



Sierra Pacific Synod

“Perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18)

Siblings in Christ,

News of federal immigration actions in the Bay Area stirs anxiety in our communities and uncertainty in our hearts. Yet as fear sweeps down upon us, love wells up within us. And love—God’s love made flesh among us—is stronger than fear, stronger than violence, stronger than intimidation, stronger than death.

When fear and violence are on the move, the Church must move with love. We stand together with the targeted and the vulnerable. We bear witness to our solidarity on the Way of Jesus—not because it is easy or popular, but because it is faithful.

“Stand firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and in no way intimidated by your opponents.” (Philippians 1:27–28)

In this moment we are called to stand up and to stand together—to stand for love and to bear witness to the crucified and risen Christ among us.

If you encounter officers of the government who stir fear or disrupt the peace of our neighborhoods, root yourselves not in faith and in prayer. Let your footing be courage and compassion. Stay centered and wise. Do not amplify anxiety, but share trustworthy information. Keep watch over one another. Reach out to your neighbors.

“Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another; be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.” (Romans 12:9–12, select)

Hold fast to what is good, my friends. Love is stronger than evil. This is our confession. This is our hope. And this is our witness.

Confident that God’s grace is sufficient,

+Jeff

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America