



Michael Ramos statement: **Standing with our Asian and Asian American siblings against racist violence in the wake of 8 tragic, racially motivated murders in Georgia**

*March 19, 2021*

On March 16, eight people were murdered at three different spas in the Atlanta area. Their names are: Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Delaina Ashley Yaun, Paul Andre Michels, Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Yong A. Yue, and Suncha Kim. Another man, Elcias Hernandez-Ortiz, was shot multiple times and remains in critical condition. Six of those murdered are Asian women.

The Church Council of Greater Seattle mourns the loss of the lives of the eight victims. We share our sorrow and condolences with their loved ones and with the greater Atlanta area. We express our solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in Washington State and Martin Luther King Jr. and South Snohomish Counties, and across the world. We condemn the recent attacks on predominantly Asian American congregations in Seattle and offer to them our love and support.

Hate and violence has risen to pandemic levels, fomented by the previous federal administration. Unless we address this violence at its roots, it will to persist in both visible and less visible ways. As the Washington Post reports, *“more than 68 percent of documented reports of anti-Asian harassment and violence since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic have been from women.”* This is a significant dimension of a horrific, disturbing pattern.

*The coalition Stop AAPI Hate has been documenting anti-Asian attacks since the pandemic started last March and says there have been nearly 3,800 hate-fueled incidents against the Asian American and Pacific Islander community in the U.S. – a number the group says is probably a fraction of the true number. About 3 in 10 Asian adults said they’ve experienced jokes or slurs about their race or ethnicity during the pandemic, according to Pew Research – the highest percentage among all races.*

(March 17, 2021, Silvia Foster-Frau, Marian Liu, Hannah Knowles and Meryl Kornfield, “Among Asian Americans, A Somber Sentiment: We Knew This Was Coming”)

This and all hateful, racist crimes point to the ongoing tragedy of systemic violence, discrimination, exclusion, stereotyping, exploitation, and dehumanization that pervades U.S. history *and our present*. Hate and violence has risen to pandemic levels, fomented by the previous federal administration. Unless we address this violence at its roots, it will to persist in both visible and less visible ways.

We grieve the hateful violence toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. We pray for healing, justice and a love without exclusions toward any of our AAPI and BIPOC siblings. We commit to engage to dismantle the systems of oppression that undergird these recent tragedies, and to be accountable to the long history of US imperialism that has stoked anti-Asian racism for over a century.

The Church Council of Greater Seattle re-affirms our commitment to listen to, collaborate with, and demand justice for our Asian American and Pacific Islander siblings here and worldwide. We value our relationships with AAPI organizations and organizers throughout our region, and commit to direct our attention and impact according to their leadership. We must all take concrete actions toward a more equitable and just future until all of our community members are safe to live with dignity and respect.