



## **Statement on Racial Justice from Leaders of the Presbytery of Donegal**

Earlier this week the jury in the Derek Chauvin trial issued guilty verdicts on all three charges brought against the former Minneapolis Police Officer for the murder of George Floyd. In the days since the decision, news outlets and social media have been awash in commentary on the significance of this moment.

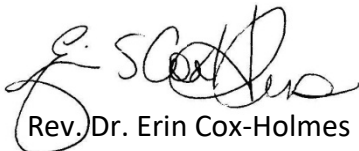
We at the Presbytery of Donegal join in affirming this development as one of significance, and we pray that it will be a catalyst for a long overdue public reckoning with the impact of racism and white supremacy on our society and its institutions. Specifically, we are bold to hope that the events of the past week will inspire a reexamining of policing methods in our communities, and lead to a changing tide in judicial accountability in cases where people of color have been the victims of racially based violence or discrimination.

We hope, but our hope is tempered. It is tempered by the truth that George Floyd was senselessly killed last summer, and that he is just one in a countless list of people of color who have been victims of racism in our society which views dark skin as a threat. It is tempered by knowing that there are families, friends, and whole communities which continue to grieve the loss of loved ones who should still be with them today. It is tempered by an awareness that the significance of this moment is derived only from its break with a long-standing history of unaccountability for perpetrators of violence and hate against the black community in this country. And it is tempered by a recognition that the roots of racism and white supremacy reach down to the very bedrock of our society and influence every aspect of our lives.

With all this mind, we state alongside so many others, that while the court's decision was indeed a display of accountability, there are no grounds by which we can say that justice has been fully served. Nothing can bring back George Floyd. And we reject any false equivalency that would allow the horror of his murder to be diminished by any reckoning concerning racial justice occasioned by it. Even still, as we stand at this juncture with the Chauvin conviction now behind us, we recognize that the true significance of this moment will only be determined by where we go from here.

In part, the journey forward for Donegal Presbytery will be charted by the newly created Racial Justice Task Group. This group has met a number of times over the past several months, with a newly appointed steering committee now focused on honing in on specific goals and initiatives to move its work forward. The Leader Team of Donegal Presbytery gives thanks to God for the diverse gifts and passions exhibited by the members of this team, and eagerly offers its full support to the Task Group as it takes steps to move our congregations and presbyteries forward in a unified and positive direction toward equity and love for all of our neighbors.

In Christ,



Rev. Dr. Erin Cox-Holmes  
Executive Presbyter



Rev. Dr. Michael Wilson  
Stated Clerk



Rev. Sarah Kneier  
2021 Presbytery Leader Team Chair



Rev. Scott Szabo  
Racial Justice Task Group Facilitator