

Statement from the Network of Religious Communities with regard to the forcible removal of the Occupy Buffalo site from Niagara Square.

Buffalo had a national reputation for its dealings with its branch of the Occupy movement. The Mayor boasted that Buffalo was one place that had “done it right” with regards to the Occupy movement. That ended at 2:00 am on February 3<sup>rd</sup> when excessive force was used and needless destruction occurred at the peaceful Occupy Buffalo Site.

The Occupy Buffalo movement acted responsibly, non-violently, and cooperatively with the City of Buffalo. They cultivated good relations with the police. They negotiated an agreement with the City, which committed them to reimburse the City for costs, vacate the Square when it was needed by others and to leave Niagara Square in good condition when they moved on.

In October of 2011, The Network of Religious Communities Board of Governors issued a statement praising the nonviolence of the Occupy Buffalo people. This month we decry the violence with which the city of Buffalo removed the Occupy people giving them neither time to come to an agreement among themselves or to remove their belongings before they were bulldozed. This act was completely unnecessary and is unworthy of a city that calls itself “The City of Good Neighbors.”

The Occupy Movement has brought many inequities and abuses of power to the forefront of the American consciousness including issues of economic justice and corruption in politics. We applaud their continued nonviolence and their dedication to keeping these issues before the public eye. We commit ourselves to ongoing work with the Occupy Movement to promote their call to justice – a call supported by all of the faiths represented by this body.

We strongly object to the actions taken by the city and call upon the city government to behave in a more respectful way towards its citizens. We are deeply disappointed that our city is no longer the city that “got it right.”

Adopted at Network of Religious Communities Board of Governors Meeting  
Thursday February 16, 2012