

Minute on Ending Police Violence
Akron Friends Meeting
Adopted July 10, 2022

In February 2021 Akron Friends adopted a Minute on Antiracism that included the statement, “We recognize our country’s shameful denial of civil and human rights to people of color.” Recent events in Akron have turned the attention of the entire country to the denial of civil and human rights to a young man of color, Jayland Walker, who was shot 60 times by police officers following a chase pursuant to a traffic stop. Citizens of Akron and from elsewhere in the nation have expressed their grief and outrage in a series of marches and rallies demanding justice for Jayland. Community groups are calling for changes in policing policies and practices believed to contribute to confrontations that put people, especially people of color, at risk of bodily harm.

Akron Friends, in our previous Minute, pledged “to be visible and outspoken about racial justice in our communities and in our work with organizations” and “to encourage local governments and police departments to reduce violence, that disproportionately affects people of color, and to treat all citizens with equal dignity and respect.” Therefore, we now call upon elected officials in Akron, in consultation with local advocacy organizations, to examine policies and practices of the police department and to reformulate those policies and practices so that all citizens, especially citizens of color, are safe in their homes and on the streets and in the public spaces of our community. In particular, we urge the Akron Police Department to ensure that all personnel receive training and supervision related to implicit racial bias. We further urge the City of Akron to adopt policies and practices designed to ensure that never again will what happened to Jayland Walker happen to anyone else. In the words of the NAACP and other advocates for police reform, “We are done dying.”