

Let's Talk – BLM

While the Bible doesn't talk directly about racism, it talks about the evil of favoritism. Acts 10:34-35 and James 2:1-9 teach us that showing favoritism is a grave sin and completely contrary to God's own character. It has no place in a Christian's life. Favoritism is treating people different or as less valuable because of who they are.

At the start and core of the cry "Black Lives Matter" is the claim that black people are treated differently than most people and especially white people. While the BLM movement may have other issues and actions that you may not agree with or are troubled by, it is our Christian duty to take this complaint seriously.

I am challenging our church to go into a **Listening** phase with regards to BLM.

Guidelines of Listening:

- 1) Look to find the problem, not the solution**
 - a. When we focus on solutions, it creates immediate division. For now, bypass all of that and just seek to hear and understand the problem (a human experience).
- 2) Suspend "Yeah, but...."**
 - a. We quickly dismiss an issue in whole when we find one part that we don't like. Sort through the "trash" to find the thing that really matters. There will be time later to bring up your reservations.
- 3) Listen to people and their stories**
 - a. Turn off the news commentators and other sources that, honestly, mainly serve to be an echo chamber of what you already believe. Let's get down to the root of the matter and hear people saying they are not treated fairly.
- 4) Appreciate that this is a big deal for the black community**
 - a. While you may not sense there is a problem, a large part of the black community says there is a problem that deeply impacts them. George Floyd is not a one-time unfortunate event, but another instance in a long line of events that devalue them in our nation. They deserve our consideration.

Listening Homework

- 1) Take an hour and listen to our starter discussion among the Free Methodist leadership. Find this discussion at www.facebook.com/fmcusa
 - a. These are the reactions of established leaders in our church. If you don't always trust a movement's leaders, we can trust them because they are committed to God and the church they serve.
- 2) Research three names of black people killed by police – find out who they are and what happened. This is NOT about finding fault, but listening to a story and understanding. How does the story impact you? Research more if you can. Find this list below and pick one bold name and any other two names.
 - a. Do not suppose that all of these stories are of perfect people who did no wrong. That's not the case. But, do we expect that unless a person is innocent and perfect, then killing them is perfectly fine?

DO THE WORK! Don't just keep your own opinion, but ask God to show you what matters.

Ahmaud Arbery

Breona Taylor
Darius Tarver
Donnie Sanders
Dreasjon Reed
Kwame "KK" Jonen
Natosha Tony McDade
Sean Reed
Steven Demarco Taylor
Tamir Rice
Tony McDade
William Howard Green
Yassin Mohamed
Atatiana Jefferson
Brandon Webber
Christopher Whitfield
Isaiah Lewis
Jamee Johnson
Jimmy Atchison
Josef Richardson
Julius Johnson
Michael Dean
Miles Hall

Ryan Twyman

Willie McCoy
Antwan Rose
Arther McAfee Jr.
Botham Shem Jean
Charles Roundtree
Danny Ray Thomas
DeAndre Ballard

EJ Fitzgerald Bradford Jr

James Leatherwood

Jemel Roberson

Jonathan Hart
Marcus-David L Peters
Maurice Granton
Rashaun Washington
Ronnell Foster
Stephen Clark
Tony Green
Aaron Bailey
Alteria Woods
Anthony Antonio Ford
Charles David Robinson
Dewboy Lister
Jean Pedro Pierre
Jordan Edwards
Keita O'Neill
Lawrence Hawkins
Marc Brandon Davis
Patrick Harmon
Ricco Devante Holden
Akiel Denkins
Alfred Olango
Gregory Gunn
Philando Castile
Jamarion Robinson
Terence Crutcher
Terence Sterling
Anthony Hill
Brendon Glenn
Charly Keunang
Christian Taylor
Freddie Carlos Gray Jr.
Eric Harris
Jamar Clark
Jordan Baker

Quintonio LeGrier

Samuel DuBose

Sandra Bland

Tony Robinson (Wisconsin)

Walter Scott

Akai Gurley

Dontre Hamilton

Eric Garner

Ezell Ford

Gregory Hill Jr

Jerame Reid

John Crawford III

Rumain Brisbon

Laquan McDonald

Tanisha Anderson

Victor White III

Yvette Smith**Jonathan Ferrell**

Larry Jackson Jr

Renisha McBride

Terrance Franklin

Kendrec McDade

Malissa Williams

Manuel Loggins Jr

Ramarley Graham

Rekia Boyd

Trayvon Martin

Wendall Allen

Danroy "DJ" Henry Jr.

Oscar Grant

Sean Bell

Kendra James

Amadou Diallo

Tyisha Miller