



***Fulfilling the Great Commission
in the spirit of the Great Commandment***

*"You are my friends if you do what I command."
- Jesus, John 15:14*

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A Letter for Our Times

As the news and social media remind us regularly, we live in a broken world filled with anxiety, pain, and grief. The global pandemic and widespread economic stress, while matters of deep concern to us in and of themselves, also serve to add weight and a growing awareness to the attitudes and systems of racial injustice and violence that persist in our country. We recognize this as blatant opposition to God's design and vision for the world.

We grieve today with the many families who have suffered from the loss of Ahmaud Arbery, Breana Taylor, George Floyd, David McAtee, and hundreds of others. We lament that this pain is both fresh and ongoing, related to very real events and acts of violence and unfair treatment today, as well as long-standing attitudes and behaviors.

We hold deep historical convictions as Friends against inequality, unjust treatment, and abuse in all its expressions. Early Friends in this country gained a reputation for fair dealings with Native Americans. They were also the first religious group to publicly denounce slavery and the first to require their members to free slaves. However, we recognize that our past behaviors are not a substitute for present action.

We confess our lack of consistent awareness, our insensitivity, and our tendency to hold onto familiar patterns, traditions, and systems that perpetuate prejudicial behaviors. Even when unintentional, we confess the sin of bias, blindness to ethnic concerns that are different from our own, and the neglect of our brothers and sisters of various racial groups all too often, rather than practicing consistently our Lord's instruction to "love your neighbor as yourself."

We recognize that as representatives of Jesus Christ, we are responsible to embrace and declare the message of good news that all people are made in the image of God, loved by God and welcomed as equal within God's family. To this end, we also recognize our need to redeem individual attitudes, processes, systems, and institutions that perpetuate injustice on the basis of race or ethnic identity.

We are committed to honor and include people from all races, cultures, and ethnicities within our churches and communities. We are united in our commitment to stand against racism in all its forms, and we call upon all others in this country and beyond to do the same.

Standing together in loving our neighbors,
Evangelical Friends Church International – North America, Executive Council:
Matthew Cork, Superintendent, Evangelical Friends Church-Southwest
Tom Crawford, Executive Director, Evangelical Friends Church-Eastern Region
Adrian Halverstadt, Leadership Facilitator, Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting
Jim Le Shana, General Superintendent, Northwest Yearly Meeting
Robert Sheldon, Superintendent, Alaska Yearly Meeting
David Williams, Lead Superintendent, Evangelical Friends Church-Mid America