

Day 7 Devotion

“...Peace when there is no peace.” They dress the wound of my people as though it were **not** serious. ‘**Peace, peace,**’ they say, **when there is no peace.** Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11

I cannot keep silent. To do so would be viewed as approval. I have been hesitant to speak, because of the depth of my pain and outrage. I did not want to lash out with my tongue.

As many of you know Terry and I are the parents of a 6’ 5” 21-year-old black male. Syron has been our son since we adopted him at 10 days old. His black life matters dearly to us. The issue of black and white in America is not an abstract issue to Terry or to me. It is very personal.

A couple of months after we moved into Windsor Park, the police were called on Syron. He was walking around the neighborhood around 10PM talking on his phone. The Brunswick police responded and handled the situation professionally. I am grateful because this could have had a different outcome. Such a thing never happened to Syron in our previous community. We lived in a lower middle class and more racially diverse neighborhood.

My heart has been ripped open since the facts surrounding the killing of Ahmaud Arbery have come out, as well the circumstances surrounding Breonna Taylor’s death in Louisville and the horrible clip of George Floyd’s suffocation in Minneapolis. I feel so powerless. I grieve for the loss of these black lives. I grieve that we still have a race problem in America - that there exists a grave disparity between the collective lives of blacks and whites in our nation. Tragically, too many in our society, and in our pews, talk past one another on this issue. If we talk about it at all.

I connect to #irunwithmaud and #icantbreathe. I do not see this as sloganeering but as a sincere lament for justice. Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount blessed those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (justice). Such a hungering and thirsting is akin to Israel yearning for rescue from enslavement in Egypt. Such is the justice I yearn for and support.

I showed my support by proudly attending the first rally at the Glynn County Courthouse on May 8th. I support the protesters. Our nation was formed by protest. Protests are constitutionally protected. This does not mean I oppose police. I respect the police and their ongoing service to our communities. They have difficult and often thankless jobs. Yet, I will continue to protest and support those nonviolently seeking justice, because I cannot and will not say peace when there is no peace!

Chris Noyes, Minister At Large

Savannah Presbytery

God of the Exodus and Exile; We, confess that we are a people who hide behind religion and tradition to keep ourselves from Your truth and faithfulness. Grant us your severe mercy and cleansing grace so that we will not say peace when there is no peace, Justice when there is no justice or racism when there is no racism. Amen.