

The Clergy Coalition of the Unheard:

Rev. Dr. Mark Tyler, Senior Pastor, Mother Bethel AME
Rev. Dr. Alyn Waller, Senior Pastor, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Leslie Callahan, Senior Pastor, St. Paul's Baptist Church
Elder Melanie DeBouse, Pastor, Evangel Chapel Church
Rev. James Buck, Senior Pastor, Grace Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Donald Moore, Senior Pastor, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church
Rev. Keon Gerow, Senior Pastor, Catalyst for Change Church
Rev. Dr. Darron McKinley, Senior Pastor, Bright Hope Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. William Moore, Senior Pastor, 10th Memorial Baptist Church
Rev. Nick Taliaferro, Senior Pastor, West Philadelphia Seventh Day Adventist Church
Rev. Dr. Clarence Wright, Senior Pastor, Love Zion Baptist Church
Rev. Cean James, Associate Conference Minister, PA Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ, Senior Pastor, Grace Christian Fellowship UCC
Rev. Dr. Donna Jones, Senior Pastor, Cookman Beloved Baptist Church, President, Metropolitan Christian Council of Philadelphia
Bishop Dwayne D. Royster, Interim Executive Director, POWER
Rev. Marshall Mitchell, Senior Pastor, Salem Baptist Church

June 2, 2020

Mayor James Kenney
City Hall, Office 215
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Mayor Kenney:

We, the undersigned, are an interfaith, diverse group of faith leaders who serve thousands of Philadelphians on a weekly basis. Our members either live or work in the city. The members we minister to expect that we will raise our voices on their behalf when we perceive that things are not as they should be. In this moment of great social upheaval and unrest, we find it necessary to write to you to express our deep concern about several pressing matters.

As the anger at the murder of Minneapolis resident George Floyd has risen in Philadelphia, the lack of clear, bold answers from our elected leaders has led to the righteous rage of thousands against police violence and brutality. We are mindful that the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called riots the language of the unheard. But, Dr. King went a step further and suggested that we ask ourselves this question: What is it that the unheard are saying?

This is what we hear from our members:

1. We must change the spending priorities in the budget

As we watch the streets, we are also watching the budget process. We find it objectionable that at a time when deep cuts are being proposed across the board that the Philadelphia Police Department is slated for an increase. Budgets are moral documents that speak in a powerful way about what we value and treasure. We need a budget that heals by giving our young people fully funded libraries and recreation centers, not more police. We need a budget that heals by creating jobs and investing in the Office of Workforce Development and Office of Adult Education, instead of cutting them. We need a budget that protects people from mass evictions. Our children need fully funded schools, not a budget that makes policing and incarcerating the largest portion of our spending. And we need a budget that uses the spending power of Council to end police abuse in Philadelphia. The city has been generous enough already by providing a 2.5% pay raise for law enforcement. We believe this is enough under the current backdrop of city-wide pay cuts, layoffs, and furloughs. Therefore, we urge you to say publicly that you will not provide the Police Department with \$14 million in additional funding.

2. We must support the Black Doctors COVID19 Consortium

Under the leadership of Dr. Ala Stanford and fellow Black doctors, supported by her pastor and area clergy, the Black Doctors COVID19 Consortium has raised just shy of \$200,000 and tested over 5,000 mostly African American residents in the hardest-hit zip codes for COVID19. In addition, they have become skilled at contact tracing. This is important in that Black Pennsylvanians are dying at twice the rate of their White neighbors. Yet, to date, the only resources they have received from the City of Philadelphia has been PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). The city must do more to support this life-saving effort. Philadelphia has received just under \$100 million in federal funds for COVID19 testing and contact tracing. The Black Doctors COVID19 Consortium has proven itself and deserves to share in the leadership of how these funds are allocated during this pandemic. Therefore, we call upon you to ensure that the Black Doctors COVID19 Consortium receives a significant amount of the funding for both continued testing and contact tracing.

3. The statue of former mayor Frank Rizzo must go now

While we appreciate your commitment to living up to the more than 2-year promise you made to remove the statue of Frank Rizzo from city-owned property by the end of the month, that is simply not good enough. The presence of the statue is a daily, painful reminder to Black residents of the type of abuses of policing power that led to the recent police killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. We cannot wait another month and possibly longer. We have a solution. We call upon you to cover the Rizzo Statue immediately so that it will no longer be seen on city property until it is finally removed.

