

## **Statement of Saint Olaf Catholic Church on the murder of George Floyd:**

Grounded in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and formed by the Catholic social teaching principle of the sanctity of life and the call to protect human dignity, Saint Olaf Catholic Church condemns the murder of George Floyd on a street in our community, even as he called for help, while in the custody of four (now) former Minneapolis Police officers. That yet another African-American man is killed by police is a stark reminder that the sin of racism remains.

For nearly 80 years we have sought to serve the wider community here in the heart of the city. We also acknowledge our own shortfalls at times in raising our voice to meet the deep and abiding needs, and our contributions as a Church, to the sin of racism through the years. Our outrage shared across this community, state, nation and indeed, around the world, ignites an opportunity to pursue peace through the work for justice.

With ears to hear, eyes to see and voices to engage in uncomfortable but essential conversations, may we surround ourselves in the love of God who created all of us with a sacred dignity and in God's own image and likeness. May we pray unceasingly for forgiveness and peace, and ACT in mission as disciples of Christ, who suffered, died and rose again, sharing that new life with the whole world.

We offer our deepest sympathy and heartfelt prayers to the family and friends of George Floyd. May he rest in peace.

Fr. Kevin Kenney, Pastor

### **How can YOU help?**

Prayer is vital. Consider contributing to the Minneapolis Interfaith Relief Fund established June 1, 2020 by the senior clergy of downtown interfaith congregations in response to requests for financial support from the communities affected by unrest in the city, following the police killing of George Floyd.

**To learn more:** See the **Minneapolis Interfaith Relief Fund FAQ** sheet below on this page.

### **Archbishop Hebda Response:**

<https://www.archspm.org/statement-regarding-the-death-of-george-floyd-in-minneapolis/>

### **Video Statement of Pope Francis on the death of George Floyd (June 3, 2020)**

<https://youtu.be/Ou2owd-efm4>

### **Statement of Archbishop Jose Gomez, President of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops:**

<http://usccb.org/news/2020/20-84.cfm>

### **Prayer to Overcome Racism-US Conference of Catholic Bishops**

<http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/Prayer-to-Overcome-Racism.pdf>

***Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love-a Pastoral Letter on Racism***  
<http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/open-wide-our-hearts.pdf>

## **Minneapolis Interfaith Relief Fund**

### **FAQ – June 2020**

- 1. What is the downtown clergy group and why was this fund established?** The Minneapolis Interfaith Relief Fund (MIRF) was established by the senior clergy of downtown interfaith congregations in response to requests for financial support from the communities affected by unrest in the city, following the police killing of George Floyd. See the Statement on the Killing of George Floyd\*, below, along with the list of congregations involved.
- 2. When was the MIRF fund established?** June 1, 2020
- 3. What is the process for decision-making about distributing the funds?** An Allocation Team of senior clergy will disburse funds to agencies and partners in communities of color and in the indigenous community that are working directly with those most affected. The Allocation Team includes these seven clergy, of which three are people of color: Makram El-Amin, Masjid An-Nur, the Rev. Dr. Laurie Feille, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Dr. Tim Hart-Andersen, Westminster Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Jia Starr Brown, First Covenant Church, Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman, Temple Israel, the Very Rev. Paul Lebens-Englund, Cathedral Church of St. Mark, the Rev. Al Gallmon, Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church.
- 4. What are the criteria for selecting fund recipients and how will they be made?** Grants will be made *to agencies and partners in communities of color and in the indigenous community that are working directly with those most affected*, upon recommendation of members of the Allocation Team or downtown senior clergy, or by recommendation or request from community groups. Priority will be given to grants that provide immediate, urgently needed support to communities of color and indigenous communities. Grants will be one-time and not recurring or long-term support.
- 5. What amount will the grants be?** Grants will generally not exceed \$5,000.
- 6. Can any organization apply for the funds and how?** Minneapolis-based organizations interested in applying should contact one of the interfaith leaders listed below with 1) the name and address of your organization, 2) a brief description of the need, 3) intended use of the funds, 4) and the amount requested. Or, you may contact Tim Hart-Andersen, Senior Minister at Westminster Presbyterian Church: [Tim@wpc-mpls.org](mailto:Tim@wpc-mpls.org).
- 7. Is there a timeframe for when the funds must be used?** The intent is that the funds be spent as quickly as possible, for immediate impact.

