

Reflections on Last Week's Tragic Events

President & Provost speak out

[Campus News](#) | Posted on July 11, 2016



The following was sent out to faculty, staff and students via email on Monday, July 11, 2016.

At Andrews University we have, along with the rest of the United States and the world, watched the events of last week with unimaginable sadness—the police killings of two more black men caught on video last Tuesday and Wednesday, followed by the targeting, wounding and killing of police officers in Dallas, Texas, last Thursday.

As a university and Christian community, we stand in opposition to and in rejection of racism in all of its forms. We refuse to accept violence as a way of life and vigorously promote the sanctity of life. We cherish our core belief that all humanity is created in the image of God and that each person has inherent dignity, value and a right of belonging as a child of God. In the words of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” and thus we add our voice in condemnation of the acts of injustice we witnessed in media reports last week.

At Andrews University, we actively embrace the significance and richness of our diversity. We are the second most diverse national university in the United States of America and we are proud of that status. Our diversity profoundly reminds us of what God’s kingdom is like and today we stand together embracing the fullness of that kingdom. When even one individual is dehumanized, when even one individual is treated as less than a valued and loved child, we feel that individual’s pain and empathize as a university family.

So, today—especially today—we call on our campus community to join with us in the pursuit of love, justice, restoration and healing. We ask that you join the causes that promote transformative love, that stand in solidarity with the less fortunate, that care for the marginalized, that renounce retaliation and retribution and that participate in overcoming the forces of evil by being involved in God’s work of goodness. These causes call for unending prayer, deep courage and the choice for restorative justice instead of retribution and revenge.

As we face moments like these and as we also understand the hundreds of years of history in this country that have led to an often wanton disregard of human dignity, we are reminded that this incredibly diverse community of Andrews University must be something more than a remarkable statistic in a report.

This is our commitment to you—faculty, staff, students and community: We shall—we *must*—become a showcase of what it means to stay awake to the possibilities of living and thriving in the midst of the diversity that is our campus, our country and God’s kingdom.

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