

## For God So Loved the World: A Christian Witness Against Harm

As faith leaders representing a spectrum of Christian traditions, we write with an urgent call to Christians to speak out for the way of Jesus and against devastation being done to our neighbors and planet. As faith leaders, we bear witness daily to the teaching of Jesus Christ—a message grounded in love and compassion that provides wisdom for humans seeking to live in respectful relationship with God's creation and one another.

Clergy have too often been complicit or silent in times of crisis. We are negligent if we remain so now. We do not speak for all Christians, nor do we represent everyone in our faith communities. We preach, lead and act in diverse ways, yet we have found a collective voice and are compelled now to speak in opposition to the harmful policies and actions we are witnessing in our nation, including by the President of the United States, the Administration, elected officials, judges, and the public, including people identifying as Christian.

Jesus' way of love leads us to see worth, dignity, and opportunity in all. Jesus repaired divisions, welcomed outsiders, and retained traditions that guide how we live together. Jesus gathered people to address injustices and harm, explicitly lifting up the poor and vulnerable, prioritizing compassion and empathy. Our nation's leaders have not often prioritized those on the margins. Since Inauguration Day of this year, we have witnessed a dizzying number of harmful policies, practices, and rhetoric. Although deceptively clothed in Christian language and symbolism, these actions invert Jesus' ministry and teachings.

We commit to a message of hope in response to the following specific actions of this current administration. These actions are daily assaults against God's beloved creation, including human decency, and especially including persons on the margins and most vulnerable. God's way of freedom, justice, and love is a path forward for all people. Instead of division, we can work together to help workers, families, and communities thrive. Instead of scarcity, we can work together to encourage growth and flourishing for people and the planet.

**"For God so loved the whole world"** describes God's dream for humanity, in contrast to the scapegoating, fear and intimidation that characterize this administration. Therefore, we denounce the following:

- people being taken, imprisoned, and deported without due process
- the criminalization of workers and children without reason

- immigration raids that bring daily fear to families and communities.

**“God created the world and called it good”** describes God’s dream for creation. Therefore, we denounce the following:

- ecological irresponsibility that imperils God's Earth and all who inhabit it.
- the use of retaliation and name-calling to suppress the freedom of expression among individuals and institutions in this country
- the inherent racism in efforts to ban books, end diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, and distort the truthful teaching of our nation's history.
- the bullying and discriminatory practices aimed at LGBTQ individuals, especially children.

**"For the least of these"** is Jesus’ vision of a world where people are free to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and respect the humanity of those imprisoned (Matthew 25:31-46). Therefore, we denounce the following and more:

- cutting Medicaid and health insurance, essential to the wellbeing of millions of people;
- closing our nation’s borders to people seeking haven from genuine harm;
- sweeping travel and visa bans that categorize people as potential threats;
- the efforts to unconstitutionally withhold citizenship from children born in this country;
- gutting of USAID and other international humanitarian assistance; which has already resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of children worldwide;
- the withholding of billions of dollars of federal funds to educational institutions which are essential for vital research.

We call ourselves to account and invite others into practices of bold mercy, justice, and compassion. With our words and actions, we will work for the common good of Earth and its inhabitants. We call on our nation’s leaders and community members of all faith traditions and life experiences to receive the wisdom of God's sacred teaching.

We turn toward one another seeking goodness, not greatness.

### **Signers**

Rev. Debora Adinolfi, Episcopal Church

Rev. Lanine Allen, Episcopal Church  
Rev. Paula Barker Datsko, Episcopal Church  
Rev. Franklyn Bergen, Episcopal Church  
Rev. Gayle Bintliff, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Rev. Jessica Braxton, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Rev. Michael Bush, United Church of Christ  
Rev. David Buss, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Mateo Chavez, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Rev. John Cheek, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Rev. Kay Childs-Travis, Covenant Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Peggy Christiansen, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Rev. Samantha Christopher, Episcopal Church  
Rev. Allison Cornell, Episcopal Church  
Rev. Gary Cyr, Episcopal Church  
Rev. Tracy Daub, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
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Rev. Mary Chotard Doll, Episcopal Church  
Rev. Ash Dotson, United Methodist Church  
Rev. Denise Edwards, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
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Rev. Dr. Lisa Graumlich, Episcopal Church  
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Rev. Daniel A. Hodgson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
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Rev. Ellie Hutchinson, The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries  
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*Note - this list includes clergy in the Southern Arizona region only.  
Website will be updated with additional signers on an on-going basis  
Please email any corrections or updates to the address below.*