**8. Does the grantee need to report how the funds will/have been used?** Yes, grantees will be asked to provide a report of fund use.

**9. How will donors find out how the funds have been used and by whom?** Westminster will keep on the MIRF web page an up-to-date list of all groups that have received funds, with a brief note of the intended use. It can be viewed here:  
<https://www.westminstermpls.org/stewardship/stewardship/mirf/>

**10. Is this Minneapolis only?** Yes. Interested parties may check with the St. Paul Interfaith Network (SPIN) to see if they have a comparable program.

**11. How long will the fund be in place?** Either until the unique or immediate need diminishes, or donations cease.

**12. Is there a target amount to be raised?** No, although there has been a generous response to date, \$57,300 from 190 donors as of June 17, 2020.

**13. How is it being promoted?** Interfaith leaders are building awareness in various ways through their individual congregations.

**14. How can I participate?** You may donate online at [www.westminstermpls.org/stewardship](http://www.westminstermpls.org/stewardship) or by sending a check (note: with MIRF in the memo line) payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1200 Marquette Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403. Gifts will be tax-deductible.

**15. Why are the funds being sent to Westminster?** Westminster Presbyterian is the fiscal sponsor of the MIRF and will receive and account for all funds donated. Westminster will not charge an administrative fee, although gifts made online will be charged a credit card fee. As previously outlined, funds will be disbursed according to direction provided by the Allocation Team.

**16. Does an organization have to be faith-based to receive funds?** No. Any Minneapolis-based non-profit or community organization that is involved in meeting urgent needs in communities of color or indigenous peoples may apply.

**17. Whom may I contact for more information?** For overall information, contact any of the interfaith clergy listed below or Mary Hess, Westminster's Director of Stewardship ([mhess@wpc-mpls.org](mailto:mhess@wpc-mpls.org)). For information on processing your gift, contact Kelsey Noack ([knoack@wpc-mpls.org](mailto:knoack@wpc-mpls.org)).

## **\*\*Statement on the Killing of George Floyd**

We, the below signed members of the Downtown Interfaith Senior Clergy, condemn in the strongest possible terms the May 25th killing by a police officer of an unarmed African American man in Minneapolis. As leaders of faith traditions that include Judaism, Islam, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Humanism, we affirm our common conviction that all life is sacred and that every human being is our neighbor, worthy to be loved. Not killed. Our hearts break, going out to the family and to those in our community who continue to bear the historical brunt of racially-motivated oppression that too often leads to violence and even death. In a press conference, Mayor Jacob Frey phrased it well: "Being black in America should not be a death sentence." We all say amen! We call for a swift response by city officials and Minneapolis law enforcement leaders, and a deeper addressing of the systemic issues that led to this and similar killings. We say "enough and more than enough!" Law enforcement must interact with all our neighbors in all our neighborhoods fairly and equally. Might we finally learn from this most recent tragic incident? We must. We are all called to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Signed,

Imam Makram Nu'Man El-Amin, Masjid An-Nur

Rev. Dr. David Breeden, First Unitarian Society

Rev. Dr. Dan Collison, First Covenant Church

Rev. Jen Crow, First Universalist Church

Rev. Dr. Laurie Feille, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The Rev. Al Gallmon, Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church

Imam Dr. Hamdy El-Sawaf Islamic Community Center of Minnesota/MasjidAl-Imin

Rev. Dr. Tim Hart-Andersen, Westminster Presbyterian Church

Father Kevin Kenney, St. Olaf Roman Catholic Church

The Very Reverend Paul Lebens-Englund, St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral

Rev. Dr. Paula Northwood, Plymouth Congregational Church

Rev. Peter Nycklemoe, Central Lutheran Church

Rev. Judy Zabel, Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church

Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman, Temple Israel