

SANKOFA

@Home

*George Floyd
Square*



Transform Minnesota

GEORGE FLOYD SQUARE

With this month's Sankofa at Home, we turn our attention to George Floyd Square.

On May 25, 2020, George Perry Floyd, Jr., was killed by police in front of Cup Foods at the intersection of E 38th St and Chicago Ave in South Minneapolis. The corner was renamed in memory of Floyd, with an inauguration of the name held at the intersection on May 25, 2022.



George Floyd Square
E 38th St and Chicago Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55407

A memorial located where Floyd was killed sprang up nearly overnight after a video of his death was posted to social media in the early morning of May 26, 2020.

Both E 38th St and Chicago Ave were soon blocked off within a block of the intersection as a variety of art pieces, murals, and other installations were created and placed at the site. This includes the **Say Their Names cemetery** one block north of the square; multiple fist sculptures; a community garden; a painted list of names along Chicago Ave of individuals killed by police; and more.

The square became a gathering place in the immediate aftermath of Floyd's death, as people went to remember, mourn, and call for change during subsequent events.



This Sankofa @ Home marks the first post in our series related to present-day events. With this, we are offered a new way to reflect - through a lived community experience.

Many of us saw the video of George Floyd's murder. We also witnessed or participated in the nationwide response to his killing - protests which were also fueled by years of highly publicized deaths of Black Americans at the hands of police, two months of COVID-19 restrictions, and additional political factors (including a contentious presidential campaign).

With all the ways we shared this experience as a community, we must also acknowledge the differences in experience across different parts of the community. Some experienced trauma for the first time, while others felt an addition to a larger historical trauma. Some were introduced to the disparities across race in policing and gaps in education, income, and housing in Minnesota, while others know those realities as an ongoing part of life.

With this post, we ask you to reflect not only on the questions below, but on the ways our lived experience informs an active pursuit of racial justice, reconciliation, and community healing. Take time to lament, to understand the pain and trauma that comes with this and our previous Sankofa @ Home stops, and to consider ways we can pursue justice without needing to first be moved by tragedy.



The "Say Their Names Cemetery" is an installation honoring numerous individuals killed by police

CREATING A MONUMENT



"I would argue that this is the most important intersection in the world based on what's happened."

-Alexander Kado, senior project manager, City of Minneapolis.

Along with bearing witness to these events, we've also been able to see the creation of a monument in real time.

The intersection of 38th and Chicago has slowly evolved from the initial memorial created by the community to the square that exists today. The city of Minneapolis has also taken initial steps toward creating a permanent monument at the intersection by officially renaming the intersection George Perry Floyd Square in 2022.

However, future development of the square remains unclear. The city of Minneapolis has been gathering community input about the future of the square since 2022 and is expected to release a vision for the square by the end of 2024,

but construction of a more permanent monument and other development at the intersection may not begin until at least 2026.

As George Floyd Square continues to develop, questions about who is shaping the site and telling Floyd's story will continue to be asked. Keeping these important questions in mind offers the ability to mold a monument that honors, reflects, and remembers George Floyd and the community.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Reflect on the events of 2020:

- What was your initial reaction to George Floyd's death?
- Did you visit 38th and Chicago during this time? What prompted your decision?
- How do people change the world?



As you visit George Floyd Square:

- What's new to you?
- What do you feel?
- How does the square honor George Floyd?
- How does the square prompt Minnesotans to think about our racial history?



Monuments:

- What story are monuments intended to convey?
- How do we decide to create monuments?
- How do we tell our own stories? How do we tell each other's stories? How do we give space for others to tell their stories?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Break the Wheel

Keith Ellison

“With this powerful and intimate trial diary, Minnesota Attorney General **Keith Ellison** asks the key question: How do we break the wheel of police violence and finally make it stop?”

The Risk of Being Woke: Sermonic Reflections for Activists

Rev. Dr. Curtiss DeYoung

“Written following the murder of George Floyd, **Rev. Dr. Curtiss DeYoung** provides a 21st century call to embrace racial justice action, live in beloved community, and seek refreshing mystic moments as we emerge from a health pandemic and engage in a racial reckoning.”

Sparked: George Floyd, Racism, and the Progressive Illusion

**Ed. Walter Jacobs, Wendy
Thompson Taiwo, and Amy
August**

“Reflections on the murder of **George Floyd** and the uprisings that followed and on racism in Minnesota, as told by former and current residents of the state.”

His Name is George Floyd: One Man’s Life and the Struggle for Racial Justice **Robert Samuels and Toluse Olorunnipa**

“A landmark biography by two prizewinning **Washington Post** reporters that reveals how systemic racism shaped George Floyd's life and legacy--from his family's roots in the tobacco fields of North Carolina, to ongoing inequality in housing, education, health care, criminal justice, and policing--telling the singular story of how one man's tragic experience brought about a global movement for change.”

Learning from the Race Conversations Opened Up in 2020: Dr. Efrem Smith **Theology in the Raw**

This podcast conversation, **Efrem Smith** and **Preston Sprinkle** talk about how 2020 opened up many important race conversations and how the church dealt with—and continues to deal with (or not deal with)—those important conversations.



George Floyd Square
Meet Minneapolis

Map: George Floyd Square
at 38th and Chicago
MPR

George Perry Floyd Square
at 38th & Chicago
City of Minneapolis

Making George Floyd's Square
MPR

Muralist Cadex Herrera
Portrayed George Floyd 'As a
Person of Light'
TPT Originals

What should be at George
Floyd Square? Minneapolis
says it will share a plan by
end of 2024
Star Tribune

Future of George Floyd
Square: Leaders want plan
in place by end of 2024
FOX 9

Killing of George Floyd
MPR

Unrest in Minneapolis
echoes Summer of 1967
Star Tribune

Minneapolis' 'long, hot
summer' of '67 - and the
parallels to today's protests
over police brutality.
MinnPost

Race and Policing in the
Twin Cities
MNOpedia



Transform Minnesota

COMPLEX ISSUES. BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE.

This resource list is part of Transform
Minnesota's Sankofa @ Home series

Inclusion of a resource on the list does
not represent a full endorsement of
stated beliefs