The Center for Racial Equity and Justice
Repent – Reform – Refocus

202-262-5053
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"No African Americans take to the streets in protest to demand Whites to love us more. We demand a behavior change!" Rev. George C. Gilbert, Jr.

February 2026 Newsletter

STATEMENT ON TRUMP'S RACIST ACT CONCERNING THE OBAMA'S

February 9, 2026

On behalf of The Center for Racial Equity and Justice, I am writing to express our deepest gratitude for your organization's continued partnership and support. Having relationships like yours are the backbone of our mission. Because of your generosity, we have been able to provide meals to over 2,000 families across disenfranchised communities in the Washington Metropolitan Area. In a region where the cost of living continues to rise, your contribution ensured that our neighbors didn't have to worry about where their next meal was coming from.

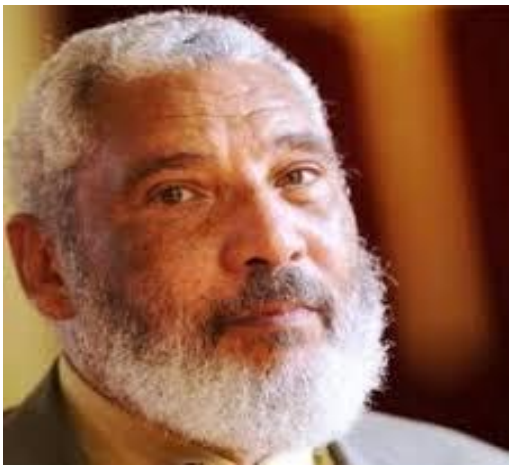
We would also like to extend a special thank you to Pastor Kip Banks. His unwavering commitment to this partnership has been a source of inspiration for our entire team. Furthermore, we express our appreciation for Mr. Darrell Davis; his responsiveness to our needs and his proactive approach makes our initiatives seamless.

It is rare to find partners who are as deeply invested in the well-being of the D.C. community as you are. We are honored to stand alongside you in this work and look forward to what we can achieve together in the future.

With gratitude and in partnership,

Rev. George Gilbert Jr.
Executive Director
The Center for Racial Equity and Justice

Thank You Rev. Graylin Hagler and Faith Strategies for your continued support!



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NOTHING IS TOO SMALL!!!

A list of powerful people named in the Epstein files

NEW YORK (AP)

From tech titans to Wall Street power brokers and foreign dignitaries, a who's who of powerful men make appearances in the huge trove of documents released by the Justice Department in connection with its investigations of Jeffrey Epstein.

All have denied having anything to do with his sexual abuse of girls and young women. Yet some of them maintained friendships with Epstein, or developed them anew, even after news stories made him widely known as an alleged abuser of young girls. None have been charged with a crime connected to the investigation.
Epstein killed himself in a Manhattan jail cell in 2019.

Here's a primer on some of the notable names in the Epstein files:

Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor

The man formerly known as Britain's Prince Andrew has long been dogged by questions about his relationship with Epstein, including allegations from the late Virginia Roberts Giuffre that she was trafficked by Epstein and instructed to have sex with Mountbatten-Windsor when she was 17.

The former prince has repeatedly denied that it happened, but his brother, King Charles III, still stripped him of his royal titles late last year, including the right to be called a prince and the Duke of York.

Mountbatten-Windsor's name appears at least several hundred times in Friday's document release, including in Epstein's private emails.

Among the correspondence is an invitation for Epstein to dine at Buckingham Palace, Epstein's offer to introduce Mountbatten-Windsor to a 26-year-old Russian woman, and photos that appear to show Mountbatten-Windsor kneeling over an unidentified woman lying on the floor.

Sarah Ferguson

In March of 2011, Sarah Ferguson, then the Duchess of York, made a public apology for letting Jeffrey Epstein pay off some of her debts. Both she and her ex-husband, the former Prince Andrew, had come under tremendous public scrutiny for continuing a friendly relationship with Epstein after he pleaded guilty to soliciting prostitution from an underage girl.

She told London's Evening Standard newspaper she would have "nothing ever to do with Jeffrey Epstein ever again." But just two months later, she emailed Epstein to say she was going on Oprah Winfrey's TV show and wanted his advice on how she

should answer questions about their relationship.

