

## IHC Responds to Racial Inequity and Violence

As Christians, we are called to be “. . .doers of the word and not merely hearers .”  
(James 1:22a)

IHC has long been a congregation based on unity and today we are called to do even more. We invite you to take a stand for healing and reconciliation.



**May 30, 2020**

**Special Message from Rev. Dr. Stephen Caine**

This message preceded the May 31 Pentecost worship service. Rev. Dr. Stephen Caine addresses current racial tensions.

[Click here to view the message from Rev. Dr. Stephen Caine on May 31](#)



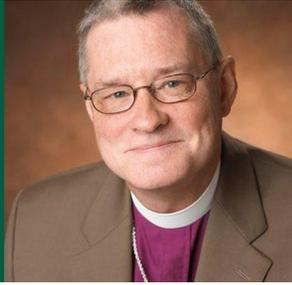
**June 3, 2020**

**Message from Rev. Nancy Hopkins-Greene**

Rev. Nancy Hopkins-Greene reflects on Pentecost, laments on lives lost, and calls us to action.

[Click here to view the message from Rev. Nancy Hopkins-Greene](#)

A message from  
the bishop



**Stay focused on our call**  
**BISHOP TOM BREIDENTHAL**  
**TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2020**

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

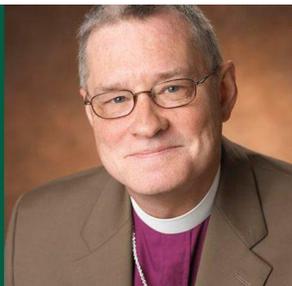
I am careful not to take sides on political issues, unless they involve policies and inequities on which the Episcopal Church or this diocese has taken a stand, or which in my view support or run counter to the love of God and neighbor. Still less would I normally take an elected leader to task — not only because this diocese reflects a wide spectrum of views on political matters, but because our tradition has always espoused a healthy and respectful relationship between church and state.

But after our president’s behavior yesterday evening, I cannot keep silent. I am deeply offended by his exploitation of St. John’s Episcopal Church (a parish that has been a place of spiritual support for presidents of all parties throughout our national history) as the backdrop for yet another self-aggrandizing performance. I am appalled by his abuse of a physical Bible as a putative symbol of his power. I am deeply troubled by his apparent order that violence and terror be inflicted on peaceful protesters in order to secure his safe procession from the White House to his chosen stage set.

Let us not forget that the deeper issue here is white supremacy, and the unrelenting pressure on people of color that remains our national disgrace. We are within our rights as a church to demand respect, but it is more important for us to stay focused on our call as a part of the body of Christ and the community of all people of faith. In the words of our baptismal covenant, that call is to “respect the dignity of every human being.”

The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal  
Bishop of Southern Ohio

A message from  
the bishop



May 29, 2020

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As we approach the great festival of Pentecost, I want to acknowledge the pain of this celebration against the background of one hundred thousand deaths in this country alone, and the mingled unrest and fear surrounding what our media calls “opening up.” There is plenty of grief and uncertainty to go around right now. But I want to draw attention to another plague that continues to dig its claws deep into our national life: the plague of racial inequity and anti-black violence.

The murder of George Floyd by white police officers in Minneapolis a few days ago is plain to all. I am calling on all the congregations in the Diocese of Southern Ohio to stand firm in opposition to the institutional racism that continues to infect our society at every level. As we observe Pentecost this Sunday, however remotely, let us remember that this ancient Jewish feast marks the giving of the Law from Sinai to the children of Israel, fifty days after their escape from slavery in Egypt. What does that law boil down to? Justice and mercy. The police action in Minneapolis exhibited neither justice nor mercy, and we cannot be silent about it.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was neither a circus event or nor a celebration of cacophony, as we often portray it. It is the miracle and great gift of hearing from God, each in his or her language and situation. It is not about noisiness but about clarity. It is about what the triune God is saying to each of us, one by one.

Let us listen carefully this Sunday to what the Spirit is saying to God’s people. Discern the racism within you. Arouse the righteous anger within you against the abuse of power. Open your heart to the ties that bind us to one another in our weaknesses and in our noblest aspirations. Those who heard the apostles speaking to them on the first Pentecost after Jesus’ rising were amazed. They said they were hearing about God’s deeds of power spoken in their own language, in the context of their own personal story.

What does that power mean for each of us personally? God’s power is infinite, but it matters most to us when it comes down to our own persistent struggles. Surely for us Americans, the chief struggle that grips us daily is racism, from within us and from whatever direction it attacks us. We cannot deal with this unless we are open to the Spirit of truth, and we cannot dare to be open to that Spirit unless we trust in the justice and mercy of God. Yet help is always there, if we have the courage to ask for it.

Blessings,

The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal  
Bishop of Southern Ohio



**Presbytery of Cincinnati**

May 29, 2020

Dear friends – as a Matthew 25 Presbytery, we are urging you to take on the following after the riots in Cincinnati last evening and the outrageous events of racial discrimination and hostility in our country over the last several days.

Therefore, we urge you to:

1. Pray without ceasing for justice, for calm, for peace, for reconciliation; and be particularly in prayer for the families of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.
2. Support peaceful protest; condemn violence and public calls for violence no matter the source. That includes government officials at all levels. There is a rally in Cincinnati at noon on Monday; if you go please use caution.
3. Seek to become more informed. Why would Minnesota Governor J.B. Pritzger state: "Being black in America cannot be a death sentence. But it is. And it's dangerous to pretend otherwise." (Black people know!)

[Click here for Video](#) and

[Click here for 23 ways to Die Black in America Video](#)

4. Advocate for and support police-community relations/communications, community policing, greater community participation in oversight and standards in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. We support MARCC here in Cincinnati, but we can do more.
5. Demand accountability; promote justice and peace.
6. Support elimination of barriers to reentry; enhanced education and job training programs in low income and targeted communities.
7. Vote responsibly and with empathy as though the life of the republic depends on it. It does...

We as a human race, and especially those of us dedicated to living the life to which we have been called in Christ Jesus, must do better than this.

Blessings and love to you all.

Lisa Allgood  
Transitional Executive Presbyter



### **31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism, and resistance**

Research from Harvard University suggests that children as young as three years old, when exposed to racism and prejudice, tend to embrace and accept it, even though they might not understand the feelings. By age 5, white children are strongly biased towards whiteness. To counter this bias, experts recommend acknowledging and naming race and racism with children as early and as often as possible. Children's books are one of the most effective and practical tools for initiating these critical conversations; and they can also be used to model what it means to resist and dismantle oppression.

Beyond addressing issues of race and racism, this children's reading list focuses on taking action. It highlights resistance, resilience and activism; and seeks to empower youth to participate in the ongoing movement for racial justice. These books showcase the diverse ways people of all ages and races have engaged in anti-racist activism, and highlight how race intersects with other issues, such as capitalism, class and colonization. The majority of books center activists of color, whose lives and bodies have been on the front lines of racial justice work, yet whose stories often go untold. The essential work of white activists is also included — to underscore that anti-racist work is not the responsibility of people of color; and exemplify the ways white allies have stood up against racial injustice.

[Click here for list of books](#)