



Mayor Ginther: Seek The Peace Of The City, Defund The Police

Dear Mayor Ginther,

You have heard the cries of the people: "Black Lives Matter! Defund the Police!" But you have not yet acted with courage and clarity to ensure that the aggressive and militarized policing that Columbus has become famous for ends on your watch.

As faith leaders, we call on you to add no new or additional funding to the 2021 budget for the Columbus Division of Police when you present your Executive Proposal to Columbus City Council on November 15th. Further, we call on you to divest from the force responsible for the deadly status quo in Black and Brown communities, and instead reinvest in programs that result in health and safety for every person in every neighborhood: affordable housing, mental health services, education, employment programs, restorative justice services, comprehensive quality child care and more. Finally, please meet with the signers of this letter by October 31st to share and explain your proposal for 2021 police funding.

As people of faith, we know that budgets are moral documents. When the city of Columbus spends one third of its budget on policing, we are saying that God values punishment and surveillance over care and connection, and as faith leaders, we know this is not true.

Mayor Ginther, for such a time as this, seek the peace of the city by defunding the police.

In faith,

Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens
First Congregational UCC

Rev. Dr. Eric Brown
Woodland Christian Church

Dr. Tarunjit Butalia
Sikh Council for Interfaith
Relations
he/him/his

Cantor Jack Chomsky
Congregation Tifereth Israel

Rev. Dan Clark
Faith in Public Life
he/him/his

Rev. Greg Henneman
Church for All People
he/him/his

Adrienne Hood

Paisha Thomas
Faith in Public Life

Rev. Gini Lohmann-Bauman
St. John's United Church of Christ

Rev. David Long-Higgins
Heartland Conference, United
Church of Christ
he/him/his

Melissa McFadden

Rev. Joel Miller
Columbus Mennonite Church

Imam Horsed Noah
Somali Islamic Centers of Ohio
he/him/his

Pastor Jason Ridley
Allegheny West Conference,
Seventh-day Adventist

Rev. Kate Shaner
First Community Church
she/her/hers

Rabbi Jessica Shimberg
Kehilat Sukkat Shalom

Rev. Dr. Susan Smith
Crazy Faith Ministries

Rev Deborah Stevens
Broad Street United Methodist
Church

Rev. Joan VanBecelaere
Unitarian Universalist Justice
Ohio
she/her/hers

Bishop Donald Washington
Mt. Hermon Baptist Church

Joni Anderson

Diana Angus

Blyth Barnow
Faith in Public Life
she/her/hers

Deacon Nick Bates
Hunger Network in Ohio

Cathy Becker

Rebecca Bishop

Cynthia Brown
Heartbeatmovement Incorporated
she/her/hers

Jamie Browning
she/her/hers

Rev. Andy Burns
United Methodist Church of the
Saviour
he/him/his

Rev. Dr. Elliott Bush

Maria Cabreja
she/her/hers

Joanie Calem

Sarah Cherry

Myra Clark-Foster

Rev. Emily Corzine
First Congregational Church

Joe Decker

Karyn Deibel

Rev. Grant Eckhart
Jacob's Porch (ELCA)

Rev. Joel Esala
he/him/his

Nathan Esala
The Church on Oakland Park

Jill Frost

Rev. Jef Gamblee
Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio

Janey George

Elizabeth Gill
Team Miriam Vargas
she/her/hers

Alecia Gillespie

Gretchen Greenawalt

Rev. Rich Hagopian
Smoky Row Brethren Church
he/him/his

Rebecca Haimowitz-King
Congregation Tifereth Israel
she/her/hers

Connie Hammond
Central Ohio Worker Center

Chere Hampton
she/her/hers

Dr. Katelin Hansen
Church for All People
she/her/hers

Amy Harkins
she/her/hers

Amanda Hays
she/her/hers

Eve Hermann
she/her/hers

Heidi Howes
she/her/hers

Natalie Jackson

Rev. Rich Johnson
Sanctuary Columbus

Sheldon Johnson

Rev. Christine Jones-Leavy
North Unitarian Universalist
Congregation

Troy Kunkler

Jodi Kushins
Kehilat Sukkat Shalom
she/her/hers

Kris LoFrumento
Methodist Theological School in Ohio
she/her/hers

Loren Lybarger

Benjamin McKean

Kayla Merchant

Gary Metzenbacher

Jen Miller
League of Women Voters of Ohio

Sr. Roberta Miller
Dominican Sisters of Peace

Rebecca Mosher

Rev. Sylvia Niedner

Deacon Patti Nussle
Broad Street Presbyterian Church

Rev. Sally Padgett
First English Lutheran
she/her/hers

Jared Petersen
he/him/his

Jan Phillips
First Unitarian Universalist Church
she/her/hers

Donald Plummer
he/him/his

Michael Premo
Church for All People

Thomas Puckett
he/him/his

Elaina Ramsey
Ohio Religious Coalition for
Reproductive Choice
she/her/hers

Tanya Schroeder
she/her/hers

Debra Seltzer
Kehilat Sukkat Shalom
she/her/hers

Tova Seltzer

Rev. Dr. Mary Shields

Samantha Shivener

Rev. Lynda Smith
Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio

Stuart Smith

Graham Spangler
they/them/theirs

Eliz Speidel

Rebekah Sperling
Methodist Theological School in Ohio
she/her/hers

Ryan Stagg
he/him/his

Pastor Terry Stephens
Manifestation Church

Rev. Karl Stevens
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
he/him/his

Chantal Stone
she/her/hers

Gregory Thomas

Frances Wooster

Patricia Tietz
she/her/hers

Pastor Mary Torok
St. John's United Church of Christ
she/her/hers

Virginia Vogts

Father Charles Wilson

Rev. Gary Witte
St. John's United Church of Christ