



Lutheran Church of Christ the Redeemer  
5440 Penn Ave South Minneapolis, MN 55419  
[lccronpenn.org](http://lccronpenn.org)

To the Church Council:

In the name of Jesus Christ, greetings from the Congregational Council of LCCR. The Council has taken note of the rise in hate language and threatening behavior encouraged by extremists as the elections approach. We have also noticed the hushed voices of denominational leaders in response. The LCCR Council recently passed a resolution approving the submission of the enclosed statement to the StarTribune and St. Paul Pioneer Press as a way of noting the lack of a significant vocal response to the extremist rhetoric.

After some consideration, the Council decided to inform other congregational councils of the statement and our intent to send it to the papers, and to invite them to join as co-signers to the statement should they choose. Please note that we will need to know your response by 04 July, and we will not entertain suggestions for changes to the document. You are welcome to contact me by email ([nrgriffith@comcast.net](mailto:nrgriffith@comcast.net)) or phone (763-670-3660) with questions. Please indicate your intent to join as a co-signing council by letter addressed to me at LCCR.

Sincerely,

  
Nicholas R. Griffith

07.20.20

President, Congregational Council

On 30 January 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany, and with his appointment began the fascist takeover of most of Europe. State supported propaganda lies were used to de-humanize, vilify, and ultimately murder millions of citizens of Germany and captured countries. Members of targeted groups were identified as “vermin” and accused of undermining the values of Germany. In response to the lies and the appalling treatment of the citizenry, the churches of Germany for the most part said nothing and did nothing. In fact, some leading members of the churches supported fascist policies and efforts.

The United States is currently experiencing an increase in hate crimes directed at racial and ethnic minorities, religious minorities, members of the LGBTQ population, much of which has been fomented by the kind of propaganda big lies spread by the fascists in 1930's Germany. While whole political parties are not espousing fascist ideologies, extremists have taken to tactics and policy proposals that are reminiscent of fascist Italy and Germany in the 20's and 30's. The response to immigrant and migrant populations, particularly black and brown people has been to use terms like “vermin” and suggestions that they will “pollute our blood.” These and similar references to easily identifiable minority populations focus the anger and frustration of a subset of the population that may feel disenfranchised because of its own marginalization. Proposals have been drafted to establish camps prior to deportation for identified populations, and to establish statutory authority for the executive branch of government to use domestic troops in response to protests and legitimate exercise of first amendment rights of citizens.

As was the case in 20's and 30's Europe, the American churches are not responding with sufficient public and emphatic leadership to the hatred, vilification, and propagandistic lies being used to stoke the anger against minority groups. We call on the leadership of all denominations to remember Pastor Martin Niemoeller who wrote from the concentration camp:

When the Nazis came for the communists, I remained silent; I was not a communist.

When they locked up the social democrats, I remained silent; I was not a social democrat.

When they came for the trade unionists, I did not speak out; I was not a trade unionist.

When they came for the Jews, I remained silent; I wasn't a Jew.

When they came for me, there was no one left to speak out.