



Dear LPU Community,

**Our nation, our cities, and our LPU community is in need of healing.** Great pain has emerged locally and nationally these past weeks as news outlets reported the tragic and unjustifiable deaths of unarmed black men and women. It has been heartbreaking and traumatizing. As a community, we repent and lament, as scripture calls us to mourn with those who mourn.

On May 14, I, along with our Board of Trustees, issued a statement against injustice following the news of Ahmaud Arbery's shooting, which you can [read here](#). Not long after, we witnessed the inhuman death of George Floyd and reaffirmed our commitment via email to speak out, lament, and act. Many members of our community including students have participated in peaceful protests and leaned into ways we can be a part of the solution.

This past week we posted an additional statement on social media condemning racism, prejudice, and injustice in all its forms. This is our firm belief. However, we heard from many students, alumni, staff, and faculty that this was not their experience. We feel for those who have been hurting, past and present, and we are thankful for those who shared their story. We hear your voice. We hear your pain. These stories have illuminated the reality that the community has much work to do in a united way.

On behalf of the University, I ask your forgiveness for ways known and unknown that we have contributed to the hurt and injustice you have experienced. You are dear to us, and with a heart of genuine reconciliation I pray that we can rebuild and restore relationship.

Since becoming President last fall, I have been committed to serving our students and responding to their voices. For several years, students have requested changes to create a more inclusive and equitable campus. You have presented many excellent ideas and solutions. I love how much you care! There have been multiple plans to address diversity and inclusion on campus, and unfortunately, some important and valuable initiatives were not followed through on. Anyone who knows me knows that I am an activator. There are certain things that should have been done long ago, but they weren't. *I am going to make sure that we act and act now.*

We have already made several intentional changes, and our most recent student surveys, collected at the end of this school year, indicate that students are seeing some progress. However, I will be the first to raise my hand and admit that there is still much work to do. We can't slow down. Moving forward, we are accelerating several actions, not least of which is the moving from a part time Diversity Coordinator, to hiring a full-time Diversity Officer. This was requested by students and not filled prior to my presidential appointment. With the support of the Board of Trustees, we have launched an immediate search. We will ensure an excellent process to find the right candidate, and our goal is to complete the hire before the end of Fall Semester 2020.

As a community, may we walk with humility and kindness, may we listen to one another's stories to understand, may we build up one another, and may we speak out against deep patterns of injustice and

oppression. May the systems put in place serve well all of our students, staff and faculty understanding it will take *all of us* to strengthen our community and address the important issues; to heal our campus, our cities, and our nation. May we align with the gospel, submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit for lasting change. We must each do our part to evoke change, and together, with God's power, we will do great things.

We have updated diversity and inclusion information on our website, which you can [see here](#). This page will provide details regarding progress, plans and resources. I recognize that we can't change everything that students have experienced, but I hope our actions moving forward will foster healing and hope.

Today, I ask that you would you join me in prayer for wisdom, guidance and healing of the hearts of our community as we move forward together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angie Richey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "R".

President Angie Richey & the LPU Board of Trustees  
Micah 6:8