

We, the undersigned Rabbis and Cantors of North Carolina, join together to express our outrage at the flagrant, systemic racism that consistently devalues the lives of our Black and Brown siblings.

In particular, we express our indignation at the ruthless murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and Breonna Taylor, as well as those killed in our own state including Keith Lamont Scott, and our nation's long history of police brutality and vigilante violence.

The Talmud teaches, "Whoever destroys a single life, it is as if they destroyed an entire world and whoever saves one life it is as if they have saved the entire world." From this, we learn that every life is sacred, humanity is inexorably bound, and all of God's children suffer when one precious life is lost.

We proudly represent a diverse Jewish community. We raise our voices out of grave concern for the safety of our fellow Jewish community members of Color and all Black and Brown Americans at-risk.

We also recognize the anguish of upstanding law enforcement officials whose good names are tarnished by the insidious actions of some in their midst. We urge officers to seize this moment to whole-heartedly commit themselves to hold their colleagues accountable for bigoted actions.

The moral pandemic of racism wreaking havoc in our country is no less deadly than Covid-19. Indeed, the two are inextricable, as we note that this virus has disproportionately ravaged Black, Brown and immigrant communities.

We firmly stand with those who choose to exercise their right to protest in nonviolent ways. Civic leaders who seek to deny this constitutional right undercut one of the great foundation stones of our democracy.

We categorically condemn all acts of wanton violence. While the damage caused by the taking of a life by law enforcement is far greater than that caused by destruction of property by provocateurs, there is deep pain in our country because of both.

This tragedy is also an opportunity for our community to fully see ourselves as a racially diverse Jewish community. We must engage in a *heshbon nefesh* ("accounting of the soul") that confronts our community's failure to fully welcome Jews of Color and our role, even if unintended, in perpetuating racism.

May the Holy One grant comfort to the bereaved, give us courage to raise our voices for justice, and grant us strength to stand in solidarity with the oppressed.

Rabbi Ana Bonnheim, Moishe House, Charlotte
Rabbi Kenneth Brickman, Pinehurst
Rabbi Leah Citrin, Temple Beth Or, Raleigh

Rabbi Geoffrey Claussen, Elon University, Elon
Cantor Katy Claussen, Jewish Family Services, Greensboro
Rabbi Mark Cohn, Temple Emanuel, Winston-Salem
Rabbi Lucy Dinner, Temple Beth Or, Raleigh
Rabbi Ariel Edery, Beth Shalom, Cary
Rabbi Dr. Andrew Vogel Ettin, Temple Israel, Salisbury
Rabbi Jennifer Feldman, Kehillah Synagogue, Chapel Hill
Rabbi Elana Friedman, Jewish Life at Duke, Durham
Rabbi Daniel Greyber, Beth El, Durham
Rabbi Fred Guttman, Temple Emanuel, Greensboro
Rabbi Rachael Jackson, Agudas Israel Congregation, Hendersonville
Rabbi Dr. Raachel Jurovics, Episcopal Diocese of NC, Raleigh
Rabbi Steven Kirschner, Raleigh
Rabbi Dusty Klass, Temple Beth El, Charlotte
Rabbi Andy Koren, Temple Emanuel, Greensboro
Rabbi Helene Kornsgold, Temple Israel, Charlotte
Rabbi Asher Knight, Temple Beth El, Charlotte
Cantor Karen Neff Kumin, Yavneh, Raleigh
***Rabbi Sandra Lawson, Elon University, Elon**
Rabbi Dr. Laura Lieber, Duke University, Durham
Rabbi David Lipper, Temple Kol Tikvah, Davidson
Cantor Shira Lissek, Temple Israel, Charlotte
Rabbi Emily Losben-Ostrov, Temple of Israel, Wilmington
Cantor Jacqueline Marx, Carrboro
Rabbi Batsheva Meiri, Congregation Beth HaTephila, Asheville
Rabbi Brian Nelson, Cary
Rabbi Judy Schindler, Greenspon Center for Peace & Social Justice, Charlotte
Rabbi Howard Siegel, Charlotte
***Rabbi Melissa Simon, North Carolina Hillel, Chapel Hill**
Rabbi Rachel Smookler, The Ruach Experience, Charlotte
***Rabbi Matthew Soffer, Judea Reform Congregation, Durham**
***Rabbi Eric Solomon, Beth Meyer Synagogue, Raleigh**
Rabbi Dr. Jennifer Solomon, Beth Meyer Synagogue, Raleigh
Rabbi Dr. Barbara Thiede, Temple Or Olam, Concord
Cantor Mary Rebecca Thomas, Temple Beth El, Charlotte

*Organizer

Rabbis and Cantors listed with organizations for identification purposes only.

For more information about ways Jews in North Carolina can take action, go to carolinajewsforjustice.org/black_lives_matter