

**Asian American Language Ministry Plan of the United Methodist Church Condemns Recent Attacks on Asian American Elderly**

**San Francisco, CA., February 12, 2021**.

The [Asian American Language Ministry Plan](https://umcmission.org/asian-american-language-ministry-aalm/) (AALM) of the United Methodist Church strongly condemns the recent surge of xenophobic violence against Asian American elderly. This violence is part of a larger trend of anti-Asian American/Pacific Islander hate brought on during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been exacerbated by xenophobic policies and racist rhetoric disseminated by the previous administration.

In the San Francisco Bay Area the violence has left one person dead and others badly injured. On February 3rd, a 64-year-old grandmother in San Jose, California was assaulted and robbed of cash that she had just withdrawn for Lunar New Year gifts. On February 4th a 91 year old man in Oakland, California was inexplicably shoved to the ground by a man who was walking behind him. On January 5th, a 52-year-old Asian American woman was shot in the head with a flare gun in Oakland’s Chinatown. On January 26th, 84-year-old Vicha Ratanapakdee was going for a morning walk in his San Francisco neighborhood, when a man running at him full speed smashed into his frail body, throwing him to the pavement. Mr. Ratanapakdee died of his injuries two days later. There have been more than two dozen recent assaults and robberies on the Asian American elderly in the San Francisco Bay Area. This violence mirrors the national rise in hate crimes against older Asian Americans across the United States.

According to “[Stop AAPI Hate](https://stopaapihate.org/)” between March 19, 2020 (when Stop AAPI Hate began collecting reports) and December 31, 2020, Stop AAPI Hate received over 2,808 firsthand accounts of anti-Asian hate from 47 states and the District of Columbia. Between March 19, 2020 and December 31, 2020, they received 126 accounts of anti-Asian hate involving Asian Americans over 60 years old (7.3% of total incidents).

Politically charged racist rhetoric has fomented hate against the Asian American community. The people who have perpetrated these acts of violence have often times used the racist language including phrases like: Wuhan virus, kung flu, China virus, China plague.

AALM commends President Biden who, on January 26, 2021, signed a [memorandum pledging to combat anti-Asian and Pacific Islander discrimination](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/26/memorandum-condemning-and-combating-racism-xenophobia-and-intolerance-against-asian-americans-and-pacific-islanders-in-the-united-states/). This memorandum was one in a series of racial equity-focused executive orders. In part the Presidential memorandum states, “During the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, inflammatory and xenophobic rhetoric has put Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) persons, families, communities, and businesses at risk.” AALM would like to see this memorandum backed up by immediate action against those who have committed acts of violence.

These acts of violence against the Asian American communities are reminders that racism and hatred continues to grow. The Asian American Language Plan of the United Methodist Church implores all communities to come together and work with one another to stop the spread of hatred and racist ideals.

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**Media Contact:**

Rev. John Oda

Program Manager AALM

Email: joda@umcmission.org

510-220-8959