

Because WE ARE

A statement in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter Movement from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary makes the following statement in solidarity with the Black-led Movement for justice, which addresses ongoing racism in our community, across the country, and throughout the world.

The centuries-old Black struggle for freedom and equality in the creation of a better country, a better world, has erupted in Louisville. The Movement for Black Lives, powerful and undaunted community-organizing by young people committed to racial and social justice, came into existence here and everywhere because it had to.

The communal response to Breonna Taylor's beautiful life and horrific death is, in sacred ways, the living center of the present Black-led Movement, and represents the humanizing transformation possible for our city and nation. In the midst of pandemic disease, ongoing racial trauma, and the killing of Black lives, this is our fierce hope and prophetic lament.

In the spirit of John 3:16, we at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary strive to be a "Whosoever" community. As such, we reject all forms of racism and any worldview, system, word, deed, or creed, which devalues and dehumanizes people. This stance does not rest in the safe and comfortable confines of our campus. Our students, faculty, staff, alums, and friends use the gifts that God gave us to be harbingers of justice beyond our chapel, beyond our classrooms, and beyond Alta Vista Road.

Where economic injustice leaves Black lives hungry and homeless ... where lack of quality affordable health care leaves Black lives more susceptible to illness ... where substandard education exists to leave Black lives unprepared to face the world's demands ... where an unjust criminal justice system keeps jails filled with Black lives ... and where Black lives are struck down by state-sanctioned and extrajudicial forms of violence, by no-knock warrants, the bullet, the fist, the whip, the noose, or any other means ...

we hold accountable the people and systems responsible.

We acknowledge that, for many of us, consciously and not, and especially white Americans, racism has informed our thoughts, words, and actions. We acknowledge that the history of our own Louisville Seminary is not exempt from the ravages of racism. We acknowledge that our own Louisville Seminary community is still just beginning the ongoing work of anti-racism.

Ours is a faith in the God of justice. Ours is a faith in the power of forgiveness for ourselves and others. Ours is a faith of hope in the possibility of transformative systemic and personal change. Ours is a faith that accepts God's charge to be good stewards of God's amazing gift of creation.

We are called to compassion. Compassion is not convenient. Compassion is not passive. Compassion is not done on “our time.” Rather, compassion is a challenging, never-ending, even sometimes confounding but always rewarding action. And so even where it may be difficult to stand strong, remain alert, and keep resolve in the tumult of racism, we continue to support the Black-led Movement for racial equality.

Because WE ARE, our work on and commitment to anti-racism is ongoing, and we will offer no place for systems of oppression, including systemic racism, in our pedagogy, in our institutional doctrine, and in our work in the community.

Because WE ARE, the sacredness of all humanity is acknowledged in every facet of our lives.

Because WE ARE among the *WHOSOEVER*, as a faith-based institution, we are called to share God’s Divine Invitation of unconditional and everlasting love with everyone.

Faithfully Stated,
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary