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Comments at St. Louis-Area Disciples Summit on Racial Justice  
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I have been asleep for 45 years. I woke up on August 9<sup>th</sup>, last year.

Our church and neighborhood held a vigil on August 11<sup>th</sup>, two days after Michael Brown was killed. Police officer Jason Flanery asked who these “outside agitators” were. Everyone was local: mothers, children, pastors, aldermen. I shook his hand and forgot him.

Jason killed Vonderrit Myers Junior on October 8<sup>th</sup>.

Fellowship Hall became a training space to teach peaceful protest with a purpose. We joined with other churches to become Safe Space, and became Safe Sanctuary for many when St. John’s Episcopal Church was tear gassed.

My heart pulls me to the southeast corner of Klemm and Shaw, where Vonderrit died, and I stand with a “Black Lives Matter” sign. I smile and wave to everyone who walks or drives by. Only whites can fix white racism.

11,733 people have gone by since I started. 65.4% respond positively.

Black women are 88% positive, black men, 85% positive, white women, 60% positive, white men, 47% positive.

I stand with this sign, an old white racist, and I am humbled and overwhelmed by the hundreds of comments and actions, the outpouring of handshakes, hugs, words, cold water bottles, cookies, care, concern and love from those who pass by.

"I have to post your picture. No one will believe me.",  
"Thank you for doing this, for being out here",  
"Don't forget that all lives do matter",  
"I love to see you here",

Glenn bubbles positively about moving to Shaw and only being stopped and frisked four times in five months. He is thrilled.

Rebecca smiles the story of her two little girls who don't know the whole alphabet yet, but yell out "Black Lives Matter" whenever they see a sign.

Only whites can fix white racism.

Of 4060 negative reactions, only 32 have been words. No one steps out of their car to debate or strike. As I stand, I am surrounded by white privilege.

Most of those 32 white folks yelled, "All lives matter!" A white man screamed his underlying truth, "Only white lives matter!" White Scooter Man yells, "Why are you still out here doing that? Go home!"

I choose never go to that old home, never to fall asleep again. Whites are fickle allies; we shall see. "It is not given to us to complete the task. Nor may we remove our hands from the plow."

I stand, an unworthy, old, white racist, with a sign. For now, this is my plow. Only whites can fix white racism.