

A Statement of Commitment and Action

Niles Discovery Church, Fremont, California

Niles Discovery Church reaffirms its commitment to respect the dignity of every human being, strive for justice and peace among all people, and seek and serve Christ in our contacts with all persons. We are concerned about the increase in statements and actions in our nation that target particular groups of people based on their skin color, their religious affiliation, their gender or orientation, their disabilities, or their country of birth. These are artificial divisions that we denounce as discriminatory and disrespectful. We believe our nation can do better, and we pledge to work toward that better vision. We commit to being a network of activists, in God's name, joining others who similarly pledge to actively pursue justice. Here's how we engage and will continue to engage in this work:

1. We will go deeper in faith.

We commit to read, study, and live the words of Jesus. The prophet Micah's words provide guidance for us as people of faith: "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God." We must seek both courage and humility as we respond.

2. We will listen.

We will search for and create opportunities to listen to those with whom we may disagree as we seek safe and sacred spaces for hearing each other's stories, pains, fears, and hopes. We will foster such dialogue so that our children might learn the meaning of the diversity and pluralism that is America's best future.

3. We will lift up truth.

We will strive to replace fear with facts when it comes to public discussions about immigrants, refugees, members of all faiths, racial diversity, and national security. Our times require a moral compass, and truth-telling is an important part of this.

4. We will reject White Nationalism.

We will name racism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia as sins. We believe all people are made in God's image, and we affirm diversity as a gift, blessing, and opportunity for our neighborhoods, our cities, our state and our nation.

5. We will love our neighbors by protecting them from hate speech and attacks.

We will identify, report, and confront hate speech and behavior – against all ethnic and religious groups, women, LGBTQ people, immigrants, people with

disabilities, and all marginalized groups. Our church stands as a sanctuary and safe haven for people threatened by those who would attack them.

6. We will welcome the stranger, as our Scriptures instruct. We will advocate for immigrants and their families, and we will block, interfere, and obstruct the mass deportations of immigrants who are members of our communities.

7. We will expose and oppose racial profiling in policing. We will join with other local faith communities in monitoring the relationship of our police to our communities, calling out racial injustice, when we see it.

8. We will defend religious liberty. We embrace members of all faith based groups as fellow Americans and stand with all places of worship in congregational solidarity. We will denounce the defamation and banning of members of any religious or ethnic group, and will seek to disrupt any attempt to require their registration.

9. We will work to end misogyny that enables sexism and a culture of sexual violence.

We will work to replace misogyny with mutual respect. We will name sexual assault for what it is – a sin and a crime. Gender fairness and equality must be fundamental principles in our workplaces, schools, and political systems.

10. We will fight for climate justice and protection of our environment. As stewards of our land, air and water, we will stand with others in broad coalition to preserve these precious resources while working to reverse the troubling trends of human-caused climate change.

11. We will protest with our best values.

We will defend constitutional values and workplace fairness, striving to respect the dignity of every human being. Whether in our streets, with our schools or in our workplaces — we will protest with dignity, discipline, and non-violence, not with hate for hate.

We make these commitments to you, and with you. Join us as we engage this work, as community, in God's name.

This statement, adapted from a statement by St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, Seattle, Washington, was adopted by the Cabinet (governing body) of Niles Discovery Church on Monday, July 17, 2017.