



CANADIAN  
UNITARIAN  
COUNCIL

CONSEIL  
UNITARIEN  
DU CANADA

## **Mourning the Deaths of More People of Colour**

May 29, 2020

Canadian Unitarian Universalists are deeply saddened by the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, and we support our fellow UUs in the United States in their calls for justice. We offer our heartfelt condolences to Mr. Lloyd's family and friends and to the communities impacted, again, by the death of an unarmed black man. At the same time, we recognize that systemic racism and its devastating impacts are prevalent and destructive in Canada as well.

Every day, in this country, racism puts people of colour and Indigenous people at risk. We can no longer just be observers. As Unitarians, there is important work to do if we want to truly live our values of equity, justice, compassion and dignity for all.

"While it is understandable to feel saddened, outraged or helpless as we read the news, we must not linger there," says Margaret Wanlin, President of the Canadian Unitarian Council Board of Trustees. "Every one of our seven principles calls us to act on this issue. However, we cannot affect change in our broader communities if we have not examined our own role in systemic racism, both personally and in our community of faith. The CUC's Dismantling Racism Study Group has begun this work, and recent events in the US and here at home have brought the need for this work into even sharper focus. I urge you to contribute your thoughts and experiences in their survey and to support this work within your own congregations," said Margaret.

Rev. Julie Stoneberg is co-chair of the Dismantling Racism Study Group and minister at the Unitarian Fellowship of Peterborough. She says, "Minneapolis is my home. This week, another black man has been killed by police. This time it is in my home precinct, and it is my neighbourhood streets that are erupting in outrage and violence. My privilege has allowed me to walk those very streets mostly unaware of the pain brewing beneath the surface...pain I am seeing so clearly today...pain that my BI-POC (black, Indigenous, people of colour) siblings feel every day. These tragic events call me to further commit myself to the work of dismantling racism."

As people of a progressive faith, we must do more than just acknowledge this loss, and the loss of Regis Korchinski-Paquet here in Canada, and return to our lives of privilege. Let these losses be a call to educate ourselves. Let it be a call to conversation – the difficult and uncomfortable ones. And let it be a call to become truly committed to this work of dismantling racism and privilege wherever we find it, including in ourselves.



The Dismantling Racism Study Group is engaged in work to identify and assess efforts to dismantle racism and other oppressions. To help in this work, please complete their survey by June 7, 2020 <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DRSGSurvey>

For more information Rev Julie Stoneberg and Beverly Horton, co-chairs of the Dismantling Racism Study Group, offer these resources for education and reflection.

Reading and reflection:

Desmond Cole's book, [The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power](#), 2020  
Doubleday Canada

Robin DiAngelo, [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#), 2018  
Beacon Press

The Guardian: “Not About the Needs and Feelings of White People”  
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/28/confronting-racism-is-not-about-the-needs-and-feelings-of-white-people>

The Globe and Mail: “Racial Disparities in Toronto Police Force”  
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/toronto/article-report-reveals-racial-disparities-in-toronto-polices-use-of-force/>

CBC Curio: “Report on Racial Profiling by Toronto Police”  
<https://curio.ca/en/video/unprecedented-report-released-on-racial-profiling-by-toronto-police-20862/>

Five Ways to Support Black Lives Matter, from our UU colleagues in the US:  
<https://www.uuworld.org/articles/5-ways-support-black-lives-matter>

~ From the CUC's National Voice Team: UU Ministers of Canada President, Rev. Anne Barker; CUC Board President, Margaret Wanlin, and Executive Director, Vyda Ng.

---

Contact: [communications@cuc.ca](mailto:communications@cuc.ca)