***An Interfaith Abolitionist Call to Action***

The death of Black people surrounds us. Each week, we learn their names—George Floyd, Tony McDade, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others—and each week we are confronted with a moral crisis of what comes next. In the face of white supremacy, we are caught in a cycle of violence that cannot be broken without action.

We have seen waves of protest following the murders of Sandra Bland, Aiyana Stanley-Jones, Eric Garner, Stephon Clark, Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, and many more. With each uprising, people disrupt the cycle of violence and bend the arc of the universe a bit closer towards justice. And now, again, with fires burning in Minneapolis, Atlanta, Louisville, New York— the protesters are telling us as clearly as they can, that Black lives are not disposable.

As people of faith, we must ask ourselves: will we take the side of the state, or will we take the side of justice?

We must ask this question because it is not a foregone conclusion. In the history of our faith traditions, we have seen religious communities choose the state. From the genocide of indigenous people, to centuries of slavery, and to military occupations across the globe, religious communities have a long history of justifying the most vile and inhumane systems of violence on which the state has been built.

Conversely, religious and faith communities have also taken bold stances in favor of justice. There have been faith leaders and communities that have opposed apartheid in South Africa, segregation in the United States, civil war in Central America, and Nazism in Europe. Throughout history, people of faith with conviction have chosen justice and have devoted their very lives to opposing racism, war, genocide, and state violence in its many forms.

With the names of George Floyd, Tony McDade, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others on our tongues, people of faith are called to choose once again: do we align with the state or do we align with justice?

We, the undersigned, are choosing justice.

As, for Moses, the burning bush was a divine revelation that led to liberation, we believe the righteous anger of oppressed people can lead to freedom. We believe that Jesus' message was radical in proclaiming good news to the poor, release to the captives, and liberty to the oppressed (Luke 4: 18-19). We agree that "there is no blame on those who enforce justice after being wronged (Qur'an 42:41).

Join us, as an interfaith community, in declaring that Black Lives Matter and condemning the intersecting forces of capitalism, nationalism, criminalization, and white supremacy. Join us in saying the names of all those we've lost to state sanctioned violence. Join us in condemning a

legal system that upholds white supremacy. Join us in remembering that god is with the suffering, they are in the struggle. Join us in lending resources, offering ministry, and organizing our communities to end state violence and bring about communities rooted in compassion, liberation and justice.

It's not enough just to fire those cops responsible for murders of unarmed Black people, although this act of basic human decency would be a start, but we must also give local communities the power to hold police accountable on a daily basis, defund and disarm police departments, and build up restorative and transformative justice models that do not rely on incarceration.

Join us because we cannot afford your silence.

We pledge to say their names. We pledge to hear the suffering. We pledge to pray for them, and, then, we pledge to take action.

Pledge to take action and join our growing community: https://bit.ly/interfaith-pledge

***Signed on with love and solidarity by:***

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