



A Statement From Our CEO

I am deeply concerned about the state of race relations in our country. George Floyd's life mattered. Ahmaud Arbery's life mattered. Despite years of hard-earned progress from the time Dr. King led us through the Civil Rights movement up to this moment, the taking of George Floyd's life, the taking of Ahmaud's Arbery's life, confronts us - that the sins of racism continue to foster racial injustice and diminish the value of black and minority lives in our country.

This is deeply personal – as it should be. I grieve, I lament the loss of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery. My family and the staff at Outreach grieve and lament the loss of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery. The entire Outreach family grieves the loss of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery and in the neighborhoods and communities where Outreach is present, this is intensely personal - they are proud Black and Hispanic Americans and many are new citizens from around the world, and they are grieving. They live the experience of being black and brown and in the minority in our country, and their grief and their pain runs deep.

As the leader of a Christian organization I need to speak this truth – we need to share this grief, feel this pain, walk along and lament with our brothers and sisters of color, and join their call for change – Jesus would do this – He does do this – and we need to follow in His footsteps.

I am convinced that the matter of race relations in our country is a matter of justice and I know from our scriptures that love and justice are at the center of God's heart, his character and his nature: Listen in to his high call to us:

“Do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the foreigner, or the poor and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.” – Zechariah 7:10.

“Seek justice, correct oppression, learn to do good.” – Isaiah 1:17

Since Outreach began, it has been our mission to reach out to children, youth and families who are vulnerable – to provide opportunities to all God's children, helping them overcome barriers and access opportunities to reach their God given potential. We are incredibly thankful to have a large family of faith-filled supporters, partner churches and their volunteer teams, and a community of Civic partners who support our staff in this mission.

Today I encourage the entire Outreach family, and our faith and community partners, to a new sense of urgency. To extend and empower our capacity to create opportunity. And to join with us to listen for, and pursue, justice: to listen to the residents in the neighborhoods and communities where we serve, and learn how to move toward a more compassionate and just community.

George Floyd's life and his death matters. Ahmaud Aubery's life and death matters. And they must continue to matter to us because we have work to do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Ellerman".