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The Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ writes to express our acknowledgement of the communal pain, outrage and lament felt by so many of our citizens. The Illinois Conference is truly outraged, and we boldly stand with our siblings who have gathered across this nation in agitation, resistance, sorrow, and hope. We affirm Black and Brown Lives Matter. We therefore choose to remain centered on the impetus for the unrest.

Fifty-three years ago - on April 14, 1967—the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King gave a captivating speech which he titled “*The Other America*” at Stanford University. King addressed race, poverty, and economic injustice. King said: *For in the final analysis, the riot is the language of the unheard. And what is it that America’s failed to hear? It’s failed to hear that the plight of the Negro poor has worsened over the last few years. It has failed to hear that the promises of justice and freedom have not been met. It has failed to hear that large segments of white society are more concerned about tranquility and the status quo than about justice, humanity, and equality, and it is still true. It is still true that these things are being ignored.*

The persistence of racially biased policing means that, unless American policing reckons with its racist roots (which are born out of “Slave Patrols” of the early 1700’s), it is likely to keep repeating mistakes of the past. This has and will continue to hinder the police from fully protecting and serving the entire public.

The Illinois Conference and we as the Ministerial Leadership Team stand boldly to be a voice to speak out for the reconstruction of laws, policies and strict accountability for those law enforcement officers who choose not to adhere to the human standards of equality for all of God’s people. The Conference stands against the perpetuation of systemic racism and injustice fueled by the sin of an ideology of white supremacy and privilege.

To echo the sentiments of the Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III; As people of faith we are called to pray, but more than prayer is needed. Yes, speak out, but more than just conversation is needed. People of faith are called upon to act in ways that will rebuild, reform and reunite this land.

In the days that lie ahead we ask you to ask these questions based on Micah 6:8:

*What does the Lord require of you?
But to do justly,
To love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God ?*

“God's desires for us are not shrouded in mystery. God has made it crystal clear how we can please our Creator; the way we should act, what we should value, and how we should relate to the Holy. It's not a question of knowledge but a matter of will.”

New King James Commentary Henry Blackabee

What are you willing to give to effect change in this moment in history?

What can you give to bring “God’s Kin-dom on earth”?

United as one, we are the Ministerial Leadership Team of the Illinois Conference,

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Statement on Letterhead (.pdf)
We are outraged. Black and Brown Lives Matter.



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