

# #blacklivesmatter

June 8, 2020

Dear Community Members,

With the Covid-19 crisis and the recent killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbury, Breonna Taylor, and so many others, we find ourselves in a pivotal moment on this earth. One of our shared principles, wherever we work, is to pay special attention to those being marginalized or excluded, whether it be for political, economic or social reasons. From our founding, each of our organizations has chosen to serve in communities made up of those who are suffering, people in whom the image of God is too often disguised or disrespected. We are called to restoration by creating and practicing positive, life-giving and diverse community as an alternative to the tribal and divisive cultures we see today. We reject fear and violence as we stand in solidarity and compassion and as we seek to reflect the love of God.

Now is a time for deep listening and reflection, to gain a deeper understanding of the pain and traumas that continue to be inflicted on people of color by systems of government, economy and community meant to serve us all. We seek to recognize our own complicity in these systems, and our responsibility to effect change. For hundreds of years, oppressive systems have inflicted discrimination and trauma on black people. All lives cannot matter until black lives matter, and that calls on each of us to be different, to stand up with courage, to break down barriers, and to open our hearts and our doors.

Here at the Center for Sharing, Jubilee Foundation, and Vista Hermosa Foundation, this is a work we seek to practice every day. Currently, we hold daily chapel services via Zoom as a space to hear diverse voices and connect. We are reaching out to families in the neighborhood, to ensure they feel safe and welcome. And we are donating funds to national and international organizations fighting against systemic injustices on all levels. Moving forward, we are expanding our own facilities to be a place for community dialogue, regional networking, and advocacy.

For our staff, we ask that you take time to deeply reflect on the biblical mandate to “do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God” and prepare to act with ever more transparency and accountability to this mandate. For those within our larger community of servant leaders, we implore you to also reflect on what you have learned through your life experiences, the courses you have attended here and to have eyes to see and ears to hear those crying out. There is not a panacea for systemic ills, but together, and with the practices we hold dear, we can foster healing and health in our communities.



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