"I just want to make sure you are aware of this and seek your advice on how you would like me to answer," Ferguson wrote. Epstein replied, "Jeffrey was unfairly characterized as a pedophile by the tabloid press. Many years ago jeffrey pleaded guilty to soliciting underage prostitutes. He paid his debt to society and has sought forgiveness. I have nothing more to say."

Elon Musk

The billionaire Tesla founder turns up at least a few times in Friday's document release, notably in email exchanges in 2012 and 2013 in which he discussed visiting Epstein's infamous Caribbean island compound. But it's not immediately clear if the island visits took place. Spokespersons for Musk's companies, Tesla and X, didn't respond to emails seeking comment Friday or Saturday.

Musk has maintained that he repeatedly turned down the disgraced financier's overtures. "Epstein tried to get me to go to his island and I REFUSED," he posted on X in 2025.

Richard Branson

The billionaire founder of the Virgin Group, a global conglomerate, exchanged numerous emails with Epstein. In a 2013 exchange, Branson invited Epstein to his own private Caribbean island, which regularly hosts large conferences, charity events and business meetings. "Any time you're in the area would love to see you," he wrote. "As long as you bring your harem!" In another message that year, he suggested Epstein rehabilitate his image by convincing Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates to tell the public how Epstein had "been a brilliant adviser to him" and had "more than learnt your lesson and have done nothing that's against the law since."

The company stressed in a statement Saturday that there was no wrongdoing on Branson's part and that any dealings with Epstein were "limited to group or business settings" more than a decade ago. Branson also declined a charitable donation and decided not to meet or speak with him again after his team "uncovered serious allegations," the company said. "Had they had the full picture and information, there would have been no contact whatsoever," the statement reads. "Richard believes that

Epstein's actions were abhorrent and supports the right to justice for his many victims."

Donald Trump

It's long been known that Epstein was friends with Trump before the two had a falling out.

The new trove of documents contain thousands of references to Trump, much of which sheds little additional light on the men's relationship. They included emails in which Epstein and others shared news articles about Trump, commented on his policies or his politics, or gossiped about him and his family.

The Justice Department also disclosed a spreadsheet created last August that summarized calls made to law enforcement tip lines from people claiming to have some knowledge of wrongdoing by Trump. That document included a range of uncorroborated stories involving many different celebrities, and somewhat fantastical scenarios, occasionally with notations indicating what follow-up, if any, was done by agents. Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche said Sunday that the FBI fielded "hundreds of calls" about prominent individuals that were "quickly determined to not be credible."

Bill Clinton

Like Trump, Clinton spent time with Epstein more than two decades ago, including flying occasionally on his private jet and seeing him at the White House. Clinton also denied any knowledge of Epstein's wrongdoing.

Clinton's representatives say the former president broke off relations with Epstein after the first round of criminal charges in 2006. The investigative file includes snapshots of Clinton and other famous people that Epstein kept in his home in New York. It also contains messages investigators received from members of the general public, demanding to know why Clinton wasn't being investigated. None of Epstein's victims have publicly accused

Clinton of being involved in Epstein's crimes.

Steven Tisch

The New York Giants co-owner is mentioned more than 400 times in the files released Friday. Correspondence between the two shows Epstein offered to connect Tisch to numerous women over the years.

In one 2013 email exchange with the subject line "Ukrainian girl," Epstein encouraged Tisch to contact a particular woman, whose physical beauty he praised in crude terms. "Pro or civilian?" Tisch asked in reply. Tisch, a scion of a powerful New York family that founded the Loews Corporation, has acknowledged knowing Epstein but denied ever going to his infamous Caribbean island. "We had a brief association where we exchanged emails about adult women, and in addition, we discussed movies, philanthropy and investments," said Tisch, who also won an Academy Award in 1994 for producing "Forrest Gump." "As we all know now, he was a terrible person and someone I deeply regret associating with."

Casey Wasserman

The president of the committee for the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los
Angeles exchanged flirty emails with Epstein confidant Ghislaine Maxwell, Friday's document release shows.

In a 2003 exchange, Wasserman wrote to Maxwell: "I think of you all the time. So, what do I have to do to see you in a tight leather outfit?" In another, Maxwell asks whether it will be foggy enough during an upcoming visit "so that you can float naked down the beach and no one can see you unless they are close up?"

