

A STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR OF TOGETHER 4 BRISTOL



Warm greetings fellow residents of Bristol.

I pray this finds you well. As a fellow resident of this great City I would like to share some thoughts with you if I may. The events of these few weeks have spurred some conversations around the world about racial justice and equity. It has generated some reflections in some and stirred up sentiments as well.

I believe this affords us all another unique opportunity to re-examine our approach and attitudes to the issue of systemic racial injustice in our own life as a City. I am under no illusion that this is going to be a challenging/arduous journey to undertake but we owe it to ourselves and to posterity to embark on the journey that history and Providence has placed before us.

I shall like to first of all express mine and our collective failings and shortcomings as the Church community to adequately face and address the issues of racial inequality that has been going on for years within our own church organisational structures. As someone once aptly noted, routine has been our ally and honesty, our dread. We have pushed to the back of our minds the questions that trouble us. We have not found time to face the emotions that disturb us. We have hidden from life behind activity, habit and routine. We have at times countered the sharp demands of justice with apathy, indifference and hardened hearts. We have sometimes allowed imagination and empathy to wither.

I would like to render my own apology and that of the church community for our failure to handle effectively the issues of racial inequalities and socio-economic injustices over the years.

However, with the events of these past few weeks it has become even more

clear that we have to transition from routine to honestly facing the issues that confronts us as a City.

May God strengthen us in our resolve to work in partnership with others to address this systemic inequalities that is reflected in our shared socio-economic life as a City.

We plan to initially engage with various community and faith leaders, and organisations as well as our Mayor and elected officials within the City in a bid to work together to find a collective way forward.

May I also take this opportunity to address the potential threat of violent protests on our streets and the use of inflammatory language and derogatory comments. This is not helpful and it is unacceptable as quite a number of the residents of Bristol would like to assist towards the building of cohesive communities that will in effect help create a strong, resilient, sustainable and unified City.

We pray for the Mayor, the Cabinet and all whose occupation is to serve this City, like the Health workers, police and emergency services. May they, together with all who live here, help this to be a City where need is met and hope is given.

May justice and reconciliation be our portion as a City.

May God richly bless and keep Bristol and make us a unified City of hope.

Thanks for your attention.

Eric Aidoo

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