

## Statement by the Keene Valley Congregational Church on the present situation in our country

### **Stop. Have Mercy.**

We are a small church in a hamlet surrounded by mountainous beauty. From this position of grace and blessing, we are obliged by our faith, as we say together each week, "to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God."

Scriptural instructions on following Jesus' teachings are clear: "Love, forgiveness, and service to others, most especially, "to care for the least of these." We interpret his teachings to mean:

- To love and care for our LGBTQI+ neighbors as they live authentically in a society which too often has marginalized them
- to love and care for our relatives in creation who lack human voices and human relatives with marginalized voices who continue to bear the brunt of economic, environmental, and social degradation.
- to love and care for those who have been driven from their homes by climate change, government mismanagement, violence, or war.

- to love and care for our neighbors who cannot always purchase adequate and healthy food or provide shelter for their families.
- To love and care for those affected by suicide.

Therefore:

- we are open and affirming to everyone, including LGBTQI+ individuals.  
"Our church is open to all; we accept you where you are on your life's journey."
- we deliberately curb or change our habits to support creation justice.
- we support immigrants and refugees at home and abroad.
- we support our neighbors through our food mission.
- we accompany family members and friends touched by suicide and suicide loss.

We are blessed to live in a wondrous region in a country we love. We see arrogance, cruelty, and injustice carried out in the name of expediency. In addition to action, we are called to be prophetic to the powerful and to say:

Stop. Have mercy.