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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 18, 2014

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**Joint Statement of  
Heads of Historic African American Church Denominations,  
Independent Churches, the National African American Clergy Network,  
Faith Partnerships, Inc., and Diverse Faith Leaders  
Denouncing  
The Brutal Killing of Michael Brown  
Pledges to Assist the Brown Family with Burial Costs  
in Ferguson, Missouri  
August 18, 2014**

**-Group will establish an Educational Memorial Fund in Michael Brown's name  
to keep his memory, and others who have died like him, forever remembered**

**-Requests that as a move towards community reconciliation, all charges be dropped against those who protested and, as a result were arrested for exercising their First Amendment Rights to lawful assembly**

**-Is requesting a Meeting of Support with U.S. Attorney General,  
The Honorable Eric Holder**

Washington, D. C. ...Leaders of Historic African American Church Denominations, Independent Churches, the National African American Clergy Network, Faith Partnerships, Inc., and Diverse Faith Leaders, release the following statement regarding the brutal killing of young Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri:

"In light of the long and bloody trail of lynchings, deaths, and killings of African American youth from Emmett Till, to Trayvon Martin, to Michael Brown, and scores of others throughout our nation, we call for action, justice, and the transformation of our society. While Michael Brown is physically dead, justice must not be buried with his young body.

"Michael Brown is spiritually 'our child;' and a child of all of the African American and concerned American communities. We stand in solidarity with the suffering community of Ferguson, Missouri, and speak in the spirit of redeeming love, nonviolence, and reconciliation.

"In light of the injustice perpetrated by the Police Department of Ferguson, Missouri, the cover up, and late release of the 'shooting' policeman's name, we recommend the following actions as a Joint Statement of heads of historic African American Church Denominations and Independent Churches, the National African American Clergy Network, Faith Partnerships Inc., Diverse Faith Leaders, concerned clergypersons of color, minorities everywhere in America, and clergy of goodwill. We express our moral outrage at the lack of justice, and issue an immediate call for true justice in the untimely death of Michael Brown.

"Mr. Brown was a promising African American male in Ferguson, Missouri, who will be buried at the time he was scheduled to enter college. We share an appreciation for the work done by Reverend Congressman Emanuel Cleaver and Congressman Lacy Clay, members of the Congressional Black Caucus, other elected state officials...particularly

members of the Missouri Congressional Delegation...clergy, legal experts, and all people of goodwill, who are working to resolve the inequities of this senseless murder. We lift our voices as well against the senseless murders of so many young black youth and men, from Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin, now Michael Brown and nameless unarmed others who have been cut down in their prime for being 'young, gifted, and black.'"

"We are family-oriented in our values in the African American community and believe that every child is our child. We embody the famous African proverb, 'it takes a village to raise a child.' As such, Michael Brown has been and is our child, now in death as he was in life in Ferguson, Missouri.

"We, therefore, pledge to assist the Brown family - Michael's biological family of origin – with burial costs. We also support the establishment of an Educational Memorial Fund in Michael's name...so that he, and young men like him, will not be forgotten. We will remember prayerfully all the young men who have lost their lives in senseless killings by insensitive and unenlightened police, who fail to properly protect and serve, and who are untrained in community relations, lacking in cultural competency, or have chosen to pull a trigger prematurely, rather than exercise good judgment.

"We request a meeting with United States Attorney General Eric Holder in support of his efforts to bring an end to this brutal pattern of injustice.

"We call on all churches in the faith community, especially those representing the African American Diaspora, to hold Memorial Services this Sunday, or next Sunday, in honor of the memory of Michael Brown, in accordance with church calendars. We call for an end to the cutting down of precious God-created lives like Michael Brown's and so many others.

"All active denominations and non-denominations in the Faith Community must 'push' for robust voter education, voter registration, and voter participation beginning in 2014. This ensures that elected officials, who choose to do wrong, can be replaced by those who will represent the preservation of life in ethnic communities where a disproportionate amount of killings, unsubstantiated sentencings, and jail time, are unwarranted means for perpetuating racism and bias against ethnic minorities.

"As a move toward community reconciliation, we urge that all charges be dropped against those who protested and were arrested for exercising their First Amendment Rights to lawful assembly.

"In order that all of these actions are promptly accomplished, we pray to God that 'justice rolls down like water and righteousness as an ever-flowing stream' - Amos 5:24.

This release is signed by the following individuals:

**Conveners,**

*Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner*, Co-Chair, National African American Clergy Network

*Dr. T. DeWitt Smith, Jr.*, Co-Chair, National African American Clergy Network

*Dr. Otis Moss, Jr.*, Chairman, Faith Partnerships, Inc.

**African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.)**

Bishop Jeffrey Nathaniel Leath

President, Council of Bishops

Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, Presiding Bishop

Office of Ecumenical and Urban Affairs

Bishop Cornal Garnett Henning, Sr.

Retired, A.M.E.

**African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A.M.E. ZION)**

Bishop George E. Battle, Jr., Senior Bishop

Bishop Seth O. Lartey, Western/West African

Episcopal District

**Christian Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.)**

Bishop Lawrence L. Reddick, III

Senior Bishop

**Church of God in Christ (C.O.G.I.C.)**

Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.

Presiding Bishop

Bishop Edwin C. Bass

President COGIC Urban Initiative

Bishop Designate Talbert W. Swan, II  
Advisor on Social Justice/Public Policy  
Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship, International

Bishop Paul S. Morton, Sr.  
Presiding Bishop and Founder

Bishop Joseph W. Walker, III  
Presiding Bishop-Elect

**National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.**

Dr. Julius R. Scruggs  
President

**Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. (P.N.B.C.)**

Dr. James C. Perkins  
President

**Independent Church Leaders**

Dr. Cynthia Hale  
Pastor Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, GA

Dr. Frederick Haynes  
Pastor Friendship-West Baptist Church, Dallas, TX

Dr. Otis Moss, III  
Pastor Trinity United Church of Christ, Chicago, IL

Dr. Raphael G. Warnock  
Pastor Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, GA

Dr. Carroll A. Baltimore, Sr.  
President, CAB Outreach Ministries, Inc.  
Senior Pastor, International Communities Baptist  
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Rev. Joshua DuBois, Founder, Values Partnerships  
Former Executive Director, White House Office of Faith-based  
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Ms. ShaRhonda Knott-Dawson  
Director Chicago Coalition on Black Civic Participation

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Rev. Dr. Delores C. Carpenter  
Professor Howard University School of Divinity  
Senior Pastor Emerita, Michigan Park Christian Church

Rev. Robert Collier  
Pastor Galilee Baptist Church

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Director Social Justice Organizing Program Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Dr. Shane Claiborne  
Author, Activist Founder of The Simple Way  
Visionary Leader of Red Letter Christians

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Board Member, Pan African Christian AIDS Network (PACANET) USA, Inc.  
Founder Humble1, LLC

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Ms. Portia Hemphill  
Member  
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