Wasserman released a statement Saturday saying he never had a personal or business relationship with Epstein and that he regretted the correspondence with Maxwell, which he said came "long before her horrific crimes came to light." Maxwell is currently serving a 20-year prison sentence for sex trafficking.

Ehud Barak

The former Israeli prime minister and his wife turn up frequently in the documents released Friday, showing they stayed in regular contact with Epstein for years, including well after his 2008 guilty plea for sex crimes in Florida.

Among the correspondence are plans for a 2017 stay at Epstein's New York residence. Other missives discuss mundane logistics for other visits, meetings and phone calls with Epstein. Barak has acknowledged regularly visiting Epstein on his trips to New York and flying on his private plane, but maintains he never observed any inappropriate behavior or parties.

Barak served as Israel's prime minister from 1999 to 2001 and later served as its defense minister.

Larry Summers

Clinton's former Secretary of the Treasury and the onetime president of Harvard University is another of Epstein's well-known longtime acquaintances. The new documents are full of references to meetings and dinners between the two men.

A previously-released trove of documents show Summers emailing Epstein in 2019, after the financier had been charged with sexual abuse of minors, to discuss his interactions with a woman, writing he'd told her "awfully coy u are." Epstein replied: "you reacted well." Summers has called his interactions with Epstein "a major error of judgment."

Howard Lutnick

President Donald Trump's commerce secretary visited Epstein's private Caribbean island with his family on at least one occasion, records released Friday show. That appears to contradict prior statements he's made claiming he cut ties with the disgraced financier, who he's called "gross," decades ago. But emails show Lutnick and his wife accepted an invitation to Little St. James in the U.S. Virgin Islands in December 2012 and planned to arrive by yacht with their children.

The former chairman of Newmark, a major commercial real estate firm, also had drinks on another occasion in 2011 with Epstein and corresponded with him about the construction of a building across the street from both of their homes. The Commerce Department, in a statement, said Lutnick had "limited interactions with Mr. Epstein in the presence of his wife and has never been accused of wrongdoing."

Sergey Brin

The billionaire Google co-founder made plans to meet with Epstein and Maxwell at his townhouse in New York years before he was publicly accused of sexually abusing underage girls, emails show.

In one exchange in 2003, Maxwell invited him to join her at a screening of the Renee Zellweger film "Down with Love" in New York. She followed up a few weeks later to invite him to a "happily casual and relaxed" dinner at Epstein's house. Brin offered to bring along Google's then-CEO Eric Schmidt.

Spokespersons for Google didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment Saturday.

Steve Bannon

The one-time adviser to Trump exchanged hundreds of friendly texts with Epstein, some sent months before the financier's 2019 arrest and jailhouse suicide.

The two discussed politics, travel and a documentary Bannon was said to be planning that would help salvage Epstein's reputation.

One 2018 exchange, for example, focused on Trump's threats at the time to oust Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell. In a 2019 message, Bannon asked Epstein if he could supply his plane to pick him up in Rome. Epstein and Bannon also exchanged gossipy messages about Trump and his politics. Bannon hasn't responded to emails seeking comment.

Miroslav Lajcak

A national security adviser to the Slovakian prime minister, Lajcak resigned Saturday after his past communications with Epstein appeared in Friday's document release. Opposition parties and a nationalist partner in Fico's governing coalition had called for him to step down.

Lajcak, a former Slovak foreign minister and a onetime president of the U.N. General Assembly, has not been accused of any wrongdoing, but was photographed meeting with Epstein in the years between his initial release from jail and his subsequent indictment in 2019 on sex trafficking charges. He said his correspondence with Epstein were part of his diplomatic duties.

Anti-Zionism is not Antisemitic

By Rev. George Gilbert, Jr.

Moral Consistency in a Time of Crisis: Faith, Justice, and the Expanding Conversation on Zionism and Human Dignity

In today's charged political and cultural climate, few topics generate as much heat — and as little light — as the relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. The tendency to collapse these two distinct ideas into one has created confusion, deepened social divides, and in some cases, silenced necessary public discourse. If communities committed to justice are to navigate this moment responsibly, we must begin with historical clarity rather than ideological reaction.

