



THE RT. REVEREND SAMUEL LAWRENCE GREEN, SR.
Presiding Bishop

August 21, 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Seventh Episcopal District,

*The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral,
begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy.
Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. - Rev. Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.*

On August 12, our world witnessed another sign of evil. The violence and other acts perpetrated by white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia are, like the massacre at **Mother Emanuel in Charleston two years ago**, terrorism. We stand in sympathy and solidarity with the people across America who have been terrorized by the actions of white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia.

We call on all faith and community leaders throughout South Carolina and beyond to challenge government officials to remove all statues and monuments of the Confederacy that is a reflection of America's dark past and is not a representation of the true values of freedom and equality, They should be removed in South Carolina, just like the Confederate Flag was removed from the State House, because it is a symbol of hurt and pain.

As we prepare to begin our 2017 Annual Conference Series, **let us be thoughtful and action-oriented to envision how God is calling us to continue speaking truth to power.** I am challenging every clergy and lay leader to educate their local congregations on the history of white supremacy culture and its deep effects within our lives today.

We must seek God's spirit to empower us to dismantle the remnants of a culture that has supported harmful standards and ideologies dehumanizing people of color. **Many of us will need to do some deep self-reflection to find evidence of white supremacy culture in our own congregations, work spaces and communities.** The world is watching as Americans are standing up against hate via protests and wrestling with historic symbols and monuments that have also represented another narrative not always reflected in history books.

As members of the AME Church, we have a mission to be a prophetic voice of hope and justice that cannot rest until **all** acts of violence, hatred, racism, sexism and dehumanization are recognized as evil that needs to be eradicated. Prayerfully, we can have intentional and effective conversations across race and denominations that will continue to shed light on the disinherited. May God's Spirit indwell us with the strength we need to participate in the work necessary to bring God's Kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven.

In the Spirit of Justice,

Bishop Sam

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amos 5:24

The 7th Episcopal District

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