



## FIRST AME CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES

Pastor J. Edgar Boyd  
Senior Minister

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **STATEMENT ON FERGUSON MISSOURI GRAND JURY DECISION BY PASTOR "J" EDGAR BOYD SENIOR MINISTER OF FIRST AME CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES**

"In the wake of more than ten high profiled cases where young "men of color" have died at the hands of law enforcement officials across America, resulting in cries of "unlawful shooting" and "excessive force." The shooting death of unarmed Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO by Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson, has drawn national and international attention. Amid constant public outcries for justice since the incident, local citizens throughout Ferguson and the St. Louis, MO Communities have demanded the empaneling of a grand jury hearing and an ultimate decision on possible criminal actions by Officer Wilson. Understanding the existence of several economic, social, and cultural disparities which exist within the city of Ferguson, it has been suspected that ongoing investigations into the matter have not been just and fair. That conclusion has been drawn because of the drastic historic and present under-representation of African Americans in the civic and justice systems of Ferguson and South St. Louis County, MO.

Anticipating the soon to be released grand jury's decision, many MO public officials are encouraging the local and national public to allow "the process" to work, and no matter what the outcomes are, to "respect the decision" of the grand jury. Many feel that the "process" being used in the wake of Michael Brown's death is the same "process" which was initially used following the beating of Rodney King in March of 1991. That "process" freed LAPD Officers Laurence Powell, Timothy Wind, Theodore Briseno and Stacey Koon.

When the "process" failed to protect Mr. King's rights, the nation cried out for justice, resulting in the United States Justice Department's filing of charges against the four White officers for violating Mr. King's Civil Rights. Justice was received as two of the officers were found guilty, the legendary LAPD Chief Daryl Gates' stranglehold on civil justice in Los Angeles was toppled, and Mr. King was awarded a sum of 3.8 Million Dollars for injuries sustained in actions. all taking 1 year and 5 months for the "Process" to work.

Just as the waiting public braces itself for what is hoped to be a just decision from the grand jury to indict Officer Wilson and allow a public trial of his actions, something very suspect happens in Jefferson City. Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon declared a state of emergency and activated the National Guard Monday in advance of a grand jury decision. That decision reeks of the notion that he knows what the decision will be and it will not result in an indictment. I am appalled that such drastic measures are taken at this time. This action certainly has the potential of inflaming tensions in and around Ferguson and possibly in many other places across the country.

**First AME Church is calling for Calm and Restraint! Whenever the decision is made public, The Social Action Commission of First AME Church is calling the Los Angeles community to gather within one hour, at FAME Church, 2270 S. Harvard Blvd. in Los Angeles. Whatever the decision contains, a measured and full response to the decision will be formulated during the gathering."**

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