A CRY FOR JUSTICE FOR GEORGE FLOYD
FROM INTERFAITH COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace (ICUJP) was founded in 2001 to urgently demand that RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES MUST STOP BLESSING WAR AND VIOLENCE.

We are a broad spectrum of people of faith – representing most of the world’s great religions – and humanists, who are deeply concerned about the US engagement in endless wars that drain our resources and distract us from the work of justice at home. We proclaim that we will not bless war. We declare that we will not be silent in the face of an escalating spiral of violence and a voracious war-making system. We promote justice at home and peace around the world. And we seek to show that poverty, racism, and injustice are forms of violence that impede peace.

Therefore, as people of many faiths and backgrounds:

WE STRONGLY CONDEMN the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis Police, and all the many other murders and acts of aggression against people of color in these United States. We are appalled by the brutality, inhumanity and indifference exhibited by the arresting police officers. Our faiths and beliefs teach the sacredness of all human life and these acts on the part of the police violate our deepest beliefs. THIS WILL NOT BRING PEACE.

WE STRONGLY CONDEMN consistent patterns of impunity that fail to bring to justice the perpetrators of violent murders, torture, rapes and other acts of aggression on the part of members of the police force. THIS WILL NOT BRING PEACE.

WE STRONGLY CONDEMN the ways many law enforcement officers escalated the national unrest by driving their vehicles through the crowds, opening fire with nonlethal rounds on journalists or people on their own property, and using batons, tear gas and pepper spray on protestors. THIS WILL NOT BRING PEACE.

WE STRONGLY CONDEMN the suggestions of the President to use violence against the looters with tweets that suggested that the people ransacking stores could be met with deadly force. THIS WILL NOT BRING PEACE.

WE STRONGLY CONDEMN the continued call upon our military forces to enter our cities to intimidate people who are using their civic right to protest. We, like Veterans for Peace and many others, are appalled to see “military weapons, vehicles and equipment once again deployed to control community members who are reacting to a long history of state-sanctioned violence.” THIS WILL NOT BRING PEACE.

WE STRONGLY CONDEMN the vandalism that some have used to express their anger. Even though we know that many people are desperately in need especially during this time of COVID-19, this destruction of people’s livelihood in our neighborhoods does not build our community nor does it strengthen our cause in the struggle for justice. THIS WILL NOT BRING PEACE.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES MUST STOP BLESSING WAR AND VIOLENCE
WE STRONGLY CONDEMN the use of curfews to restrain people from coming together. We affirm the right for all people to protest and to demand justice. Without justice there will never be peace. We endorse the position of the ACLU-SC that “universal curfews and the deployment of armed National Guard in Los Angeles are the wrong way to handle disruptions in otherwise peaceful protests. Curfews that bar all presence in public are far broader than necessary to address problems at protests and sweep in necessary activities like providing care to others at a time people’s resources are already strained by the pandemic and stay-at-home orders.” By using well-trained and effectively deployed police officers, there is no need for sweeping curfews which penalize residents who have legitimate reasons to go out in public at different times during the day. THIS WILL NOT BRING PEACE.

WE LAMENT the vacuum of leadership from our federal government to respond to the protests with a concrete commitment to identify and pursue nationwide measures to address racial discrimination and economic inequity, and to promote an enduring shift from militarization of our communities to providing universal access to quality education, health care and other community services. Transforming our police and national guard from perpetrators of violence to resources of understanding, compassion and support to those they are called upon to serve WILL BRING PEACE!

WE AFFIRM the right for our black sisters and brothers to passionately and even angrily express that they matter, and their demand of a recognition and repentance of the racism in this country.

WE, AS PEOPLE OF FAITH, REPENT of the many ways we have consciously or unconsciously continued the racism evident in our capitalist society. We believe that change in our economic system must break down the inequities that exist and keep many people in impoverished conditions. We affirm the need for a restructured economic system that is not based on racist notions of property and goods.

AND WE STAND with the family of George Floyd and grieve with them over the loss of their loved one. In the same way, we stand with all our sisters and brothers of color who are grieving for their people, who are also our people. Together, we are one people who must work to build a just society. This is our faith. This is our moral reason. We are bound together in our common humanity and our common faith. We will strive to continue working for Justice and Peace.

Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace
June 1, 2020
www.icujp.org

WE MOURN AND WE ORGANIZE
To further our Cry for Justice, ICUJP is dedicating our upcoming online conference – ONE WORLD: Ending Endless War and Creating a Just, Peaceful, Healthy World, Sunday, June 7 – to the memory of George Floyd. Free and open to all. Info/registration: https://oneworldonline.eventbrite.com.