



"You must be the change you wish to see in the world." – Mahatma Gandhi

American Public Square at Jewell and KC Common Good stand in solidarity with those seeking reform and justice in our community, and we are saddened by the devastation that has resulted from escalating violence in communities across the nation.

We know that the outpouring of anger we have seen in recent days signifies something important. We also know that living in a state of acute stress is corrosive to the well-being of all in our community. We are all seeing and feeling the trauma that results from our failure to meaningfully address systemic issues.

This moment presents us with a profound opportunity to move from a moment of crisis to a moment of conviction. To translate the emotion of recent days into personal power that enables each and every one of us to create the change we seek. We stand ready to help our community make that happen—to work alongside, to listen and to authentically engage one another to find solutions that make our city better.

This work will not be easy.

We cannot rely on the methods and strategies of the past to pave the path forward. We cannot stand idly by, wringing our hands and despairing at what has taken place. Instead, we must recognize that structural racism and race relations are generations old, multi-faceted and complex issues that contain many uncomfortable truths that we must bravely face together.

We must be willing both to talk and to listen to one another, and to do so in a way that, at once, creates space for multiple difficult truths.

American Public Square was established to bring together non-like-minded people to engage in civil, fact-based dialogue about issues that tend to polarize us. We are committed to convening the community in a peaceful, respectful manner. Our sister organization, KC Common Good, was born to provide hope and access to opportunity to the more than 2 million people who call Kansas City Home by addressing the root causes of violence.

Given our collective missions, we offer the resources at our disposal to uplift and empower those who have gone unheard in order to effect true change in our communities.

American Public Square and KC Common Good are conveners and connectors, bringing together engaged citizens, government entities, community resources and key stakeholders to make an investment in meaningful societal change. We are intermediaries who believe that the power of many creates more change than the power of a few. We offer our platforms to the city and community we love.

As we continue to demonstrate our Constitutional right to peaceably assemble, let us remember the prescient words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who said,

Here is the true meaning and value of compassion and nonviolence, when it helps us to see the enemy's point of view, to hear his questions, to know his assessment of ourselves. For from his view we may indeed see the basic weaknesses of our own condition, and if we are mature, we may learn and grow and profit from the wisdom of the brothers who are called the opposition.

At American Public Square and KC Common Good, we believe that as a community can learn and grow together not by disagreeing less, but by disagreeing better. We can ensure a more informed and engaged citizenry by coming together, by sharing our points of view with one another and by actively seeking to listen to and gain an understanding of the perspectives of others. We are committed to creating space for all residents to be heard as we take the outpouring of recent days and turn it into a plan that delivers the outcomes we seek: peace, justice, and unity for all in our community.



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