

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH 



# Global Mission Digital Toolkit

## **Black Lives Matter**

**A Statement from the Anglican Diocese of Brasilia**

## BLACK LIVES MATTER

Statement by the Diocese of Brasilia

June 9, 2020

On June 8th, twenty days after the assassination of João Pedro Motta, one week after the death of the child Miguel Otávio Santana da Silva (June 2<sup>nd</sup>) and two weeks after the death of the American George Floyd, Bishop Mauricio Andrade of the Anglican Diocese of Brasilia, Rev. Tati Ribeiro, pastor of the Anglican Cathedral of the Resurrection, and a group of people from the community, held a ceremony in front of the church in memory of the thousands of dead black Brazilians, victims of violence and state abandonment, and of all those killed because of their skin color and their appearance. Members of the community of the Anglican Cathedral of the Resurrection knelt in front of the church, as a reminder that it is not possible to continue standing as if everything is fine, and raised their arms evoking the struggle of the oppressed to live without fear and in peace.

The racist structure of our society, a legacy of the colonial period, and the way in which the Christian religion has been an accomplice of slavery for centuries, show that we need to **talk about racism and seek ways to counteract it**. It is urgent that we talk more directly and frankly, because it is not enough to not be racist. We must fight against all forms of racism and prejudice. We need to raise our voices and our bodies to defend the lives of black people and not give up. We can't allow the death of so many children, young people and adults.

The Church can no longer quietly accept that lives are lost in such a brutal and unfair manner. For a long time, Christian churches accepted theologies that denied that blacks had souls, which were used as ideologies to allow slavery. These theologies must be increasingly rejected and seen as a sinful invention that takes away the value God has given to all people.

The Christ we follow and of whom we are disciples is black! Not only from a phenotypical perspective, but also in the sense of the race that marks and marked the social place of our Brother. He was born in Bethlehem and was raised in the marginal town of Nazareth, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth? (Jn.1.46). He survived the genocide perpetrated by the State (Mt. 2.16) and was welcomed in Africa as a refugee (Mt. 2.13) and, despite the struggles and pains, He calls us to life and love. It is necessary to relive in our memory who is our Christ, where He came from, how He lived and who He would look like today.

We must say the words "Black Lives Matter", because black people have been unjustly murdered, as if their lives were worthless. Now we repeat: **BLACK LIVES MATTER**, because every life matters and is a sign of God's presence, because we are created in His image and likeness: women, men, whether black, indigenous, white, trans, lesbian, gay, straight, foreign, marginal and disabled. God loves each and every person, and therefore, everyone has the right to be respected and to live a safe life!

As a community, we stand in solidarity with the pain of all the families that mourn the deaths of their sons and daughters, victims of the brutal violence of a society that continues to be racist and prejudiced, and of a State that should protect but kills.

We believe in the God that became man, a black man, a discriminated man, a suffering man that was persecuted by the State. He conquered death and gives us life so that we may live it abundantly. We believe in the living Christ who walks beside us in the daily struggle for a life of love, in peace and security. "We believe in the hope of starting again, in the beauty of a gesture of solidarity, in justice for all kinds of oppression, in compassion in the face of pain, in love, in the divine-human gift" (Book of Common Prayer, p.122).

"Black lives matter. Indigenous lives matter. Our faith does not combine with racism, our faith combines with love that fosters the inclusion of all people, regardless of their skin color or their sexual orientation. By being here in this ceremony in front of our Cathedral, we reaffirm our commitment against all forms of racism and discrimination, because we are an inclusive Church willing to welcome all people." - Bishop Mauricio Andrade

"We will never allow any kind of prejudice in our community. The cathedral is open to ALL people, so that they can live their faith and be respected. We strive to make our church a safe space where everyone can find respect, brotherly love, compassion, solidarity, so that we can become a community that lives love, "the perfect love that rejects all fear". Because of this love, we are not afraid to fight against all forms of racism, prejudice, injustice and violation of rights." - Tati Ribeiro

"Every black man and woman suffer the terrible anguish of knowing that their child is three times more likely to be a victim of violence, death comes from all sides. We have no shields. Even state agents are potential assailants and killers of our children. To be a Black parent is to be resilient. It means to teach your children to have an honorable stance even in the face of submission to the police power of the state. It means to be afraid every day of a phone call at dawn. But we will be warriors as our ancestors were warriors. They were enslaved in the worst conditions. Yet, they were essential in the construction of the nations. Black people fight and cry for their children, their kids, each day of this genocide. But we will never stop fighting for equity." - Saulo Lino

Original posting may be found on the Anglican Diocese of Brasilia's [website](#).

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## Reflection on the Statement on Black Lives Matter issued by the Diocese of Brasilia

On June 8, 2020, in memory of João Pedro Motta, Miguel Otávio Santana da Silva, George Floyd, and thousands of deaths of Brazilians, black people, and women who were victims of violence, Bishop Maurício Andrade (Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Brasilia), the Revd. Tati Ribeiro (Pastor of the Anglican Cathedral of the Resurrection), and members of the community knelt in front of the Cathedral in Brasilia with their arms stretched out into fists.

In the statement a short excerpt is shared from Livro da Oração Commum (Book of Common Prayer). The 2015 Book of Common Prayer produced by the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil (Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil) is the newest Book of Common Prayer published by an Anglican province. The book is fully gender-neutral with inclusive language to address God, and many liturgies that mention local customs. There are also prayers that address gender equality, social justice for minorities, and environmental preservation.

A translated version of the full prayer mentioned in the statement is printed below in its original language of Portuguese and a translated version in English. After reading the statement, read the prayer in its entirety and think about the language and sentiments expressed and the emotion it may evoke.

### *Afirmação de Fé*

*Como resposta à Palavra de Deus  
fazemos a nossa afirmação de fé:*

*Cremos em Deus;  
Cremos na força das pessoas pobres,  
Na audácia das pessoas poetas,  
Na ousadia das profetas,  
Na inspiração das artistas.*

*Cremos em Jesus,  
Cremos na humildade para servir,  
Na coragem de transformar,  
Na alegria de celebrar,  
No respeito às diferenças,  
No pão para toda mesa,  
No conforto para toda tristeza.*

*Cremos no Espírito,  
Cremos na esperança de recomeçar,  
Na beleza do gesto solidário,  
Na justiça para toda opressão,  
Na compaixão diante da dor,  
No amor, dádiva divino-humana. Amém.*

### *Affirmation of Faith*

*In response to the Word of God  
let us make our statement of faith:*

*We believe in God;  
We believe in the strength of poor people,  
In the audacity of poet people,  
In the boldness of the prophets,  
In the inspiration of the artists.*

*We believe in Jesus,  
We believe in humility to serve,  
In the courage to transform,  
In the joy of celebrating,  
With respect to differences,  
In bread for every table,  
In comfort for all sadness.*

*We believe in the Spirit,  
We believe in the hope of starting over,  
In the beauty of the gesture of solidarity,  
In justice for all oppression,  
In compassion in the face of pain,  
In love, divine-human gift. Amen.*

You may use the questions below to facilitate a group discussion or to simply reflect as an individual on the statement and the prayer:

- *What words or phrases stuck out to you?*
- *What emotions or sentiments did reading the statement and praying the prayer as a group or as an individual spark in you?*
- *How does the prayer encourage us in our baptismal call to “strive for justice and peace and respect the dignity of every human being”?*
- *What can your community do to stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter?*

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