

Dear Hope on Union faith family

The entire world has watched the video of the knee of the police officer on the neck of a black man for almost nine minutes killing him. We all saw the vivid image of the historical statement on racism, "The man has his foot on my neck", and it haunts us. Since then, the global outrage calling for an end to systemic racism and misuse of power by police has not stopped.

The world is speaking out against systemic racism and is demanding change. Young people are leading the efforts that say that current power systems - social, economic, and security - are unethical, immoral, and unjust. They are demanding a new security system that serves people, and politicians who work for the public good. Young people have taken to the streets to declare that Black Lives Matter.

As a church, we have a responsibility to affirm all people as God's creation and uphold every person's right for self-determination. As a faith community, we will appreciate each person as who they are and accept them as they want to be accepted. We will recognize the uniqueness of each person, and we will work to recognize the equal importance of every person.

While everyone wants change, the real question is, "What will we do now?" We need to take concrete steps so we will take the rest of the year to talk about how we can contribute to creating a new and equitable world.

We will start a new sermon series titled "You Are Welcome" based on the welcome statement we read at the beginning of each worship service. We read the statement to make clear of our foundational belief that everyone is welcomed by God. I believe the beloved community we are working to create is the very community that the world is wanting, but not finding.

My hope is that we will be able to reflect what we believe in all that we do, how we worship, ministries we create, and the ways we relate to people in the course of our being a church. We will work to enable every person who comes to be among us to feel their value. Let us recognize the diversity that exists among us and make everyone feel at home as we welcome everyone.

Pastor Sunny