At its core, the word *Semitic* has never described a single race. It originated as a linguistic classification used by scholars to identify groups whose languages emerged from a common family — including Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, and Amharic. Historically, Semitic peoples have included Jews, Arabs, Ethiopians, and several other ancient populations. Yet modern public conversation often uses the term almost exclusively in reference to Jewish identity, unintentionally narrowing a category that was always broader.

This brings us to Zionism — a political movement that arose in nineteenth-century Europe advocating for a Jewish homeland. For many Jewish people, Zionism is inseparable from questions of safety, survival, and self-determination, particularly in the shadow of centuries of persecution culminating in the Holocaust. Understanding this historical trauma is essential for any honest discussion.

At the same time, many scholars, political theorists, and even some Jewish intellectuals maintain that criticism of a political ideology or the policies of a nation-state does not inherently constitute hatred toward a people. Democracies depend on the moral right to critique governments. To question policy is not, by definition, prejudice.

However, the distinction becomes critically important when rhetoric shifts from political critique to ethnic hostility. Anti-Zionism crosses into antisemitism

when it traffics in stereotypes, denies Jewish humanity, or holds Jewish communities collectively responsible for geopolitical events. Motivation matters. Language matters. Moral consistency matters.

Another conversation emerging in some academic, theological, and cultural spaces asks whether descendants of enslaved Africans might possess historical connections to ancient Semitic populations. While Africa is undeniably central to biblical history — with Egypt, Cush, and Ethiopia playing prominent roles — mainstream historians have not found conclusive evidence that the majority of African Americans descend directly from ancient Israelites.

Yet reducing this exploration to a simple historical claim misses a deeper truth. For many enslaved Africans and their descendants, identifying with the story of Israel was never merely about genealogy; it was about theological survival. In the Exodus narrative, oppressed people found a God who delivers. In Babylonian exile, they saw their own displacement. Scripture became both mirror and medicine.

This reflects a universal human longing: the desire to locate oneself within a sacred story. Oppressed communities throughout history have reached toward narratives that affirm dignity when the world has denied it.

Today, another moral question is pressing itself into global consciousness — the humanitarian crisis unfolding in Gaza and the broader Palestinian territories. Many international observers, human-rights organizations, and faith leaders have raised grave concerns about mass civilian suffering, displacement, and the destruction of essential infrastructure. Others strongly dispute terms such as “ethnic cleansing,” underscoring the complexity and deep contestation surrounding both the language and the political realities on the ground.

Regardless of terminology, the images of wounded children, grieving parents, and devastated neighborhoods have stirred profound spiritual discomfort within many African American churches. For a people whose collective memory carries the trauma of the Middle Passage, generations of chattel slavery, the terror of Jim Crow, and the ongoing struggle against inequities within the criminal justice system, suffering is not an abstract concept — it is ancestral memory.

Because of this history, many Black Christians interpret large-scale human suffering through a theological lens

shaped by liberation, dignity, and God's preferential concern for the oppressed. The question often asked in pulpits and prayer circles alike is not merely political but moral: *Are we witnessing the protection of life, or the disproportionate loss of it?*

At the same time, Christian ethics calls believers to reject simplistic narratives. Moral concern for Palestinian civilians does not require indifference to Israeli trauma, including the horror of terrorism and the legitimate desire for security. Justice is not a finite resource; compassion does not have to choose sides.

The deeper danger emerges when the logic of dominance — whether political, military, or ideological — begins to overshadow the sacred value of human life. History has repeatedly shown that when power operates without sufficient moral restraint, vulnerable populations suffer first and most.

Yet wisdom calls for caution. Competing over who constitutes the "real" heirs of biblical promise risks reproducing the very hierarchies that justice movements seek to dismantle. Liberation should never require the erasure of another people's suffering.

Instead, the biblical witness points toward something far more expansive — a multiethnic human story shaped by covenant, compassion, and divine concern for the vulnerable. The arc of scripture consistently bends toward the marginalized, not toward racial supremacy.

