Rabbi Grumbacher Sermon Post-Charlottesville – August 2017

<u>Martin Niemoller</u> (1892–1984) was a prominent Protestant pastor who emerged as an outspoken public foe of Adolf Hitler and spent the last seven years of Nazi rule in concentration camps.

Niemöller is perhaps best remembered for the quotation:

*First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.*

*Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.*

*Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.*

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

At a rally following the infamous Charlottesville, Virginia incident, Rabbi Michael Latz of Minneapolis offered the following based on Niemoller's quotation.

*First they came for transpeople and I spoke up
 Because God does not make mistakes.*

*They came for the African-Americans and I spoke up
 Because I am my sisters' and brothers' keeper*

*And they came for the women and I spoke up
 Because women hold up half the sky*

*And then they came for the immigrants and I spoke up
 Because I remember the ideals of our democracy*

*And then they came for the Muslims and I spoke up
 Because they are my cousins and we are one human family*

*And then they came for the Native Americans and Mother Earth and I stood up
 Because the blood-soaked land cries and the mountains weep*

*They keep coming
We keep rising*

Because we Jews know the cost of silence
We remember where we came from
And we will link arms because when you come for our neighbors
You come for us
And THAT just won't stand
  What more can we say?

(Adapted from Martin Niemoller).