

Rochester Area Faith Leaders and Clergy
An Invitation to Conversation and Action
February 2026

In solidarity with faith and spiritual leaders around the country, we, faith leaders in the Greater Rochester Area, invite you into a conversation about how faith speaks to our current moment in the United States, especially concerning immigration and the tactics currently being used by federal agents against our citizen and immigrant neighbors.

As diverse faith leaders, we have been working on deepening our relationships with each other, and are united over our concern for our country. Even in our diversity, we have found several core faith-based principles on which we are united:

- **We are coming together as diverse faith and spiritual leaders in the Greater Rochester area.** Not despite but because of our differences in faith, and how we articulate our most dearly held convictions, we believe it is of utmost importance to come together in community and solidarity, especially in a time when diversity is cast as a weakness or a problem to solve. We believe the opposite is true; our difference is our great asset.
- **We believe all are created in the image of the divine,** and because of this, every human possesses and should be treated with great dignity. How we treat our neighbor - no matter their ethnicity, immigration status, orientation, etc. - reflects how we treat the divine.
- **Even in our different faith traditions, we all are driven by and toward the love of neighbor,** and in particular, our neighbor who is in need. Further, this love is not a passive one, but one that implies action. Thus, we cannot sit idly by as our neighbors in need, in our city and around the country, are being harmed. Our faith convictions will not allow it.

This is what we have agreed on as faith leaders; now we would like to broaden the conversation beyond clergy to include all people of faith (however you understand “faith”). To this end, we would like to invite you for an evening of conversation. Join us on February 24 at 7:30 PM at First Universalist Church of Rochester, 150 South Clinton Ave. We will have a few people of different faith traditions speak briefly to lay the groundwork for the conversation, then continue with small group discussions to contemplate what we can do together, as people convicted by faith principles, and imagine how we might engage in collective action.

We hope you will join us for this fruitful conversation!

Signers to date

To add your name, contact Rabbi Peter Stein at pstein@tbk.org

Ven. Kanji Argetsinger
Cantor Renata Braun
Fr. Rob Bourcy
Isha Das Craig Bullock
The Very Rev. Leslie Burkardt
Vickijo Campanaro
Rev. Eileen Casey-Campbell
Dr. Ahmet Celenli
Reverend Jeff Fox-Kline
The Rev. Lisa K. Frauens
Rev. Joanne Gilbert-Cannon
The Rev. Andrew Gookin
Rev. Lawrence Hargrave
The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman
The Reverend Deborah L. Hughes
Rev. Julius David Jackson, Jr.
Rev. Erin Schubmehl Jacobson
Rabbi Alan Katz
Rabbi Jan Katz
Rev. Sam Kinsman
Sr. Beth LeValley, SSJ Rochester
Dr. Denise Mack
Rev. Matthew Martin Nickoloff
Deacon Emily Orner
Rev Edward L Palumbos
The Rev. Kenneth R. Pepin
Rev. Tedd Pullano
Rev. Shari Quan
The Rev. Johanna K. Rehbaum
The Rev. Columba Salamony
Dr. Donald Schwab
Rt. Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer
Rabbi Peter W. Stein
Rev. Martha Koenig Stone
Rev. Cindy Terlazzo
Rev. Kathy Thiel
Rabbi Rochelle Tulik

Rev. AJ van Tine

Fr. Gary Tyman

The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson

Rev. Dr. William Huston Wilkinson

The Rev. Dr. C. Denise Yarbrough

Imam Jafer Yasar

Rabbi Or Zohar