



THE LATINO COMMISSION

Eastern Pennsylvania Conference
The United Methodist Church



June 17, 2020

¡Familia en Cristo!

The tragic and senseless murders of our brothers George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, our sister Breonna Taylor and Rayshod Brooks has highlighted the reality of racism that so often black and brown people face across this nation. We mourn their murders and pray for God's justice to rise among us. From families being separated, detained in overcrowded camps and left to die to the continued violent assault on black bodies by police, only serve to point to the truth that for too long our communities continue to be heavily policed and systematically targeted and brutalized. This reality is not lost on us. COVID 19 is not the only virus that has plagued our country, and in particular our black and brown communities. Rather since its inception racism, white supremacy and white privilege has been the greatest disease and sin that continues to destroy and devalue human life.

The Latino Commission of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference stands in solidarity with our siblings of the Black Methodist for Church Renewal (BMCR) of the Eastern Penn Conference and their prophetic letter recently sent to the entire annual conference. We also stand with the BMCR Caucus in our larger connection and denomination. With them, we raise our voices to proclaim that: **BLACK LIVES MATTER!** ¡LAS VIDAS NEGRAS VALEN!

When black voices rise, all voices rise because the story of racism, white supremacy and discrimination is one that we share specifically with our African American sisters and brothers, and can continue to witness and experience the brutal scars of colonialism and institutional racism in our midst till this day.

The Latino Commission, commits itself along with our siblings in BMCR to hold our Annual Conference accountable to take seriously the work of dismantling racism in all its form and to continue to live up to our baptismal vows as United Methodist "to resist evil and oppression in every form it presents itself" and to continue the work of Jesus Christ, who incarnated the love of God living like a brown, Palestinian Jew, in a military occupied, oppressed community and who commissioned us:

*"to bring good news to the poor...
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed, go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4:18,19 (NRSV)*

Standing together for Justice!