrey
Bishop, Virginia Synod

The Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer
Bishop, Grand Canyon Synod

The Rev. Richard E. Jaech
Bishop, Southwestern Washington Synod

The Rev. Laurie A. Jungling
Bishop, Montana Synod

The Rev. Donald P. Kreiss
Bishop, Southeast Michigan Synod

The Rev. Wilma S. Kucharek
Bishop, Slovak Zion Synod

The Rev. Kristen E. Kuempel
Bishop, Northwest Intermountain Synod

The Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow
Bishop, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

The Rev. Laurie A. Larson Caesar
Bishop, Oregon Synod

The Rev. Michael L. Lozano
Bishop, Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod

The Rev. Patricia J. Lull
Bishop, Saint Paul Area Synod
The Rev. Brian D. Maas  
Bishop, Nebraska Synod

The Rev. John S. Macholz  
Bishop, Upstate New York Synod

The Rev. Gerald L. Mansholt  
Bishop, East-Central Synod of Wisconsin

The Rev. Idalia Negron-Caamano  
Bishop, Caribbean Synod

The Rev. Leila M. Ortiz  
Bishop, Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod

The Rev. Michael L. Rhyne  
Bishop, Allegheny Synod

The Rev. Michael W. Rinehart  
Bishop, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

The Rev. Peter Rogness  
Interim Bishop, South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

The Rev. S. John Roth  
Bishop, Central/Southern Illinois Synod

The Rev. Craig A. Satterlee  
Bishop, North/West Lower Michigan Synod

The Rev. Laurie Skow-Anderson  
Bishop, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

The Rev. Timothy M. Smith  
Bishop, North Carolina Synod

The Rev. Kevin L. Strickland  
Bishop, Southeastern Synod

The Rev. Pedro M. Suarez  
Bishop, Florida-Bahamas Synod
The Rev. Ann M. Svennungsen  
Bishop, Minneapolis Area Synod

The Rev. Andrew A. Taylor  
Bishop, Pacifica Synod

The Rev. William T. Tesch  
Bishop, Northwestern Minnesota Synod

The Rev. Steven L. Ullestad  
Bishop, Northeastern Iowa Synod

The Rev. Shelley R. Wickstrom  
Bishop, Alaska Synod

The Rev. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe  
Interim Bishop, Eastern North Dakota Synod

The Rev. Herman R. Yoos  
Bishop, South Carolina Synod

The Rev. Samuel R. Zeiser  
Bishop, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod

The Rev. David Zellmer  
Interim Bishop, Western North Dakota Synod