

## **Statement from Dr Donald Bolt, Administrative Bishop and the National Executive Council condemning the killing of George Floyd**

The New Testament Church of God England & Wales (NTCG) conveys its solidarity with the family and friends mourning the inexcusable loss of life suffered by George Floyd at the hands of the police in Minneapolis.

We stand in agreement with Dr Tim Hill, the presiding Bishop of Church of God, who issued statements on behalf of our international church. His statement speaks for each of us as a church of over seven million members and millions of adherents in over 180 countries.

From our own experience here in the UK, our observation of racism, social injustice, social inequality and discriminatory practices are clearly seen as global issues and so we recognise the issues and related concerns as they are currently being demonstrated in the USA. We are equally cognisant of our Christian obligation to advocate, particularly on behalf of the weak in the interest of our common good.

We are very clear in our belief that governments and institutions must be held to account to deliver policies and processes that are just. To this end we stand ready to support and work with other Christian organisations, other faith groups and those of no faith to advocate for a better future for all.

We support the right to protest but this must be carried out lawfully and peacefully and whilst we understand the build-up of frustration, we cannot condone any violence, looting or criminal activity on the back of any protest. This type of behaviour will set back the cause we are all actively pursuing.

The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Community (BAME) are negatively disproportionately represented in the UK in areas such as mental health, educational achievement, the criminal justice system, employment opportunities, politics and civic leadership to name but a few, and much work is to be done to change individual attitudes and behaviours; institutional policies and procedures that stifle the aspirations and life of the BAME community in the local, national and global contexts.

We are committed to positive, peaceful and just actions that will lead to sustainable change in the plight of the oppressed. We stand ready to make constructive contributions to efforts to ensure life in abundance for all people in accordance with our reading of Scriptures such as Luke 4:18,19 (NIV): *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”*

It is our earnest prayer - in words and deeds - that the peace, love, righteousness and justice of God becomes a current reality for all.