

June 3, 2020

There's Work to Do

Dear Tanenbaum Community,

I wasn't sure what my first communication would be to you as CEO, but I never envisioned that first communication would be addressing this issue. I, like many of you, have been of mixed emotions since the suffocating [death of George Floyd](#). I have moved from shock, to anger, to rage, and now to fear. For I know that no accomplishment I have achieved can shield me fully from meeting the same fate as Mr. Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and countless others. That is unfortunately the result of a system of oppression so insidious we can barely see it operating.

Around the country, faith leaders are offering aid to demonstrators who have taken to the streets to decry racism and police brutality. [Churches](#) are providing sanctuary, mosques are providing medics for activists, and temples are providing trauma-informed counseling. While the fingerprint of religious traditions' role on the creation and sustaining of systems of inequity remains, many of those same traditions, and others, are doing the hard work to end racism.

As you process through your own emotions during this time of trouble and transformation, know that there are actions you can take:

1. Identify what is yours to do. Each of us can do something to contribute to the actions necessary to bring about a world where no person can lose their lives because of their racial background.
2. Work with others. Religious and spiritual communities are actively engaged in anti-racism work. [This fact sheet](#) highlights organizations and initiatives working to move the needle toward justice.
3. Educate yourself about [White Supremacy](#). Supremacy is not just a way people identify their values, it is a structural concept that is at the core of racial oppression.

Every single person is impacted by inequitable dynamics of power and when we work to lift the veil, heal from our past, and commit to making moves towards changes in structural dynamics, we lift everyone up.

As we fight for justice, we stand with millions of people across the country who are rightfully outraged, but condemnation and outrage is not enough.

Tanenbaum is committed to working with our supporters and our partner organizations to combat hate and extremism, and stand with community members directly impacted by oppressive systems. A world where religious differences are respected is also a world where racial differences are respected.

In solidarity,
Rev. Mark Fowler
CEO