



GEORGE FLOYD, 1973-2020

WHY HERE? WHY NOW?

George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Rayshard Brooks. Ahmaud Arbery. Tony McDade. Dion Johnson.

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis after allegedly attempting to use a counterfeit \$20 bill at a grocery store. After being handcuffed face-down on the street, officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee to Floyd's neck for more than eight minutes. For the final several of those minutes, Floyd was unresponsive and had no pulse. None of the four police officers present attempted to revive him.

Following this, amidst a global COVID-19 pandemic, an international surge of protests led by the Black Lives Matter movement ensued, organized in all 50 states, over 60 countries and across every continent except Antarctica.

People want change.

They not only want to see an end to police brutality, they're also protesting what they believe is systemic racism in the United States.

This magazine attempts to not only tell their stories but also shed light on this movement, a movement with ancient roots yet new ideas, a movement that will not subside until change is made.

We stand with the Black lives in this country that are hurting and have been hurting for generations.

Because Black lives matter.

We understand the great responsibility and challenge that producing a magazine of this nature entails. It is our hope that the hard work and effort of the *Focus* team is reflected in every page, every paragraph, every word.

The St. Mark's community is comprised of a diverse group of students, faculty, staff and alumni. The school has done an admirable job building awareness and has made successful efforts to increase the diversity and inclusivity of its community.

But the world is changing. And with that change, we ourselves are called to change. We ourselves are called to be more aware of the struggles of other people and better embrace their value.

As journalists, part of our job in facilitating this change in giving people ways to inform themselves and expose themselves to new, sometimes frightening perspectives outside their community bubble — outside their comfort zones. Which bring us to this magazine.

Our goal as the *Focus* staff is to expose students to the complicated world that lies just outside 10600 Preston Road — and to encourage them to think. Think about the world, about the people around them and about themselves.

And to never be satisfied with the knowledge they have. There is always a new perspective, a new idea, a new story to embrace.

Cristian Pereira
Editor-in-chief