

June 19, 2020

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The General Baptist State Convention of Wisconsin, Inc. is a conglomerate of National Baptist congregations which has diligently served faith-based African American communities throughout southeastern Wisconsin for over 95 years. Our Convention expresses our sincerest condolences to the Family and Friends of Mr. George Floyd. We share the community's outrage regarding Mr. Floyd's murder by Minneapolis police officers last month, as well as the countless other hateful acts of police brutality against black people in our country. We choose to stand in solidarity with these victims of murder, their families, and all of our fellow Americans who choose to lift their voices and demand justice and systemic change through non-violent protests across our country. We will honor and say his name: George Floyd. George Floyd was a son, a brother, a father, and a friend. We believe that the police officer who took Mr. Floyd's life and the police officers who stood complacently choosing not to intervene have committed a Hate Crime.

The General Baptist State Convention of Wisconsin, Inc. also stands in solidarity with our fellow Wisconsinites who have diligently used their voices to sound off against the history of systemic racism and white supremacy in our state. We are outraged as the vile and hateful assault of a Black child by Shorewood resident and practicing lawyer, Stephanie Rapkin. We support the demands of our community to charge Stephanie Rapkin with a Hate Crime as we believe that the choice to spit in a child's face is born purely from hate. We believe that hate and white supremacy have no place in the Kingdom of Heaven. Stephanie Rapkin and the Minneapolis Police officers are not simply "bad apples." Rather, they are manifestations of our nation's history of systemic racism and white supremacy which must immediately be dismantled.

The General Baptist State Convention of Wisconsin, Inc. calls upon President Trump, Governor Evers, Mayor Barrett and all locally elected officials, and political parties to commit to a formal inclusive process of healing and reconciliation for our communities. The message of our Baptist preach-brother Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. best fits this movement: “Resistance and nonviolence are not in themselves good. There is another element that must be present in our struggle that then makes our resistance and nonviolence truly meaningful. That element is reconciliation. Our ultimate end must be the creation of the beloved community.”

The General Baptist State Convention of Wisconsin, Inc. in our Country, and around the globe will continue in solidarity, prayer and support of the rapid reconciliation of our beloved communities.

Let us fight passionately and unrelentingly for the goals of justice and peace. But let's be sure that our hands are clean in this struggle. Let us never fight with falsehood, violence, hate and malice; but always fight with love, so that when the day comes that the walls of segregation have completely crumbled in Wisconsin, our Country and around the globe that we will be able to live with all people as brothers and sisters.

In the Name of Jesus Christ,
Reverend Dr. Garry Levy, President

“Moving Forward in the name of Jesus.” ~Hebrews 12: 1-2~