4. Stand against the rehiring of ousted “Facebook” Philadelphia Police officers

Last year, 13 Philadelphia Police officers were fired due to their conduct on social media, which included racist, bigoted, Islamophobic, misogynistic content. Thanks to the Plain View Project, this conduct was brought to light, which resulted in the termination of the said officers. However, arbitration is such a powerful tool that it often helps officers get

their jobs back even when deemed by their own colleagues as unfit to serve. We call upon you as Mayor to join us in stating publicly that these persons should never work in law enforcement again and to call for as much transparency as possible in the arbitration process.

5. Stand in solidarity with Minneapolis

The killing of George Floyd has hit all us in a most painful way. We who have seen the video have been forever scarred with the sight and sound of the former officer with his knee on his throat as he gasped for his last breath, as he called out for his mother, as the crowd pleaded for the police to stop. We are grateful that the wheels of justice have started to move by arresting the officer directly responsible for what their District Attorney believes was murder. But, he did not act alone. The other 3 officers stood by and did nothing. We believe that they too are partly responsible for the death of George Floyd. We ask that you publicly join our call through a resolution to arrest all officers involved in the death of Mr. Floyd as an act of solidarity with the people of Minneapolis.

In summary, this city is our beloved home. The choices we make in the coming days will shape the future of our city for years ahead. This moment requires bold and clear leadership. As a first step, we ask that: (1) you reject any city budget that increases spending on the police while starving the community services we need and that fails to use the spending power of Council to end police abuse in Philadelphia; (2) that you take action to address the appalling death rate from COVID-19 in Black neighborhoods by assuring that the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium is supported with funding for testing and contact tracing; (3) that you immediately remove the Rizzo statue and the legacy it stands for; (4) that you stand publicly against the rehiring of racist police officers; and (5) that you speak out publicly on the need to arrest all four officers who participated in the murder of George Floyd.

To talk about all of these urgent issues in this extraordinary moment, we are formally requesting that you and your staff attend a community public hearing online that we will call in the next days. The ability of our communities and our leaders to participate in the decision-making that is our hard-fought democratic right is deeply curtailed by this coronavirus moment and by the militarization of our streets. We need you to speak with your communities and us immediately on these urgent matters. For more information please contact Bishop Dwayne Royster at droyster@powerphiladelphia.org (215) 232-7697.

Sincerely,

Bishop Dwayne Royster, Executive Director, POWER

Rev. Keon Gerow, Pastor Catalyst Church

Rev. Dr. Donald D. Moore, Mount Carmel Baptist Church

Rev. James McIntire, Pastor, United Methodist Church

Rev. Violet Little, Pastor, The Welcome Church
Rabbi Mordechai Liebling, Philadelphians Organized to Witness Empower & Rebuild (POWER)
Rev. Sean Lanigan, Rector, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Ardmore
Rabbi Julie Greenberg, Rabbi, Congregation Leyv Ha Ir - Heart of the City
Rev. Eileen DiFranco, Pastor,
Rev. Dr. Clarence Wright, Senior Pastor, Love Zion Baptist Church
Rabbi Nancy Kreimer, rabbi, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Rev. Sylvester Peterka, Pastor, St. Vincent DePaul Catholic Church
Rabbi Jessica Rosenberg, National Organizer, Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson, Pastor, Overbrook Presbyterian Church
Rabbi Linda Holtzman, Rabbi, Tikkun Olam Chavurah
Rev. Daniel Eisenberg, Pastor, Saint John's Lutheran Church Mayfair/POWER Interfaith
Rabbi Phyllis Berman, Spiritual Director, ALEPH Ordination Program
Rev. Mark Tyler, Pastor, Mother Bethel AME Church
Rabbi David Teutsch, Professor Emeritus, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Rabbi Arthur Waskow, Executive Director, The Shalom Center
Rabbi Eli C. Freedman, Rabbi, Congregation Rodeph Shalom
Rabbi Malkah Binah Klein
Rabbi Adam Zeff, Rabbi, Germantown Jewish Centre
Rabbi Marcia Prager Rabbi, P'nai Or Jewish Renewal Congregation of Philadelphia
Rabbi Michelle Greenfield, Director of Family Education and Engagement, Kol Tzedek
Rev. Barbara Ballenger, Associate for Formation and Care, Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields
Rev. William Brawner, Pastor, Mid town Parish United Methodist Church
Rabbi Raysh Weiss, Rabbi Dr. Congregation Beth El of Bucks County
Rev. Ashley Rossi, Pastor, Carmel Presbyterian Church
Rabbi Rayzel Raphael, Rabbi, Darkaynu
Rev. Cean James, Senior Pastor, Salt&Light (UCC&PCUSA)
Rabbi Shawn Zevit, Mishkan Shalom
Rev. Sandra Brown, Pastor, Peace Lutheran Church
Rev. April Martin, Pastor, Mt. Zion AME Church
Rev. Laura Colee, Head Pastor, Broad Street Ministry

