

I have been reflecting on last weeks murder of George Floyd and the riots and protests that are happening in response.

Let me begin by saying I am saddened and my heart is heavy. This has affected me in the depth and core of my soul, the sight of a human being taking another human beings life. The sight of a calloused inhumane treatment of another was heartbreaking and heartwrenching. The killing of one who happened to share my skin color. The second video to surface showing a person of color being murdered in just a few weeks. This could have easily been my nephew, cousin, or any other family member. I have to often remind them of the actions they must take if they are ever pulled over in their car or arrested for some matter. The goal, I remind them is to get to the police station alive, get to the police station alive. I know that all policeman are not bad. It was our church idea to celebrate their work in our community last March by inviting them to our church service. Yet, as in everything we find that there are bad examples.

I have been very careful to measure my words since last week. As I write, that is what my brain keeps telling me, watch your words, do not offend. As your leader I understand that importance. I understand that race relations can be difficult conversations. My appointment here at Central is my second cross racial appointment, and I truly feel I have been called to this work. It is my hearts desire that you are able to hear the voices that are crying out. That is important to me as a black person. Understanding, you do not have to agree but please try to understand.

Perhaps you do not understand the why of it all. This current situation is the culmination of a long history of brutality carried out on people of color. Many have referred to it as a modern day lynching. People are angry and people are hurting.

I do not condone the violence, burning of buildings or looting that is happening. My hope is that this can be the beginning of much needed structural change in our country as well as our church.