



# AFL-CIO

AMERICA'S UNIONS

**American Federation  
of Labor and  
Congress of Industrial  
Organizations**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Council Members  
National and International Union Presidents  
Trades and Industrial Departments  
General Board Representatives

FROM: Richard L. Trumka and Reverend William J. Barber II

DATE: September 13, 2020

RE: 57<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Birmingham, AL Baptist Church Bombing

On **Tuesday, September 15**, we will mark the 57th anniversary of the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama with a candlelight vigil and ten-point pledge for social, racial and economic justice. As a leader in the faith, civil rights and labor movements, we invite you to join us in this commitment through one or all of the following actions:

- [Sign the pledge](#) (copied below).
- Promote the anniversary event. It will be live streamed on [aflcio.tv](#).
- Submit a video of support. Please upload your completed video of no longer than 2 minutes to <http://go.aflcio.org/racialjustice>.

No evil is extinguished unless good people act. We are calling on everyone who has marched to challenge systemic racism to come together with poor and working people and the labor movement we have built to push this nation toward a more perfect union.

RLT/WJB/vh

Enclosure

cc: Elizabeth H. Shuler, Secretary-Treasurer  
Tefere A. Gebre, Executive Vice President

## A 10-POINT COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL, RACIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

<https://actionnetwork.org/forms/racialjusticepledge>

1. We call on all of us here in the United States of America to reject death, whether by racism or economic injustice, and unite to fight for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for everyone. And as we embrace life, we remember those Americans who gave their lives that we might be free—from the beaches of Normandy to the coal camps of West Virginia to the churches of Birmingham and Charleston.
2. We call on every person, regardless of race, creed, color, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, to demand that those whom we the people have granted authority—our elected leaders, our government officials and our law enforcement officers, from the president of the United States to the police officer on the beat—to uphold the Constitution and to honor the oaths you took on the Holy Bible to establish justice, provide for the common defense and the general welfare and, in this time of pandemic, to place the lives, health and safety of our people above the greed of the wealthy and the ambitions of the powerful.
3. We call on the president of the United States to stop lying, to stop stoking hate and racism, and instead to turn his attention and the full power of the federal government he leads to address the physical and economic fear and pain so many now endure. We further call on him to come to the aid of the essential worker, the unemployed, the poor and the vulnerable, whether in nursing homes, in meatpacking houses or on the unemployment lines.
4. We call on every person of conscience to reject our country going backward. We call on our nation and our elected leaders to embrace America's promise, to have the courage to embrace the future that we can build together, not the divisive legacies of our past.
5. We call on the U.S. Senate to address the intertwined crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic pain and structural racism by taking up and passing the HEROES Act and the Justice in Policing Act.
6. We call on both houses of Congress to go beyond the bills still sitting on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's desk and take bold action to give all of us, but especially the poor among us, all we need to live and thrive and bring a new day for our country, starting with a good job with rights and economic security for all who want to work.
7. We call on the authorities who have the responsibility of protecting our democracy, and on every person who believes in America, to come together to stop every attempt at voter suppression, and we call on every citizen of our republic to make every sacrifice needed to vote.
8. We call on every employer—every business, nonprofit and government body in America to give all workers the day off, or at least time off (with pay), to vote on Election Day.

9. We call on every person who believes in civil rights and economic justice to take action to defend our right to vote and our democratic republic—to work with your church, your union and your civic organization to stand up for solidarity and to reject death. We can begin by joining in a digital gathering and training on September 14, jointly hosted by the Moral Mondays movement and the AFL-CIO on the theme of, “Voting Is Power Unleashed.”

10. On **September 15**, we call on every person in this nation to join us virtually at **12:00 p.m. Noon** to declare that:

*We the people, with deep conviction and determination, declare our commitment to defend our republic, won by the blood and sacrifice of those who came before us, by exercising our right to vote. We truly have nothing to fear but fear itself. We will move forward together and we will accept nothing but freedom. We will not take one step back, and we will bring a new day to our beloved country.*