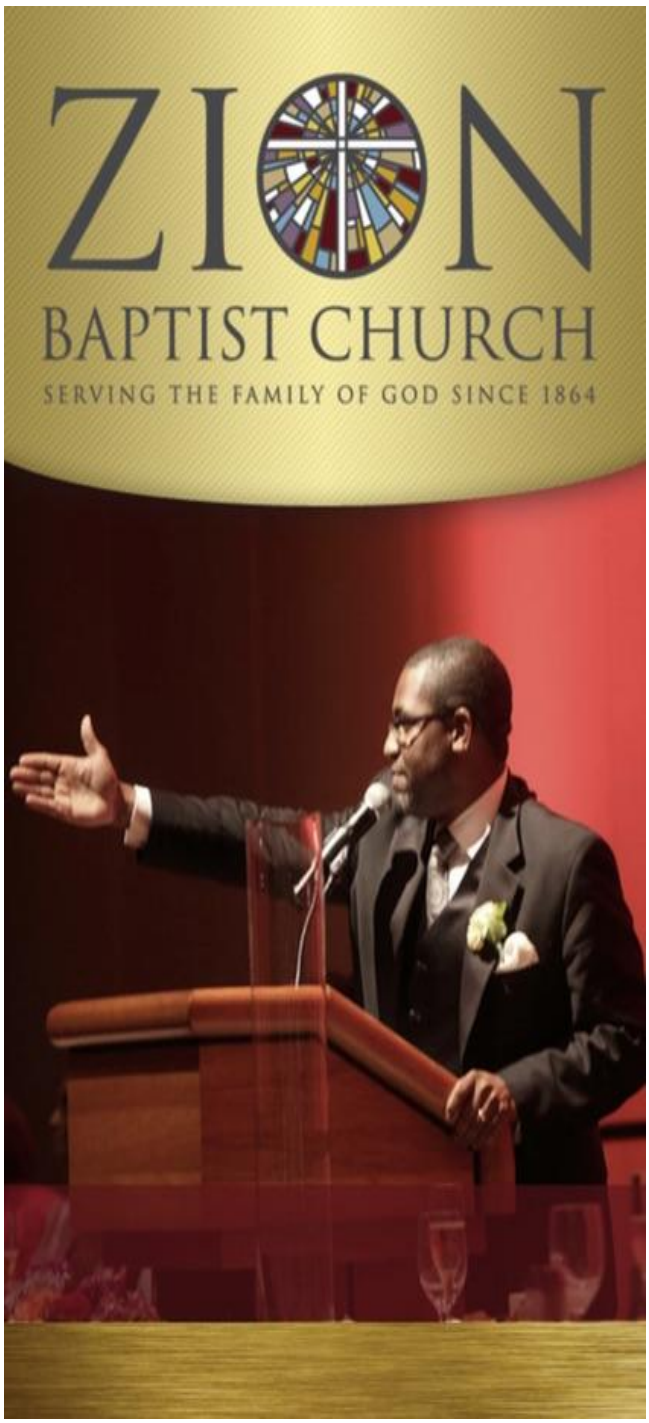
Perhaps the more urgent moral reminder for our time is this: criticism of political structures can coexist with an unwavering rejection of hatred. One does not have to deny another community's trauma to affirm their own.

History offers a powerful precedent. Black and Jewish leaders once stood shoulder to shoulder during the Civil Rights Movement, demonstrating that solidarity among historically oppressed groups is not only possible but transformative. Preserving that legacy requires resisting narratives that pit communities against one another.

In an era driven by outrage algorithms and ideological echo chambers, responsible voices must lower the temperature while raising the intellectual and moral seriousness of our public conversations.

Anti-Zionism is a political debate.
Antisemitism is a moral failure.
And the test of authentic faith is whether we defend human dignity — consistently, courageously, and without exception.

Thank You Pastor Keith Byrd & Zion Baptist Church for your continued support!



A Letter of Clergy Support for Rev. Dr. Howard John Wesley and his Remarks on Christian Kirk

To Whom It May Concern,

We, the undersigned clergy, write this letter in unwavering support of the remarks made by Rev. Dr. Howard John Wesley of Alfred Street Baptist Church concerning Christian Kirk. In a time when silence can be mistaken for complicity, we affirm the courage and conviction displayed in speaking truth to power and upholding the eternal truths of God's Word.

