



Dear Friends

The board and staff of Nebraska Interfaith Power & Light join with people of faith and conscience everywhere to condemn the brutal and senseless murder of George Floyd at the hands of police officers. Our mission of care for the earth and care for its people are inextricably connected. Therefore, we pledge to stand up against racism wherever it occurs and to take action to address the roots of racism wherever we can. Here are some reflections about what we can do.

LISTEN

The first thing that people in positions of privilege can do is listen. Listen to the voices of people of color as they share their stories and experiences; of anger, of fear, of despair, of love, of joy, of hope, of their undeniable humanity which has been too often denied. We must not be too eager to rush in with our own stories, to try to fit their stories into our prism. We also need to recognize the diversity of messages and the conflicting impulses that may exist, including the rage against racist brutality toward unarmed black people while balancing concerns about the damage to minority communities from violent protests.

LEARN

Learning is change. People of privilege need to examine ourselves, our thoughts, our attitudes. After marinating in systemic racism for our entire lives, it is disingenuous to be blind to the racism all around us or to claim that we have no racism in or among us. We need to learn from the messages of people of color. A fundamental area of learning must include environmental racism, including the disproportionately negative impacts of the climate crisis on minority communities. We also need to learn from the

wise messages of our faith traditions about being everyone's neighbor and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

LOVE

Martin Luther King said, "Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." Love is an action word, not just a feeling. We need to reach out to people who look different from us and speak different languages from us and make sure they have a place at the table, that they are included in the room where decisions are made. Nebraska Interfaith Power & Light recognizes the need to increase the diversity in our organization and in our advocacy work. We are beginning an initiative to reach out to faith leaders and congregations with predominately minority membership to listen and learn from them about their needs and concerns.

While we need to listen and learn in order to address the systemic racism of society, it is important that we not be silent either. We need to stand up against injustice wherever it occurs, against inhumane laws and racist criminal justice policies, against social and economic systems which are rigged to benefit the wealthy and make the poor poorer. Because the climate crisis continues unabated we need to advocate for comprehensive action to address it, including environmental justice, jobs in clean energy, expanded broadband access, agricultural policies that support taking care of the land, environmental policies that protect our land and water, and policies that protect the poorest and most vulnerable among us.

Most important, we need a spiritual and moral resurgence, of people connecting with neighbors, creating healthier communities. We need to build communities based on love, on caring and sharing so we can all thrive. There are many images of love, such as a mother holding her child, the colors of the rainbow and divine beams of light. Each act of love can create more love. As songwriter Will Hutchinson sings, "Love casts a long shadow." Let's help love grow, expand and cast an even longer shadow.

Nebraska Interfaith Power & Light

1327 H St, Ste 300, Lincoln, NE 68508