

TEAM - Tempe Interfaith Alliance

**TEMPE FAITH LEADERS RESPOND TO CALL BY STEVEN ANDERSON
FOR EXECUTION OF HOMOSEXUALS**

TEMPE, AZ – Steven Anderson, pastor at Faithful Word Baptist Church in Tempe, recently preached a sermon in which he called for the execution of all homosexuals by Christmas in order to cure AIDS/HIV (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSb0jyvwNlM>). Since posting the video online tens of thousands of people have seen it, mostly because Mr. Anderson purchased advertising for the video on Facebook. This is not the first inflammatory sermon Mr. Anderson has preached.

On December 4, 2014, TEAM, the local alliance of faith leaders in Tempe—consisting of conservative, moderate, and liberal/progressive Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faith leaders—alarmed by Mr. Anderson’s call for execution, prepared the following statement denouncing his call for violence against homosexual persons:

For those alarmed, as we are, by the recent statements by a Tempe Baptist minister, calling for the execution of homosexuals, we would like to offer a different perspective as faith leaders of TEAM, the Tempe Interfaith Alliance.

Faith is meant to draw us together to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God—whether we use the name God, G-d, or Allah. And so today we sign our names side by side to show our solidarity against anyone who calls for the execution of LGBTQ people in the name of God.

Faith ought to strengthen our communal life and encourage respect and tolerance for our differences. It is not meant to polarize and divide or to set us against each other. And it is never meant to be a cry for attention from one to murder the many!

We deplore this pastor’s hate speech and calls for violence, especially when these statements come from a man who purports to be a faith leader in our community and especially during this season when we long for peace, justice and reconciliation. We stand together calling all people to care for our neighbors, to link arms against violence, and to work together for mutual forbearance and understanding of all people.

Signed by TEAM, including,

Rev. Eric Ledermann, Pastor, University Presbyterian Church
Rabbi Dean Shapiro, Temple Emanuel
Rev. Chris Gonzalez, Pastor, Missio dei Communities
Pastor Seth Troutt, Grace Community Church
Rev. Gil Stafford, Pastor, St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church
Deacon Dorothy Saucedo, St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church
Rev. Andy Burnette, Pastor, Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Rev. Kellie Walker, Minister of Music, Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Rev. Jeff Procter-Murphy, Pastor, Dayspring United Methodist Church
Rev. Stan Martin, Pastor, Mission del Sol Presbyterian Church
Rev. Elice Higginbotham, Interim Senior Minister, Desert Palm United Church of Christ
Ann Hardt, Tempe Friends Meeting
Rev. Tony Valenti, Pastor, The Bridge Tempe
Rev. Tom Parker and Rev. Gayle Parker, co-Pastors, The Spring Church
Rev. Al Gephart, Pastor Emeritus, University Presbyterian Church
Rev. Doug Bland, Pastor, Tempe Community Christian Church, Disciples of Christ
Rev. Sue Ringler, Pastor, Guardian Angels Catholic Community

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