Rev. Wesley's prophetic voice echoes the call of the ancient prophets who refused to bend to political pressure or cultural convenience. His rebuke of Christian Kirk's stance is not only biblically sound—it is spiritually necessary.

As clergy committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we stand on the authority of Scripture:

- **Isaiah 58:1** – "Cry aloud; do not hold back; lift up your voice like a trumpet; declare to my people their transgression."
- **Micah 6:8** – "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"
- **John 8:32** – "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
- **Ephesians 5:11** – "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness but rather expose them."

Rev. Wesley's words remind us that the pulpit is not a platform for popularity but a sacred space for proclamation. Christian Kirk's integrity and witness deserve not only our constructive criticism but our collective protection from forces that seek to distort, diminish, or silence the truth.

We call upon fellow clergy, churches, and communities of faith to stand with us in this moment. Let us not be found wanting in our duty to defend righteousness, to uplift those who speak truth, and to challenge systems that perpetuate injustice.

In the spirit of the prophets, the apostles, and our Savior Jesus Christ—who overturned tables and confronted hypocrisy—we sign this letter as a testament to our shared commitment to truth, justice, and the unshakable Word of God.

Rev. George Gilbert, Jr.
The Center for Racial Equity and Justice
202-262-5053
tcfreaj@gmail.com

Rev. Dr. Christopher L. Zacharias,
Pastor, John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church, Washington, DC

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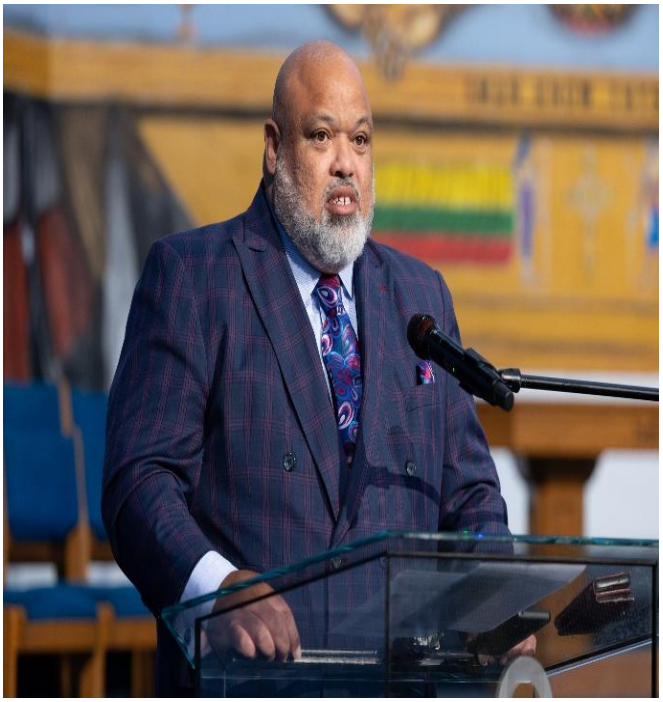
PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE KILLING OF RENEE GOOD



What happened in Minnesota was not an isolated tragedy—it was only a matter of time!

When federal immigration enforcement was deliberately placed into local communities and encouraged to operate as an occupying force, treating residents like enemies of warfare rather than neighbors with constitutional rights, the outcome was predictable. People who are protesting—peacefully—still retain their First Amendment rights. The militarization of

enforcement against civilians erodes trust, inflames fear, and creates conditions where loss of life becomes inevitable. This death is the result of reckless policy choices. When Donald Trump placed ICE into communities without accountability, without guardrails, and without respect for constitutional norms, the federal government sent a message that force mattered more than law, and power mattered more than people. Now we are witnessing the consequences.

It is time for Americans—across race, party, and region—to stand together against illegal decisions, divisive actions, and systemic moves that are putting our country and our communities in harm's way. What we are seeing is lawlessness at the highest levels of government, sanctioned and protected by those who worship power instead of justice.

This moment demands moral clarity. We must put aside political loyalty and rhetorical cover and instead protect what truly sustains a democracy:

- the power of the people,
- the integrity of government processes,
- and the checks and balances that prevent tyranny from taking root.

