

Inauguration Day Statement from the Tucson Borderlands Young Adult Volunteers

This statement was written entirely by the 2016-2017 volunteers, and reflects their views and experiences.

In light of the political climate and statements made during the recent election, we, the Tucson Borderlands Young Adult Volunteers, feel moved to speak out against all forms of prejudice. We denounce the remarks made in hatred by President Trump and the incoming administration. We recommit ourselves to actively work in solidarity alongside those on the margins of society and labeled as “less than” by the incoming administration.

Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, in which the poor and the meek are blessed, and those who hunger and thirst for justice will be filled. God’s Kingdom transcends national borders and human-created boundaries. Jesus broke the division between Jew and Gentile by coming to save all people and inviting in workers for his vineyard from East and West and all nations. Discrimination based on worldly divisions contradicts the values of this Kingdom we are called to build together. Before we are citizens of the United States and its government we are citizens of God’s country.

Jesus was born a Middle-Eastern Jew in Roman-occupied Palestine, spent time in Egypt as a refugee¹, was homeless², lived in poverty, and worked against the occupying state with peaceful preaching and teaching. Not only did he speak, but he directly defied the social norms of his day, healing and teaching on the Sabbath³, casting out the money-changers from the temple⁴, and upsetting the status quo upheld by the temple elites by uplifting the reviled members of that society⁵. In accordance with Christ’s example, we refuse to sit idly by as members of our community in Christ, and in love, are persecuted, belittled, and treated as “less than.” We will love our neighbors not in spite of, but because of their race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and every other thing that makes them who they are.

The following scriptures give us hope and the desire to continue our work through this difficult time:

Exodus 23:9 You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Esther 4:14 For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

Matthew 35:40 The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

God came for all, lived and worked with those on the margins, and calls us to do the same. We will not be moved, we will work, and we will be co-conspirators with those in oppression here in the United States and around the world.

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2016-2017 Tucson Borderlands Young Adult Volunteers

¹ Matthew 2:13

² Luke 9:58

³ Mark 3:1-6; John 5:1-17

⁴ Matthew 21:12

⁵ John 4:1-44; Luke 19:1-10