

The Session of First Presbyterian Church of San Anselmo issued the following statement in response to the humanitarian crisis at our nation's southern border. We, the Session of First Presbyterian Church San Rafael, stand in full agreement with this statement.

Recently, the Administration began separating families and criminally prosecuting all people who enter the U.S. without previous authorization, removing children, including many as young as 2 or 3 years old, to detention facilities away from their parents. We vehemently condemn this cruel practice as an outrage and a travesty.

We affirm the family as a foundational societal structure to support human community. The security of the family provides critical mental, physical and emotional support to the development and well being of children. Leaving their communities is often the only option migrants have to provide safety for their children and protect them from harm. Tearing children away from parents who have made a dangerous journey to provide a safe and sufficient life for them is unnecessarily cruel and detrimental to the well being of parents and children. The harm done to these children is permanent and has a lifetime of health consequences.

We further condemn the use of cruelty as a potential bargaining chip to achieve increasingly draconian immigration policies.

Finally, we condemn the misappropriation of scripture to justify this loveless action. It is disgraceful for a government official to use scripture in order to say, "obey me." If this situation is to be approached from a Christian perspective, or relying on Christian teachings, the Bible honors the stories of migrants looking for new homes, and condemns ripping children out of the hands of their parents. To argue otherwise is to misrepresent the full text of scripture to justify the cruelty imposed upon children of asylum-seeking women and men. They, like the Holy family of Matthew 2, flee oppression. And it is in their favor that the Christian scriptures speak, not the government's. These families are the very neighbors Jesus commands us to love. In fact, Jesus says that there is nothing more imperative than loving. Separating children from parents is not loving in any way, but instead, is an evil practice which must end with all families reunited, safe and free.