History teaches us a sobering truth: if we do not learn how to live together, we will die divided. A nation cannot survive when fear replaces freedom and force replaces fairness. To those in power—and to those who support immoral decisions that harm the least, the vulnerable, and the marginalized—Scripture offers a warning:

"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed."
— **Isaiah 10:1

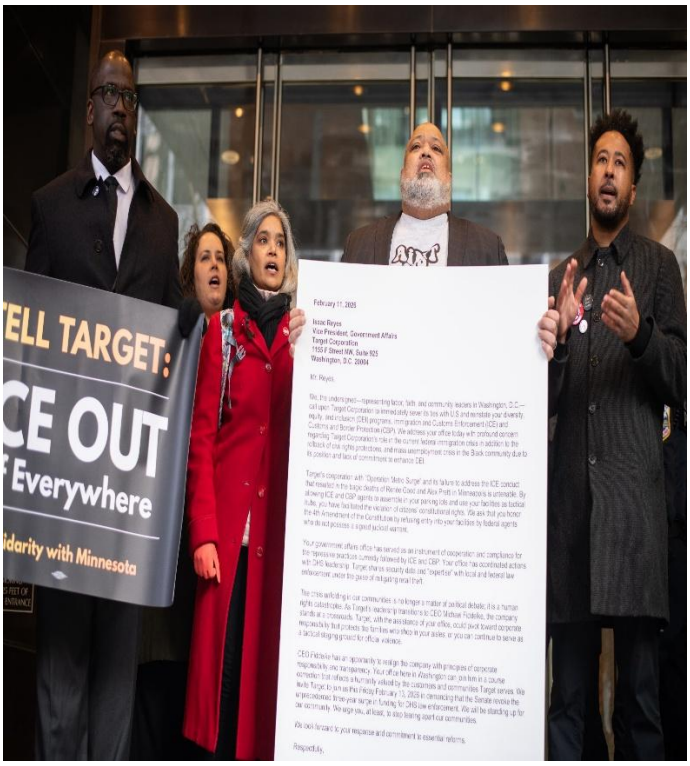
With gratitude and in partnership,

Rev. George Gilbert Jr.
Executive Director
The Center for Racial Equity and Justice

Thank you DoorDash for your continued support!

Thank You Pastor C.H. Johnson and Christ Missionary Baptist Church for your continued support!

Fighting for the Least, Lost and Left-Out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Vice President, Government Affairs
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Let's Talk About It.

The Big Beautiful Bill:
"How beautiful is it?"

Presenter:
Rev. George Gilbert

The Center for
Racial Equity and Justice

Feb. 5, 2026
6:30-7:30 p.m.

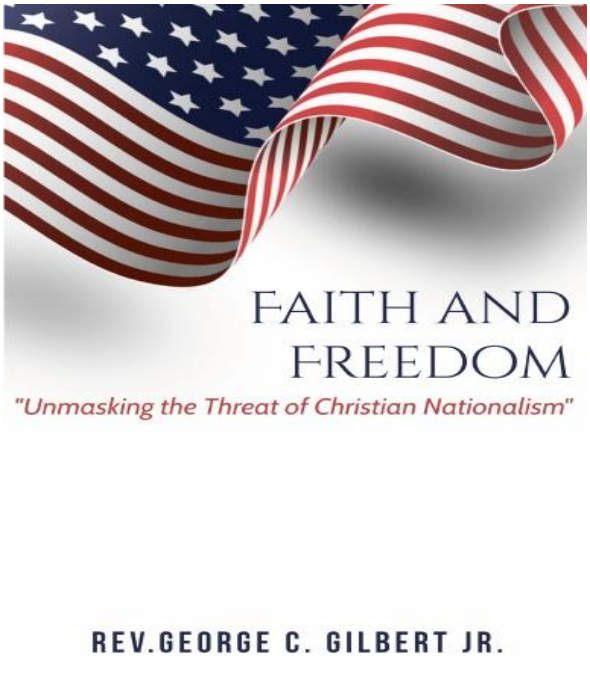
RSVP:
Connections.AASO@gmail.com

President
Andrea Sims-Parson

Connection and Social Action Chair
Belinda Lindsay

Virtual Event
Zoom Link will be provided.

HAVE YOU PURCHASED REV. GILBERT'S NEW BOOK?



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