

Cross Street Unitarian Chapel



29 Cross Street,
Manchester M2 1NL
tel: 0161 834 0019
<http://CrossStChapel.org.uk>

Cross Street Chapel, its minister and committee are filled with sadness and grief by the brutal killing of George Floyd last week in Minneapolis. Our faith calls us to recognise “the worth and dignity of all people” and his death is anathema to the professed ideals of a police force whose motto is "to protect with courage, to serve with compassion."

George Floyd’s death sadly rests alongside many other Black victims. Acknowledging the systemic racism and anti-blackness that has plagued our world, we denounce this senseless killing, and commit to supporting People of Colour in and beyond our community. As a congregation committed to equality, we join with the voices across the United States and the world calling for justice to be done, and for the officers responsible for George Floyd's death to be prosecuted for their crimes. Our compassion calls us to acknowledge the deep-seated anger that People of Colour are feeling in response to these events. We condemn those seeking to take advantage of this tragedy by perpetrating violence but also recognise the systemic violence that has caused this outburst of protest. We must also recognise with concern that there are White Supremacist groups who are aggravating the violence with the intention of inciting further criticism of People of Colour.

The chapel is aware of its own complicated history, a congregation that has included both slave-owner and abolitionist. As we continue to promote a message of tolerance, we must remain vigilant in countering our own implicit biases and racist structures.

To better care for People of Colour, and as part of our wider commitment to diversity and inclusion, we will be implementing specific initiatives, detailed on the following page.

Above all, we will be better listeners to those voices seeking justice, calling for change, and affirming that Black Lives Matter.

With love and care,

Rev’d Cody Coyne, Minister
Adam O’Leary-Amponsah, Chairperson
Cross Street Chapel Congregational Committee

6 June 2020

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To better care for People of Colour, and as part of our wider commitment to diversity and inclusion, we will implementing these specific initiatives:

Organisation

We will review our constitution and structures to better enable participation by People of Colour.

Worship

We will ensure that our worship contains a broad range of materials (readings, prayers, music, etc.) of ethnically diverse authorship, in recognition of the variety of people who influence our Manchester-based, globalised community. We will do this while being mindful that our use of words from People of Colour risks being culturally appropriative, and will seek permission from authors to use texts where possible, and in all cases will use a standpoint of Critical Whiteness to understand the impact of the choices of texts used in our worship.

We will seek to ensure our reflection on scripture is aware of and inclusive towards Black theologies and other modes of interpretation.

We will aim to include more People of Colour speaking from our pulpit.

Education

We will promote the resources of anti-racist scholarship, towards the end of educating ourselves.

We will explore our archives to tell the unvarnished history of our chapel including when it has contributed to the current pervasive and wicked structures of White Supremacy.

Outreach

We will engage with and support as allies communities of colour in Manchester.

We will commit to the promotion of BME events, and lend financial support when able.

Lettings

We will review our lettings policies and practices to remove barriers for Black and other minorities.