

November 11, 2022



To our Extended Community,

As clergy and faith community leaders - and participants in the Monadnock Interfaith Project – we have been heartbroken and angered by a wave of recent racist and antisemitic acts of vandalism in our community. This past week multiple acts of vandalism struck a Westmoreland faith community and Keene High School. These vile acts have revealed that hate and violence are attempting to establish a home in our community. Therefore, we have penned this letter to affirm that we must do all in our power to ensure it never does so.

Together we prophetically and unequivocally commit to the truth that there is no place or tolerance for these ugly behaviors. Together, we join with our neighbors, fellow community leaders, and state and local law enforcement to declare that we are better than this. We affirm that we are at our best when we celebrate our diversity alongside those things that unite us.

Together, this diverse group of faith leaders and the communities we represent, believe our faith compels us to speak out and acknowledge that eradicating racism and discrimination begins with each of us. In the face of these acts, each of us is called to embrace the core of our spiritual, moral, and religious beliefs -whatever form they take – that teaches us to find collective and pragmatic ways to stand firm against these evils.

Ultimately, we encourage our greater community to speak out with grace and compassion. We also acknowledge that when hate and violence take a hold on our lives, even those who perpetrate these acts, suffer in ways that steal hope and our humanity. In the words of Abraham Joshua Heschel, Jewish theologian and philosopher, “racism is man’s gravest threat to man, the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason, the maximum of cruelty for a minimum of thinking.” By embracing our better selves, we can be better than these acts witness to.

Both respectfully and full of hope,

Individually signed by the following clergy members of the Monadnock Interfaith Project:

Rev. Cindy Bagley, United Church of Christ  
Rev. Eliot Fay, Nelson Congregational Church  
Rabbi Dan Aronson, Congregation Ahavas Achim  
Rev. Jenna Frost, Monadnock Covenant Church  
Rev. Brad Frost, Monadnock Covenant Church  
Rev. Michael F. Hall, Keene Unitarian Universalist Church  
Rev. Scott Masters, United Methodist Church (Keene, Chesterfield, West Rindge)  
Rev. Elsa Worth, St James Episcopal  
Archdeacon Derek Scalia, St James Episcopal  
Rev. Mike Kennedy, Keene Church of the Nazarene  
Pastor Traceymay Kalvaitis, Dublin Community Church and the Community Church of Harrisville  
Rev. Mark Koyama, United Church of Jaffrey  
Rev. Richard Malberg, First Congregational Church of Walpole, UCC  
Rev. Dana Joy Mann, Federated Church of Marlborough UCC  
Pastor Lynn Wickberg, Westmoreland United Church  
Pastor Susan Clinkenbeard, Fitzwilliam Community Church  
Rev. Sandra Whippie, Walpole Unitarian Church