

Holy Cross/Santa Cruz Episcopal Church

30 Pine Grave Avenue, Kingston, NY 12401 845-331-6796

November 28, 2016

Mayor Steve Noble
Office of the Mayor
Kingston City Hall
420 Broadway
Kingston, NY 12401

Dear Mayor Noble:

As clergy leaders of the diverse religious community that is resident in Kingston, through your office, we wish to petition the Common Council to declare the City of Kingston a *Sanctuary City*.

We are aware that the governor has already declared ours a Sanctuary State, but we are also very aware that the large number of Latinos and the smaller number of Muslims who are such an important part of our common life are increasingly and reasonably concerned and frightened for their safety and security.

Residents face restrictions and deportations under current or future immigration enforcement policies, including those that may be implemented by the President-Elect.

Mr. Trump has vowed to revoke all of President Obama's executive orders, particularly those concerning immigration reform, such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which creates an exception from deportation orders and helps undocumented youth brought to the US as children to obtain work permits. He has also proposed to create a dedicated task force to detain and deport undocumented US residents, and to employ existing law enforcement to carry out deportations on a large scale.

Today we are confronted with a moral imperative to protect vulnerable populations in the event that forces move against them unfairly or immorally. The imperative requires that we pledge to refuse to cooperate with immoral laws, executive orders, police demands, or judicial decisions that target these members of our community, particularly those who are undocumented. It means that we refuse to report the

names or other information about our citizens, to turn them over to authorities, or otherwise aid their persecution.

According to a 2011 internal memo from the US Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), immigration officers must observe specific restrictions, such as not being able to enter places of worship, hospitals and campuses without explicit permission.

A few days ago a Latino member of one of our congregations shared a most disturbing story. Last week his nephew's child came home from school, where he is in the third grade, and told his mother that he wasn't going to return to school next day or ever again. When his mother asked why, he told her that some of his classmates had cornered him and told him that he wasn't an American and that he didn't belong here and that he should go home to his own country. The child was born in Kingston Hospital. No child should know such pain.

As religious leaders we are mindful of the power of symbolic gestures and actions and believe that declaring Kingston a *Sanctuary City* would both help to educate our populace at large relative to the destructiveness of nativist impulses and xenophobic expressions, as well as provide some measure of reassurance to sisters and brothers who are under siege.

Respectfully,

The Rev. Frank J. Alagna, Ph.D.
Holy Cross/Santa Cruz Episcopal Church

The Rev. Filomena Servellon
Holy Cross/Santa Cruz Episcopal Church

The Rev. David Jolly (in his own name)
United Methodist Church

The Rev. James Rowe
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

The Rev. James Childs
Pointe of Praise Church

The Rev. Michelle Meech
St. John's Episcopal Church

Pastor J.B. Childs, Jr.
Pointe of Praise Church

The Rev. Justin Johnson
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

The Rev. G. Modele Clark
New Progressive Baptist Church

The Rev. Erica Baron
Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Pastor Donald Mapes
King's Fire Church

The Rev. Doris Hatcher
Riverview Missionary Baptist Church

The Rev. Kendra VanHouten
Fair Street Reformed Church

The Rev. Fate Banks Taylor
St. Mark's Chapel AME Church

The Rev. James and Joan Alley (retired)
Katsbaan Reformed Church

The Rev. Evelyn J. Clarke
New Progressive Baptist Church

The Rev. Paul D. Worthington
New Progressive Baptist Church

The Rev. Dr. Renee House
Old Dutch Church

The Rev. Kevin Slusher
Reformed Church of Port Ewen

Pastor Jordan Scruggs
St. James United Methodist Church

The Rev. Rick De La Pena (in his own name)
Roman Catholic Church