



May 2, 2020

Holyrood Church/Iglesia Santa Cruz
Washington Heights, New York City

**A socio theological
responsibility of good faith**

Holyrood Church/Santa Cruz, and Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New York, stands unequivocally with Reclaim Pride and all queer people in the struggle for equality and justice, and condemns all organizations that promote prejudice in their beliefs and practices. Hate and exclusion are not Christian values and should never be public health policy. We urge Mount Sinai Hospital and others to end their alliances with Samaritan's Purse and partner with organization that will abide by our civil and moral laws and do not brazenly discriminate against LGBTQX people.

Theological statement: Regarding the alliance of Samaritan’s Purse and healthcare facilities in New York City

Because God has welcomed us into his family through faith in Jesus Christ and calls us to pursue love and justice for all, Holyrood Church/ Iglesia Santa Cruz, is welcoming and inclusive of all people regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, family makeup, social status, income, ability, or physical or mental health. Our mission is to root a church in the midst of all peoples, attuned to the God who liberates us – and who we, in congregating together, may liberate.

At the present moment we at the Holyrood Church/ Iglesia Santa Cruz, a multicultural, multiracial, multiethnic, multigenerational community of people who congregate to worship in three languages: English, Spanish, and Sign Language (ASL). As part of our ministry, we actively welcome all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity (heterosexual, LGBTQX: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, third sex or ‘two-spirited’). We share the responsibility of creating a climate of love, respect and inclusion for all.

Jesus Christ spent his public ministry in service to the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the disabled. Through his recorded life He acted to bring individuals into community, to be in relationship with others, and to be heal the bodies and minds of diverse peoples. In His healing ministries He healed the sick, not just to repair their body, but to welcome them into confraternity with the world.

We are evangelical Christians. We seek to have the loving vision of Jesus fulfilled here on Earth. This intention is for a compassionate, kind, embracing nation. We reject the way of greed, marginalization, and oppression.

We strive in our ministries to support all peoples who have been tyrannized and brought down by a long history of spiritual hegemony, especially our LGBTQX sisters and brothers.

In this life-giving and life-sustaining work, we at Holyhood Church/ Iglesia Santa Cruz are inspired to movement by the Book of Jeremiah (29:11): “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Guided by this prophetic moral light, we envision and practice our church as one of connectedness, openness, and ongoing reaffirmation. Through these visions and practices, we invoke and revitalize our ancient human vocation of mutuality and care, and we support emerging expressions of love, respect, compassion, justice, mercy, beauty, and liberating faith between those with whom we congregate, between all in the community whose relationships and well-being we treasure as precious and interdependent, and with our shared planet that has honored and humbled us as its entrusted stewards.

The issue of our government and healthcare institutions aligning with Franklin Graham’s Samaritan’s Purse is one of grave concern. We are clear. This is not a matter of discrimination in terms of provision of services nor a matter of personal conscience on affairs of marriage. The issue is the brazen and unacceptable discriminatory hiring policy and the requirement to sign a statement of faith that condemn all LGBTQX people and all people of other faiths to banishment in everlasting hell fire. We reject this interpretation of scripture as facile, hateful, and in grievous error. And we note that this breaks the laws of New York State and New York City.

We understand this to be a moment of new beginnings, filled with infinite possibilities to rediscover God in and with each other, and to perpetually recommit, as a church, to deepen our individual and collective responsibilities in the face of all the challenges we face, both the timeless and the newly emerging. As Episcopalians and people of faith we urge all healthcare facilities to carefully consider with whom they partner. The mission of our Church and the mission of our medical facilities must be to bring health and healing to all people and to end discrimination in all forms. We stand unequivocally with Reclaim Pride and all queer people in the struggle for equality and justice and condemn all organizations that promote prejudice in their beliefs and practices.

Indifference to pain and suffering of others or of our own selves – is a capital sin. We are inspired by the prophetic words of our St. Romero of America: *A church that doesn't provoke any crises, a gospel that doesn't unsettle, a word of God that doesn't get under anyone's skin, a word of God that doesn't touch the real sin of the society in which it is being proclaimed.*

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