Rev. McKinley Sims, Minister, Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration
Rabbi Yitz Nates, HaLev
Rabbi Aaron Gaber, Rabbi, Congregation Brothers of Israel
Rev. Garrison Lockley, Pastor, Bethel AME Church
Rabbi Dayle Friedman, Rabbi, Congregation Levv Ha-Ir~Heart of the City
Rev. Sarah Hedgis, Associate Rector, St. Peter's Episcopal Philadelphia
Rabbi Robyn Frisch, Rabbi, Temple Menorah Keneseth Chai
Rev. Jacqueline Pinkney, AME
Rabbi Ari Lev Fornari, Kol Tzedek
Rev. Linda Noonan, Senior Pastor, Chestnut Hill United Church
Rev. AJ Smith Lead Pastor, Restoration Church of Philadelphia
Rabbi Tamara Cohen
Rev. Kevin Jagoe, Minister, BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Rev. Dr. Daren Miller, Pastor, Memorial Church of God in Christ
Rev. Dr. Kipp Gilmore-Clough, Associate Pastor, Chestnut Hill United Church
Rev. Dr. Neal Jones, Minister, Main Line Unitarian Church
Rev. John Gardner, Rector, Church of the Holy Trinity, Rittenhouse Square
Rabbi Erin Hirsh, Rabbi, JEWEL Consulting
Rabbi Yosef Goldman, Co-Director, Rising Song Institute
Rabbi Annie Lewis, Associate Rabbi, Temple Beth Zion-Beth Israel
Rabbi Elyse Seidner-Joseph, Founder and Spiritual Leader, Makom Kadosh
Rabbi Howard Avruhm Addison, Director, Jewish Spirituality Doctoral Program, Graduate Theological Foundation
Rabbi Nathan Martin, Rabbi, Congregation Beth Israel
Rabbi Elyse Wechterman, Executive Director, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association
Rev. Austin Shelley, Associate Pastor, The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill
Rabbi Alissa Wise, Jewish Voice for Peace
Rev. Abbey Tennis, Lead Minister, First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia
Rev. Jamie Kaufman, Chaplain, Pastor, People of The Way of Jesus
Rabbi Alan LaPayover, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Rabbi Anna Boswell-Levy, Rabbi, Congregation Kol Emet, POWER Bucks
Rev. Sameh Shaker, Pastor of Visitation, Neshaminy Warwick Presbyterian Church

Rev. Crystal Goree, Interim Pastor, The Second Baptist Church of Germantown
Rabbi Charles Briskin, Senior Rabbi, Shir Ami Congregation
Rabbi Micah Shapiro, Rabbi
Rev. Cheryl Pynch, Summit Presbyterian Church
Rev. Benjamin Capps
Rabbi Alanna Sklover, Rabbi, Or Hadash: A Reconstructionist Congregation
Rev. Claire Nevin-Field, Rector, St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Rabbi Myriam Klotz, Director, Spiritual Direction Programming, HUC-JIR/NY
Rabbi Rebecca Alpert
Rabbi Simcha Zevit, Rabbi, Narberth Havurah
Rev. Lorie Hershey, Pastor, West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship
Rabbi Mónica Gomery, Rabbi, Kol Tzedek Synagogue
Rev. Sharon Kind
Sister Mary Elizabeth Clark, SSJ, Sisters of St. Joseph
Rabbi Robert Tabak, Editor, Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association RRA Connection
Rev. Jeanette Davis, Reverend, D.I.V.A.S Ministry Group Non-Profit.Org.
Rev. Joshua Caler, Rector, Christ Episcopal Church
Rev. Damon Savage, Pastor of Liturgy and Discipleship, Restoration Church of Philadelphia
Rev. Richard Fernandez, Tabernacle United Church
Rev. Robert Coombe, Pastor, First United Methodist Church of Germantown
Rachel Davidson, Rabbinical Student, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Rev. Beth Lyon, Pastor, Glenside United Church of Christ
Rabbi Julie Pfau, Rabbi, Temple B'nai Abraham, Bordentown NJ
Rev. Rebecca Blake, Pastor, Beacon Church
Priscilla Tennant, Associate Pastor, Chestnut Hill United Church
Rev. Dr. Wayne Croft, Pastor, St. Paul's Baptist Church
Rev. Phyllis Harris, Rev. Mt. Pisgah A. M. E. Church
Rev. Angela Brown-Vann, St. Mark A.M.E Zion
Rabbi David Levin, Founder/Director, Jewish Relationships Initiative
Rev. Nichole Jackson, Pastor, Trinity Reformed United Church of Christ/POWER
Rabbi Tsurah August, Chaplain, JFCS
Rabbi Marjorie Berman, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Rev. Robert Collier, President, Galilee Baptist Church/Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity

Rabbi Vivian Mayer, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Rev. Cheryl Pynch, Summit Presbyterian Church

Rev. Rebecca Segers, Head Pastor, First Presbyterian Church in Germantown

Rev. David Tatgenhorst, St. Luke Church

Rabbi Yael Levy, Mishkan Shalom

Rabbi Kelilah Miller

Rev. John Rice, Presbytery of Philadelphia

Rev. Michael King, Presiding Elder, Philadelphia District of the A.M.E. Zion Church

Rev. Lugenure Jones, Pastor, Bensalem AME Church

Rev. William Scott III, Senior Pastor, House of Faith Baptist Church-UCC

Rev. Judith Sullivan, Dean, Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral

Cantor Jessi Roemer, Society Hill Synagogue

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Rev. Jeffrey L. Ruffin, Pastor, Alleyne Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church

Rev. Eugene Branham, New Hope AME Zion Church

Mr. Juan Arango, Living Water United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Calenthia Dowdy, Director of Faith Initiatives, Philadelphia FIGHT

Rabbi Diana Miller, Kehilat HaNahar

Rev. Richelle Foreman Gunter, Associate Minister, St. Paul's Baptist Church

Rabbi Sheila Weinberg, Rabbi/ Retired member of Germantown Jewish Centre

Rev. Frances Chester Falkner, Swamp United Church of Christ

Masaru Edmund Nakawatase, Clerk, Racial and Social Justice Committee, Germantown Friends Meeting

Rev. Anne Thatcher, Associate Rector, Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields

Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner

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Rabbi Elisa Goldberg, Temple Micah

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Rev. J Kenneth Hawley Jr, Pastor, Open Door Sanctuary
Rev. Donna Jones, Executive Director, MCCP
Rev. Donna Jones, Pastor, Cookman Beloved Community Baptist Church
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Rev. Doug Harris, Associate Pastor, Kingdom Worship Center
Rev. Damon Carver, Pastor, AME Zion Church
Rev. Katherine Brooks, Pastor, Bethel A.M.E. Church
Dr. Drick Boyd, Professor Emeritus, Eastern University
Rev. Walter Little, Associate Minister, AME Zion Church
Rev. Dr. Malcolm Byrd, President & CEO, Philadelphia Forum for Faith, Law and Civics (Forum Philly)
Rev. Dr. Thelma Fletcher, Associate Minister, AME Zion Church
Rev. DIANA L Clark, Associate Minister, Allen AME Church
Rev. Dr. W. Gregory Fleming, Pastor/Teacher, St. Joseph Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Sharon Gramby-Sobukwe, Associate Minister, First Corinthian Baptist Church
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Rev. Lydia Munoz, Clergy, Swarthmore United Methodist Church
Anthony Battle, Minister, African Methodist Episcopal Church
Rev. Bruce MacCullough, POWER Interfaith
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Robin Hinton, Minister, Zion Baptist Church of Ambler

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Rev. Michael Caine, Pastor, Old First Reformed United Church of Christ
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Rabbi Eric Woodward, Rabbi, Tiferet Bet Israel
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Rabbi Nathan Kamesar, ,
Mr. Lincoln Statler, Spiritual Support Specialist, Psychiatric Hospital- Philadelphia
Rev. Dr. Alexander Houston, Pastor, The Christian Church in Philadelphia
Rabbi Reba Carmel, ,
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Rev. Orville Brissett, Senior Pastor, Germantown Seventh Day Adventist Church
Rev. Dr. Darron McKinney, Senior Pastor, Bright Hope Baptist Church
Carlos McConico, Pastor, Ebenezer SDA Church
Rev. Sandra Reed, Pastor, St. Mark AME Zion Church

