

We, as members of The Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs in the KIO Region join with righteous people from around the world to condemn the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and countless others. We offer our unequivocal support and sympathize with their families for the senseless, heinous and racist-fueled murders of their loved ones and with the grieving communities of Minneapolis, Louisville and Brunswick, Georgia and countless others.

We understand and speak out against these injustices, as in our long history as Jews we too have been vilified and murdered for who we are and how we look.

We do not need to reach back too far in our history to remember when our brothers and sisters at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh were senselessly murdered by a white supremacist. They were killed because they were Jews, just as countless blacks have been killed because they are black. We remember how we felt as we received the horrible information that day and we remember how we grieved for them. We also remember that day as the black community came and prayed and supported us.

We understand systemic racism and bigotry all too well. Our communities have experienced it and it has been a part of our history since before the pharaohs. The Black Community's and Jewish Community's paths have intersected and mimicked each other throughout the generations. When we remember our 400 years enslaved in Egypt, we think of the Black Community who has faced oppression and forms of enslavement for hundreds of years in America. And, just as we were rounded up and murdered in Europe during the Holocaust, Jim Crow laws led to the rounding up and lynching of blacks in our country.

The Jewish Community has stood-up and joined in the fight against racism and bigotry and will continue to do so for as long as is necessary. We marched and died with the Black Community during the Civil Rights movements in the 1950s and 60's. However, to think that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 fixed the racial/racist/bigoted problem, would be remiss. We remember the police beating of Rodney King nearly 30 years ago and we see that things are not fixed and we have more work to make things right. And on May 25, 2020, we collectively witnessed the brutal murder of George Floyd, an innocent black man. It is our job to help fight for justice for all people.

Our Jewish traditions and values compel us to stand up for the rights of all people without prejudice or bias. As Parsha Shoftim so brilliantly exclaims, "Justice, Justice You Shall Pursue", it is the eternal obligation of Judaism. How we treat the weakest in our midst is at the core of Judaism. Goodness, justice and decency form the foundation of Judaism. As we said after the Tree of Life massacre, "Never Again". We will continue to shine our lights onto all good people. We believe silence is complicity and we dedicate ourselves to listening to and supporting our black brothers and sisters around the world.

Respectfully,

Karl B. Rubin, Ross Goodman and Dale Levy