

We stand together.

The events of the past few weeks on the heels of a pandemic that has brought widespread change to our daily lives making us acutely aware of the fragility and inequity of our social structures, our democracy, and our humanity. The collateral damage we see is not the buildings burning as a consequence of rage and frustration, but our collective appetite to normalize the violence of our systems. Justice, healthcare, and education, all institutions we revere, are crumbling, skewed by racism embedded in every process, procedure, and outcome. The problem is so ingrained and pervasive we could easily lose count—George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, Amadou Diallo, Rodney King—decades of lives lost.

As a black male living in America, George Floyd's story could just as easily be my story. I must tell my 24-year-old son, who stands 6'3," if ever stopped by the police, move slowly and make sure they see your hands at all times. I need to remind my wife, if you ever call 911, tell them the homeowners are black. Protection against a system meant to protect us.

The poverty and homelessness we see at the Newburgh Ministry falls disproportionately on people of color exacerbating the feelings of hopelessness and frustration in attempting to navigate systems stacked against them. As a black leader of a grassroots organization, my work is literally our mission to improve the lives of the most vulnerable among us and carry on the social justice work of the Sisters who built the Ministry on compassion and dignity. To my white brothers and sisters, I want to say there is no quick fix, but you are essential to effect change. I encourage you to use your privilege, when and where others can't.

We need a lifetime of difficult conversations. What America is willing to tolerate is shifting. I welcome the discourse. If you would be interested in having a discussion about our work, please click the "Let's Talk" button below and I will call you.

Our hearts go out to George Floyd's family and the families of all those affected by racial violence and injustice.

Yours in compassion,



Colin Jarvis
Executive Director



[Let's Talk](#)