

# **NO MORE STATE-SPONSORED CRUCIFIXIONS IN THE NAME OF “SAFETY”**

**A Holy Week Declaration From First Congregational Church of Oakland  
Issued on Good Friday, March 30, 2018**

## **As followers of Jesus, we recognize:**

That Lent is a season of spiritual searching and wilderness wandering when we recommit ourselves to following the way of Jesus Christ.

That we face temptations that threaten to make us complicit with violence against our neighbors and ourselves, including the temptation to try to secure our own safety, survival, and comfort at the expense of other human beings and the planet.

That during Holy Week, we remember the execution by the state of a person targeted not for what he had done but for who he was and how he was positioned in his society

That at Easter, we celebrate the resurrection of a criminalized Christ, revealing that love is more powerful than violence and that we are invited to live according to that love

That this journey, from death to life, is an expression of the fundamental gospel truth that sets us free.

## **In our community we see:**

That state-sanctioned violence perpetuates a violent and inequitable status quo in a number of forms including racialized policing

That Christ is found among those who are criminalized by our society and targeted for state violence: Black and Brown people, poor people, transgender and gender-non-conforming people, disabled people, and homeless people.

That beloved community members have been killed by local police, including Stephon Clark, Sahleem Tindle, Demouria Hogg, Nate Wilks, Yvette Henderson, Kayla Moore, Alan Blueford, Oscar Grant and so many others.

That militarized policing continues to threaten the lives of beloved people within and outside our own faith community.

That militarized policing also harms human beings who serve as police officers, many of whom suffer from moral injury as a result of their work

That courageous resistance has been mounted against this state-sanctioned violence, led by people-of-color-led organizations.

That our faith calls us into deeper community with and participation in these liberation movements, as well as with all our neighbors

That our faith further calls us to commit ourselves to developing restorative and/or transformative justice processes as a means of addressing harm in our communities

**Therefore:**

As an expression of our hope in God's goodness, our assurance in the resurrection, and our faith in Jesus Christ, we declare that we will live our new life today.

We commit to reimagining our policies, procedures, and relationships to our neighbors to reduce our reliance on policing that is too often deadly for those already marginalized, to contribute to restorative/transformational approaches to addressing harm, and to increase our capacity to ensure the safety of everyone in our community.

God has already done all that needs to be done to prepare the way for us. We are now ready to live our faith with the boldness that is required.

May what we declare with these words be ratified by our action.



