

Durham Friends Meeting Statement of Solidarity June 2020

Adopted by Meeting for Business, June 12, 2020

The Durham Friends Meeting (NC) of the Religious Society of Friends joins with individuals, families, and communities around the world as they express outrage following the recent murder of George Floyd by police officers and the wrongful deaths of other Black individuals, including Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, David McAtee, James Scurlock, Nina Pop, and so many others stretching back through the centuries. Rooted in our core testimony that there is that of God/Spirit/the Divine in everyone, we tremble in anger and join the voices affirming, unequivocally, Black Lives Matter.

As a predominantly white institution, Durham Friends Meeting acknowledges our complacency and complicity in allowing for the perpetuation of white supremacy. We own our moral obligation to listen deeply, utilize our power, and respond justly.

Therefore, we explicitly condemn:

- Generations of trauma imposed by slavery, genocide, segregation, and ongoing systemic oppression
- The persistent patterns of police brutality towards communities of color and the murder of Black and Brown people at the hands of police officers
- Other state-sanctioned violence in the forms of mass incarceration, prejudicial courts, and disproportionate sentencing that perpetuate anti-Blackness
- The disproportionate impact that Covid-19 has had and will continue to have on communities of color
- The current U.S. administration's call for more state-sanctioned violence to further criticize, silence, and harm those who have taken to the streets

To our Black neighbors in Durham and Black people everywhere: we see you. We honor all of the ways you are lifting up the cry for justice- in the streets, within your organizations, from behind bars, on social media. We commit to de-centering whiteness and amplifying your voice. And we hear your calls for us to see beyond Black pain and death and to value Black lives, wellness, and joy.

To white individuals and families within our DFM community and to white Quakers everywhere: We call you into the lifelong work of identifying, examining, and dismantling the root cause of generations of suffering: white supremacy. With continuing revelation as a pillar of our faith and practice, we invite you to join us in our commitment to unlearning white violence and reimagining what it means to listen deeply, act justly, and reflect that Black Lives Matter in our daily lives. We honor our Quaker ancestors of Color who have been calling us into dismantling racism in the Religious Society of Friends for centuries. We also honor our contemporary Friends of Color who have for decades been calling Quakers to be an active anti-racist faith community. We commit to responding, finally, to their call to Spirit-led action towards collective liberation.

The Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, and equality cannot

come to fruition as long as white supremacy exists. With our anger inextricably bound with love, and our inward work inextricably bound with outward action, Durham Friends Meeting commits to actively identifying and dismantling white supremacist norms within ourselves and our community of faith, maintaining collaboration with other faith communities in this call, and engaging in the self-reflection, deep listening, and outward action necessary for sufficient repair and collective liberation.

In Light and Solidarity, Durham Friends Meeting

We acknowledge Alexa Broderick of the Equity Paradigm, for developing and facilitating the Racial Equity Learning Arc, which has informed this document.