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## Going After Trump

### Merkley blasts plans to hire purveyor of hate

Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley has joined civil rights advocates to denounce Donald Trump's announced plan to hire Steve Bannon as his chief strategist in the White House, calling him a purveyor of hate on radio and television.

"There should be no sugarcoating the truth here: Donald Trump just invited a white nationalist into the highest reaches of the government," Merkley said.

Bannon has boasted that he made Breitbart News "the platform of the alt-right," a political



Jeff Merkley

term used for the resurrection of white nationalism.

In a statement issued Sunday, the Council on American-Islamic Relations also slammed the appointment saying Bannon helped promote a "dark and paranoid picture" of Muslim Americans through the Breitbart News web-

site and Bannon's own radio show.

The appointment sends the disturbing message that anti-Muslim conspiracy theories and white nationalist ideology will be welcome in the White House, said Nihad Awad, the council's national executive director. "We urge President-elect Trump to reconsider this ill-advised appointment if he truly seeks to unite Americans."

The Anti-Defamation League echoed the condemnation, saying it was a sad day when a man who presided over the website "alt-right" is slated to be a senior staff member of the people's house.

Richard Cohen, president of the Southern Poverty Law Center, a nonprofit that tracks extremist groups, said that when news of Bannon's appointment hit white supremacist websites, forums erupted in celebration.

## Faith Leaders Respond to Election

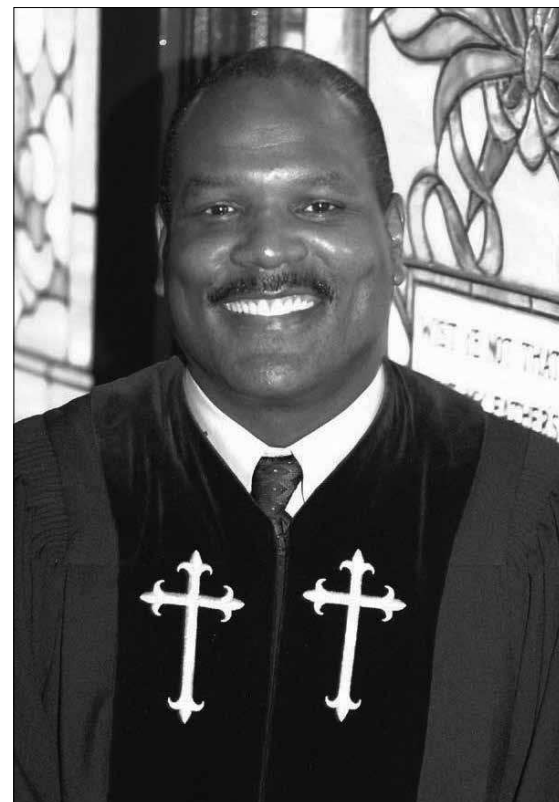
Faith leaders from throughout the Portland area, including Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and First Nations representatives, gathered at Pioneer Courthouse Square last Thursday with a public call for inclusion in reaction to the election of Donald Trump.

"Our action today is a call to continue the work for creating the Beloved Community. We stand with Muslims, with immigrants, with women who have been sexually assaulted, with people with disabilities, with the poor, and with the LGBTQ community," said the Rev. Tara Wilkins, executive director of the Community of Welcoming Congregations and pastor of Bridgeport United Church of Christ.

Pastor Matt Hennessee of Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, said it was his hope and prayer that "We will stand against the legitimization and normalization of bullying, name calling, threats of deportation, building walls, and 'privileged' behavior that is celebrated and without consequence.

Rabbi Ariel Stone, chair of the Oregon Board of Rabbis and Rabbi to the Congregation Shir Tikvah, said it was important "To seize the high ground to demand from ourselves and all others the ongoing awareness and action to demonstrate that kindness is our only hope, truth our rallying flag, and that we will never stop affirming that love trumps hate."

The Rev. Michael Ellick, Senior Minister of First Congregational United Church of Christ, said "For just about anybody who isn't white, for anybody who isn't in the top 1 percent, and - you know - for all women everywhere - there is a lot of fear right now. So, it's more important than ever for the spiritual and moral adults



Matt Hennessee

on this planet to show up, speak clearly, and get organized."

The executive director of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Jan Elfers concludes, "At all times, but particularly in this current climate of uncertainty and fear, our response must be to continue to work to build the beloved community; to hold on to the values of love, justice and the inclusion of all people. We put those values into practice as we pray and act together for this vision. We must not lose hope; we will not give up. Our vision is not fragile; love will have the last word."