

August 21, 2025

Governor Sarah Sanders
State Capitol
500 Woodlane Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Letter from Arkansas Faith Leaders on the Death Penalty

Dear Governor Sanders,

We, the undersigned faith leaders from Arkansas, urge you not to restart executions in our great state. We are especially concerned about the proposed method of gas asphyxiation whether through the use of masks or any form of gas chamber. We implore you to look at the recent scientific study and eyewitness accounts of gas executions to ensure our state does not engage in torture.

Arkansas has the means of keeping society safe without violating the inherent human dignity of every person. We need to do more to help victims in the aftermath of tragedy by providing emotional and financial support and services that help promote healing and recovery, instead of focusing solely on what happens to the person who caused harm. It also denies an opportunity for redemption and healing, and drains resources that could be better used serving all victims and preventing crime in the first place. Resources would be better spent preventing child abuse, providing mental health care and substance abuse treatment, and by investing in community safety programs.

Our call not to restart executions in our state is an expression of our desire to uphold a humane vision of seeking safety through acknowledging harm, repairing the harm as able, and changing society so the harm can't happen again, which honors the sacred dignity of all people, including both victims and those who have caused immeasurable harm. Like many of Arkansas's civil leaders who share our values, we long to see the mercy, compassion, equity, and justice of God reflected in public policies that promote safety, human dignity, and healing for all our citizens.

Together, we prayerfully urge you to investigate the problems associated with execution by means of gas suffocation and continue to recognize the value of every human life. Execution by means of gas suffocation is at odds with recognizing the inherent human dignity in every person.

Respectfully,

**Titles are for identification purposes only.*

Music Minister and Lector Alisa Dixon

Cathedral of St Andrew Catholic
North Little Rock, AR

Rabbi Barry H. Block

Congregation B'nai Israel, Reform Judaism
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Becky Purcell

First Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church (USA)
Jonesboro, AR

Benjamin Young Heacox, Board Member

Ecumenical Buddhist Society of Little Rock, Zen Buddhism
North Little Rock, AR

Bishop Anthony Basil Taylor

Diocese of Little Rock, Catholic
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Britt Allen Skarda

Pulaski Heights UMC, United Methodist
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Brittany Stillwell

Second Baptist Church - Downtown Little Rock
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
Little Rock, AR

Caroline Stevenson, Lay Leader

St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Episcopalian
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Chris Ellis

Second Baptist, Baptist
Little Rock, AR

Deborah W. Goolsby, Past President of UUCLR Board of Directors

Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock, Unitarian Universalist
Little Rock, AR

Dacey Gay Lee, Member Altar Guild, Member Chancel Choir

First United Methodist Church, Methodist
Little Rock, AR

The Rev. Evan D. Garner

St. Paul's Episcopal
Fayetteville, AR

Reverend Gail Brooks

Arkansas Annual Conference United Methodist Church
Hot Springs, AR

Rev. Jacqui Buschor

Faith Lutheran Church, ELCA Lutheran
Little Rock, AR

Janice Goldman, Certified Lay Servant

Magnet Cove United Methodist Church, United Methodist
Malvern, AR

Rev. Jay Clark

Pulaski Heights UMC, United Methodist
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Jennie McCain Williams

Central United Methodist Church, UMC
Fayetteville, AR

Rev. Jim Parrish, Retired

Unitarian Universalist Church
Fayetteville, AR

Rev. K. Marie Mainard O'Connell

Q.C. Presbyterian Church USA
Little Rock, AR

Deacon Kale D. Anderson

Second Baptist Church - Downtown Little Rock
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Karen K. Akin

Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
Little Rock, AR

Deacon Kathy McGregor

Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas
St. Mary's Episcopal

Rev. Katye Chambers

Pulaski Heights UMC, United Methodist
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Lisa Hlass

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Episcopalian
Little Rock, AR

The Rev. Lowell E. Grisham

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Episcopalian
Fayetteville, AR

Rev. Paul R. Beedle

Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock
Little Rock, AR

The Rev. Peggy Cromwell

St. Nicholas' Episcopal Church
Maumelle, AR

Rev. Dr. Preston Clegg

Second Baptist Church-Downtown LR
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Randy A. Seale

Fairview UMC, United Methodist
Camden, AR

Rev. Betsy Singleton Snyder

Pinnacle View United Methodist Church, United Methodist
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Carolyn Yeldell Staley, Retired Pastor

Pulaski Heights Baptist Church
Cooperative Baptist
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Phillip A. Reaves, Priest, Director of Prison Ministry

Diocese of Little Rock, Catholic
Little Rock, AR

Pastor Rizelle Aaron

1st Baptist Church of Keo, AR Baptist
Keo, AR

Roger Hawkins, VP Board of Directors

Ecumenical Buddhist Society, Buddhist
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Ruskin Falls

Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Salvador Marquez-Munoz

St. Mary's Catholic
Siloam Springs, AR

Rev. Samuel Loudenslager

St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Episcopalian
Bigelow, AR

Rev. Sara Milford

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Episcopal
Fayetteville, AR

Reverend Warren Harvey

St. Augustine Church, Roman Catholic
Little Rock, AR

Rev. Zachary Crow

New Millennium Church, Non denominational
Little Rock, AR