

Statement of Intention

We know that a thriving future for New York City and the world will require moral and inclusive social and economic leadership. Faith communities have a key role to play in helping to reimagine and rebuild New York in the wake of the protests for racial justice and the coronavirus pandemic.

Small and minority owned businesses of all sizes have been particularly hard hit by the coronavirus pandemic. The impact on businesses has had ripple effects in all of our communities, but particularly in communities of color which have long endured unequal access to opportunities.

One way that faith communities can step forward to serve our city and help co-create God's economy, is to assess our vendor relationships and make an intentional effort to employ and contract with Black and minority owned businesses. As faith communities, we are called to be honest and prudent with our financial and human resources, and to use those resources to promote justice and dignity for all people.

An intentional effort to identify and employ and contract with Black and minority owned businesses will require faith communities to 1) assess and acknowledge current vendor relations; 2) research and build relationships with local Black and minority identified consultants, entrepreneurs and small businesses; 3) commit economic and institutional resources to support the thriving of black and minority-owned businesses; 4) Steer and guide Black and minority owned businesses to apply for and obtain M/WBE (Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise) Certification with the City of New York if they are currently lacking this credential to ensure a vetted, seamless, vendor relationship. 5) Share vendor lists with other faith-based institutions to promote the black and minority-owned businesses you currently work with.

We are not asking that you terminate or switch a long-standing current vendor relationship. We are asking faith communities to adopt this statement and shift relationships to ensure no one is left out. Access to the market is one of the top challenges for minority-owned businesses, but this initiative can help combat economic inequality by promoting businesses owned by people of color. We have an obligation to help level the playing field for minority-owned businesses.