

## **The First Church in Oberlin United Church of Christ**

We, the members of The First Church in Oberlin United Church of Christ, are dismayed by the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. These injustices are only the most recent examples of a national disgrace. Their deaths demonstrate how Black citizens are daily held in suspicion by neighbors, threatened by authorities and subjected to bias by police as they are pre-judged, searched, discouraged and disregarded. The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed for all to see the disparities by race in access to healthcare and rates of incarceration.

There is a wide gulf between Blacks and Whites in terms of access to education, jobs, loans and housing. All of these aspects of racism are evident in Oberlin. We recognize that race is fundamental to these disparities. What we see today in terms of the depth of grief and outrage are direct responses to racism and discrimination that are part of our history and remain today. This must end.

The First Church in Oberlin seeks to be an ally of our Black sisters and brothers in combating racism and hate in our country. We recognize that our church has not fully addressed its own racism. We recognize that we need to become more aware of our own biases and arrive at ways to combat racism within ourselves, our community, our nation and our world. We pledge to educate ourselves individually and collectively and take part in activities in our community that help heal these wounds.

Guided by the teachings of Christ and informed by listening and learning we hope to find strength in each other to stand up and be active participants in the struggle to end racism and discrimination. Black Lives Matter.