

*The Episcopal Parish of  
St. John the Evangelist*

February 3, 2026

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I write you as a citizen, a Minnesotan, and as a devoted Christian and follower of Jesus, himself an immigrant who fled across national lines to seek safety from oppression. My heart is heavy and I am saddened and angry at what I have seen unfolding in my state and in my country in recent weeks and months. I shouldn't have to recite the litany of wrongs, only from the past few weeks, nevermind the long history of oppression against immigrants, indigenous people, and persons of color in our country, for they should be well known and well understood by elected leaders who represent the American people in the highest legislative body in our land. But, sadly with enough power and money to protect you, it seems that the wrongs being perpetrated in my state and around the country by ICE, DHS, and CBP and the lies perpetuated to support those wrongs, are sadly being ignored by so many of you seated in this body. As a follower of the crucified and resurrected one, and as a priest and pastor ordained in his church, one of my responsibilities is to speak out to name evil when I see it, and to use my voice to protect the vulnerable, the oppressed, and those on the margins of our society – those whom Jesus refers to in Matthew's gospel as "the least of these". For, we are told, whatever we do to these, it is as if we have done it to Jesus himself.

There is evil being done in the name of our government in our state. Innocent citizens have been executed on our streets by officers operating under the guise of immigration enforcement. Citizens have been arrested and detained, beaten and held unlawfully for protesting or for exercising their constitutional rights to observe and document the behavior of these officers. We are daily seeing and have widely documented evidence of officers intimidating, harassing, and abusing their power in broad daylight. Now we are seeing journalists being arrested and threatened. Children are being detained and separated from their parents, used as bait to catch their parents, all under the pretext of arresting the "worst of the worst". Citizens and legally documented residents of our state, neighbors of ours, are being stopped and asked for their paperwork and asked to prove their citizenship, even indigenous people, whose ancestors predate colonial presence on these lands.

This must stop. If you believe in the rule of law, the Constitution of the United States, the rights it bestows, and our common commitment to be a government of the people for the people and by the people, you must act as a body to reign in these abuses. And, if appealing to the Constitution, to the rights it bestows, and the highest ideals of our common life as Americans will not persuade you, perhaps the words of Christian scripture will convince you:

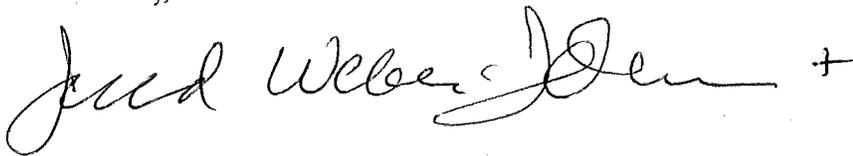
- "You shall not oppress a foreigner. You know the heart of a foreigner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt." – Exodus 23:9
- "You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt". – Deuteronomy 10:19
- "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. 34 You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you

were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."  
Leviticus 19:33-34 (ESV)

- “‘Cursed is anyone who withholds justice from the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow.’ Then all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’” –Deuteronomy 27:19 (NIV)
- “The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.” – Psalm 146:9
- “You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the aliens who reside among you and have begotten children among you. They shall be to you as citizens of Israel; with you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel.” – Ezekiel 47:22
- “Thus says the Lord of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.” – Zechariah 7:9-10
- “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me... Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of my brethren you did it to me.” – Matthew 25:35,40
- “Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.” – Romans 12:13
- “Love does no wrong to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” – Romans 13:10
- “Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.” – Hebrews 13:1-3
- “Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the friends, even though they are strangers to you; they have testified to your love before the church. You do well to send them on in a manner worthy of God; for they began their journey for the sake of Christ, accepting no support from non-believers. Therefore we ought to support such people, so that they may become co-workers with the truth.” – 3 John 1:5-8

Friends, the prophet Micah, only this past Sunday in the readings appointed for the day, invites the people of God, to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.” The words of scripture and the teaching of Jesus and the calling of my faith and baptism in the church tell me that what is happening in my state is a blasphemy against God. My understanding of the Constitution and my rights as a citizen of this country tell me that what is happening here is unlawful and unconstitutional and that the rights of thousands are being violated. I ask you in the name of God and by the power given you by the people you were elected to represent and protect, bring this madness to an end.

Sincerely,



The Very Reverend Jered Weber-Johnson  
Rector, Saint John the Evangelist  
Dean, East Metro of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota