



Resiliency, Resolve, and Righteous Resistance

Velda Love
Minister for Racial Justice

Amid ongoing headlines of state-sanctioned violence, the targeting of immigrants and people of color, and faith-based resistance to these injustices, it feels natural to reflect on uprisings and protests beyond Black History Month. In 2020, George Floyd's murder garnered media attention and outrage in predominately African American communities.

The murders always feel personal when you are a person of African descent living in the United States with [500 years of racial injustice](#)—enslavement, plantation politics, state-sanctioned violence, segregation, Jim Crow, racial terror lynching, sundown towns, racial capitalism, and presumption of guilt.

Decades of attempts to destroy and eradicate African descended people with injustice were always countered with [resilience, resolve, and righteous resistance](#).

Following George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis, the nation saw an historic movement against racism and state-sanctioned violence towards Black lives. People in cities across the country left their homes. Tens of thousands took to the streets to speak out against enduring racial injustices that had defined the United States since its inception.

The uprisings and protests reached beyond the United States. People [across the globe rallied](#) around the movement for Black lives. The energy was palpable, as people stood in solidarity, calling attention to race-based injustices from



state-sanctioned murder of Black people to the persistent economic inequities facing Black communities.

Residents of Minneapolis recognize clearly how the legacy of the Black Lives Matter protests echo amidst the city's current occupation. Rev. Dr. Curtiss DeYoung, a resident of Minnesota, shares an analysis of the connection between the killing of George Floyd and the government's continued racist policies and practices by deploying ICE agents in cities that are primarily liberal leaning and vote Democratic:

"George Floyd's murder was rooted in police killings of Black people over several generations reaching a startling increase in the first decades of the twenty-first century. The ICE occupation of the Twin Cities follows similar contexts in other cities and a history of abuse at the borders and nationwide detention centers. Interestingly, it is likely that among the 3,000 ICE officers tormenting residents of Minnesota, some are from those who were pardoned for January 6 insurrections charges or were white supremacists driving unmarked cars in Minneapolis to harass and torch Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities after the killing of George Floyd."

January 2026

The current ICE occupation of Minneapolis and the Twin Cities, as well as the harassment of the larger State of Minnesota, comes five and a half years after the state-sponsored killing of George Floyd during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders. The Southside of Minneapolis has three active memorial sites: George Floyd (now called George Floyd Square [GFS]) killed on May 25, 2020, by Minneapolis Police; 10 blocks from GFS, Renee Nicole Good killed on January 7, 2026, by ICE; and about 30 blocks north of GFS, Alex Pretti killed on January 24, 2026, by CBP.

This is an overwhelming amount of tragedy and trauma for a neighborhood to absorb.

It is important to note the connection of today's resistance to ICE and the uprisings in response to George Floyd's killing[AB1.1] [VL1.2]. With a focus on faith communities, today's organizing networks, neighborhood connections, clergy leadership, movement chaplains, engaged congregations, and the like were strengthened or birthed during the George Floyd response. When the federal government targeted Minnesota, they did not account for the resiliency, resolve, and righteous resistance they would face.

Resolve

Residents of the Twin Cities understand well the importance of resolve and persistence in the face of such state-sanctioned actions. As Siri Milton, a St. Paul resident, reflects: "As ICE rolled into Minneapolis, most white Minnesotans were not quite prepared for the level of depravity one would witness of the brutality against our fellow American. As the first wave of shock wore off, residents of St. Paul and Minneapolis began to share what they were seeing at school pick-ups, while eating at their local restaurant, or just stopping for gas. We all began to ask what can be done and every time the answer was: SHOW up. Show up with what you have. Your time, your resources, your voice and even your body, show up with whatever you have."

Righteous Resistance

Jesus is very clear that justice for all is God's priority. We are God's beloved human family, and the corrective is to call out injustice—racism, sexism, misogyny, anti-immigrant rhetoric, xenophobia, genocide, ethnic cleansing, land theft, racial capitalism, and religious exceptionalism—injustice.

Dr. King reminds us that justice is not only the responsibility of governments, courts, or movements. It is also tied to personal integrity, how we live, speak, act, and treat one another. Righteousness is something we must demand from institutions, but it is also something we must expect of ourselves. It means being prepared,

trained, and available to stand against ICE, and pushing back against our government's narratives of invoking violence and killings of innocent people.

Let injustice stir in you the call to build a movement of resiliency, resolve, and righteous resistance.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rev. Dr. Velda Love serves as the Minister for Racial Justice in the National Setting of the United Church of Christ.

LEARN ucc.org/justice

DONATE ucc.org/donate

ARCHIVE bit.ly/witness4justice



The United Church of Christ has more than 5,000 churches throughout the United States. Rooted in the Christian traditions of congregational governance and covenantal relationships, each UCC setting speaks only for itself and not on behalf of every UCC congregation. UCC members and churches are free to differ on important social issues, even as the UCC remains principally committed to unity in the midst of our diversity.