

A Letter from the Elders of Fellowship North

To our Fellowship North Family,

Scripture tells us, from the very beginning:

"...that sin is crouching at your door, its desire is for you, but you must rule over it." - Genesis 4:7

Sin continues today causing pain, anger, grief, and division in this world inside and outside the church. The videos over the last few weeks showing the unjust deaths of Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd, coupled with the video of Amy Cooper calling the police on Christian Cooper while he was bird-watching, have brought our collective frustrations to a boiling point. They have only added to the long, and often overlooked history of this country where injustice and racism have impacted the lives and families of minorities and people of color. It is at this time when the entire world is watching and crying out, that we must stand unified and demand change.

"...that righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne." - Psalm 89:14

and also:

"Mankind, he has told each of you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God." - Micah 6:8

We see that righteousness and justice are not only characteristics of our Lord, but to act justly is also one of the first things he requires of us as His children. *So how do we respond and what do we do?*

First, we must acknowledge that this system is broken and is in need of immediate repair. It is broken and in need of repair because this world has a sin problem. The system that gives authority to the police and courts to uphold law and order in our society, must be the same system that holds those that abuse their authority accountable when these kinds of crimes are committed. It is beyond time for us as brothers and sisters in Christ to stand in solidarity and with one voice cry out against oppression and for justice. It is imperative that we not only join those that are crying out for justice, but we must also begin to lead those cries. Why? Because if we acknowledge that this is a sin problem, we must also speak with clarity and boldness that the Church has the answer in Christ.

The very church that, at times, has perpetuated racism and inequality, and the church that was established by Christ, must come together to lead the change that is so desperately needed in this country. We must stand together as one, with all of our differences, and be a family of families. The only way we can bring about change in the world is to change our world. God can change our world as He brings about change within us as individuals, within our families, and within our church. As we look and depend on Christ, we can bring about change in the world.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment." - 2 Timothy 1:7

We can't be afraid to lead in this area. Let us not allow fear to keep us from reaching out to one another, from admitting when something is wrong, from communicating that we don't understand, and from saying, 'I'm sorry.' We must step out and pursue these things with one another:

- **Communication**
- **Understanding**
- **Compassion**
- **Righteousness**
- **Justice**
- **Peace**

We must cover all of these things with prayer. Let us also pray for the families that have been affected by these horrible acts of violence, those that are in hard places dealing with all of the hurt and pain from these events, and those in positions of leadership and authority that can affect policy and system changes. Let's pray that our church will continue to reflect and model what we know heaven will look like. Let us mirror the hope that the world needs to see, not only today, but in the days, weeks, months, and years to come. We look forward to hearing your hearts, this evening, at 6:30, via **ZOOM**.

As we move into commemorating our 36th church anniversary, we recognize that the current state of affairs does not lend itself to 'celebrating.' We ask that more so than viewing this Sunday as a celebration, let us all view it as a thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness. We have so many things that we are beyond grateful to God for seeing us through, including the last year, this medical pandemic, the racial pandemic, economic peril and the fact that we are grateful our church's diversity and all of the people who are in our church family. We will not falter in continuing to pursue racial reconciliation. God is faithful -- let us think on these things.