

From the Mayor...

June 5, 2020

My daughter and I sat down at the kitchen table this past weekend to discuss the deplorable police action that occurred in Minneapolis, one that showcased racial injustice disguised as necessary use of force.

We talked at length but she kept telling me, “Dad, I’m over this. It’s not right. It’s never been right. I’m over it! Something has got to change!”

I was saddened by the hurt and frustration she expressed to me. How can our country, a leader of the free world, be so handicapped by the inability of some to tolerate those that are different?

Our future generation sees it. We have to do better. People have had enough

What will it take to look beyond the stereotypes and bias that make some people uncomfortable to the point of hatred? We have seen this happen over and over again. Each time those shocking news clips come up, they seem to harden us just a little bit more. The embarrassment and disgust gradually fades away with the next news cycle.

What happened was wrong. There is no circumstance that justifies such a heinous death. Feelings of outrage have been simmering on social media, at public protests, and at many other kitchen tables in our community. We have reached a tipping point. It is obvious that our nation is pleading for change.

Keeping silent about the injustices, the oppression, and the discrimination we see all around us, is simply a sign of complacency and indifference. The obvious question is what are we going to do about it.

The Golden Rule: “Treat others as you would want them to treat you”. It is a fundamental principle of humanity that has been preached about for centuries and passed on for generations. I see no political overtones to that principle. Why is this so difficult?

What it boils down to is this. We are all blessed with the God given freedom to be ourselves. But we are also born with a loving heart to respect the freedoms of others. We all must learn to embrace those that doesn’t look, act, or think like we do.

I know that collectively, our community has a large, generous, and loving heart. During this pandemic, I have seen that expressed in the way we all come together to take care of those in need. That heart beats loud in our community!

We must now focus to meet the needs of our diverse community, acknowledging the dignity of all men and women.

The City of Warsaw has accepted the challenge to improve. We will reach out to the Hispanic and African American communities to better understand their concerns. Then, we will take actionable steps to reevaluate our policies and practices. We will work to improve opportunity for everyone. We will be intolerant of bias that marginalizes opportunity for anyone.

The future leaders of our community have the benefit of being a generation of tolerance and inclusion. The lessons I learned at my kitchen table were not the first on this topic nor will they be the last. I am confident that those lessons will broaden even more in a few years when I listen to my grandchildren.