



Why do we gather for an Anti-Racism Vigil each month?

We began our vigils in April 2021 during the week of jury deliberation in the trial of Officer Derek Chauvin who murdered George Floyd. We marched every day until the verdict was reached.

We've continued monthly vigils ever since as both a statement of solidarity and a spiritual practice because:

- Vigils regularly remind us of the discrimination and violence experienced by people who have been labeled “the other”. - Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, skin pigmentation, religious practices, ethnic background.
- Vigils regularly remind those of us who were born with unearned privilege, that we are called to advocate for justice for those who do not enjoy that same privilege.
- Vigils regularly remind us that we seek a community of people who will support, encourage and challenge one another to speak up and enter into discussions that at times may be uncomfortable.
- Vigils regularly remind us that the greatest concern is not only to challenge blatant racism but rather the challenge is to address the silence of the complicit majority who benefit from a racist system.

- Vigils regularly remind us that it has often been religious institutions that have been the perpetrators of discrimination and racism and so religious institutions not only need to confess their past, but decide to change.
- Vigils regularly remind us that some drivers that pass us on France Avenue will spend a few seconds reflecting on justice for all and many will recognize that there are others in this community with whom they share a common value.
- Vigils regularly remind us that justice work is part of the very fabric of our lives and we leave here called to live out our lives doing that work.
- Vigils regularly remind us that all religious traditions have common values: Love your neighbor, supporting the common good, concern for the outcast.
- Vigils regularly remind us that it is ordinary people who must do this work and we are those ordinary people. We are not waiting for charismatic leaders to appear. It is our work.

And from ***Spiritual Literacy in Today's World*** by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat

"When we heard that Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Rev. Robert Edgar of the National Council of Churches had called for a global candlelight vigil for peace Sunday night, March 16, 2003, we got to thinking about vigil-keeping as a spiritual practice for wartime. This time-honored way of responding to danger, crisis, and even death is practiced in most religious traditions and is closely associated with monastic Christianity.

*The word derives from a verb that means "watch" in both the sense of "observe" and "guard." A vigil is a time of **intense wakefulness**. The*

Bible is full of stories about people keeping watch, especially during times of great difficulty and concern for others. Vigils may be silent or filled with wails and lamentations.”