Rabbi Leah Berkowitz, Rabbi, Congregation Kol Ami
Rev. Lethonia Dennison, Rev, St. Matthew AME Church
Rabbi Avi Winokur, Society Hill Synagogue
Rabbi Leah Wald, Rabbi, an area hospital (I don't speak for the hospital)
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Rev. Terry Oakman, Pastor, National Temple Baptist Church
Rev. Sharon Kind
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Rev. Dr. Kimberlee Johnson, Fellowship of Women Clergy, Inc.
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Rev. Jacqueline Capers, Pastor, Disney-Nichols
Jaynette Arrington, Fellowship of Women Clergy
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Rev. Dianne Faust, Grace Baptist Church of Germantown

Rev. Dr. Lori Banfield, Executive Director/ Associate Elder, Redemption Housing - Reentry Services / Gates of Heaven Pentecostal Church

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Rev. Dr. Michelle Ford, Lead Pastor, Serenity Christian Worship Center Inc.

Rabbi Janine Jankovitz

Rev. Vernon Byrd Jr, Pastor, St Matthew AME Church

Rev. Dr. Michael Heath, Staff Minister, St Matthew AME Church

Rev. Alfred Williams, Associate Minister, New Hope Ministries

Timothy Williams, Ebenezer Temple Pentecostal Church

Rev. Tianda Smart, Pastor, Union AME Church

Rev. Dr. Jessic Ingram, Episcopal Supervisor, AME Church

Rev. Dr. Stephen Kriss, Executive Minister, Mosaic Mennonite Conference

Kim Brown, Deaconess, Beulah Tabernacle

Rev. Sheila Salley, Reverend, Sharon Baptist Church

Rev. David Reppert, Pastor, Emanuel United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson, Pastor, Overbrook Presbyterian Church

Rev. Maxine Johnson, Reverend, AME Church

Rev. Charmaine Goldsmith, Elder, Abundant Life Care and Outreach Ministries

Rev. Robert Goldsmith, Elder, ALCOM Abundant Life Care and Outreach

Rev. Susan Teegen, Ordained Minister + Executive Director, Philadelphia Association, United Church of Christ plus ArtWell

Rev. Tamika Holder, Staff, Fellowship of Women Clergy

Rev. Toni Waddington, Elder, Sisters of Philadelphia

Rev. Dr. Clayton Furlow, Pastor, Philippian Baptist Church

Bonita Patterson, Deacon, Beulah Tabernacle Church

Rev. Dr. Ayoka Dyani-Ojo, Apostle, Truth Universal Spiritual Kingdom

Faithe Hornung, NPC Missions Chair, Deacon, Narberth Presbyterian Church

Keisha Jordan, Elder, FWC Board Member

Rev. Kari Olson, Pastor, East Falls Presbyterian Church

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Rev. B. Michelle Horton, Pastor, A Sacred Space Ministry

Rev. Alicia Williams-Clark, New Hope Ministries

Rev. Megan LeCluyse, Campus Minister and Director/Celebration Team Leader, The Christian Association at the University of Pennsylvania/First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia

Rev. Josh Blakesley, Pastor, Love In Action United Church of Christ

Rev. Victoria Monts, Associate minister, Grace Baptist Church of Germantown

Rev. Evon DeLee, Pastor, New Church Down The Way Ministries

Rabbi Deborah Glanzberg-Krainin

Rev. Kasha Sudler, Reverend, A.M.E. Church

Rabbi Kami Knapp, Rabbi,

Dr. Cheryl Sparks, Director or Doctoral Programs in Marriage and Family Therapy, Eastern University

Carolyn Blackson, Minister, Grace Baptist Church of Germantown

Rev. Dr. Susan Richardson, Assistant Minister, Christ Church Philadelphia

Rev. Brian Rallison, Rector, Holy Innocents St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Grace Episcopal Church and the Incarnation

Rev. Peter Carey, Rector, St. Mary's Episcopal Church - Cathedral Road

Rev. Dr. MaryAnn Mertz, Rector, St. Christopher's Episcopal Church

Rev. Eric P Jackson, Associate Pastor, The Grace Center Church

Rev. Emily Richards, St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Rabbi Andrew Markowitz, Rabbi, Adath Israel

Rev. Aldo Siahaan, Philadelphia Praise Center

Rev. Beatrice Sims, Associate Minister, St. Matthew A.M.E. Church