



Thursday, March 18, 2021

On the evening of March 16, 2021, a horrific act of racism was inflicted on our Asian siblings in the Atlanta area when a suspect shot and killed 8 people in three different locations. This crime, while committed by one individual, is just another example of increased attacks targeting Asian American and Pacific Islander communities during the COVID 19 pandemic.

We condemn the sin of racism in all its forms and I call on all members of the Southeastern Synod to reaffirm the Evangelical Lutheran Church's commitment to the values and goals articulated in the 1993 social statement "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture" and encourage members, congregations, agencies and institutions to join me in confronting the realities of racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, age, gender, familial, sexual, physical, and class barriers that often result in exclusion and violence.

The Southeastern Synod-ELCA joins with the Association of Asian and Pacific Islanders-ELCA to call on our church to denounce racism by taking immediate action to defend, protect and uphold the safety and lives of Asian Americans.

I invite congregations to join me in prayer to lament with our Asian and Pacific Islander siblings of the pain that these attacks have caused on their wellbeing and pray for the victims of violence against Asian Americans.

God has called us to become the beloved community that God created where all are valued and honored. We then are called through the waters of our baptism to strive for justice and peace in all the world, for all.

O God of all, with wonderful diversity of languages and cultures you created all people in your own image. Free us from prejudice and fear, that we may see your face in the faces of our Asian siblings and people around the world; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen (*Adapted from Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly, pg 398*)

ELCA's Statement on anti-Asian Racism: <https://elca.org/News-and-Events/8089>

Additional Worship Resources for Day of Lament Against anti-Asian Racism:
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Worship_Resources_for_Day_of_Lament_Against_Anti-Asian_Racism.pdf

Together we are the God's beloved,


Bishop Kevin Strickland