News



Clergy members sing the hymn "We Rise" at a memorial honoring Renee Good, who was fatally shot Jan. 7 by an ICE officer, near the site of the shooting in Minneapolis Jan. 9. (RNS/Jack Jenkins)

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Minneapolis — January 11, 2026
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On Jan. 7, the intersection of 34th Street and Portland Avenue was a chaotic scene of violence and tears. A mangled maroon Honda Pilot sat crushed against a telephone pole as its driver, Renee Good, lay dying after being shot by a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent. Bystanders, including a woman who identified herself as Good's wife, screamed and sobbed.

Days after the incident, the vehicle and ICE agents are gone. But the tears are not, and neither is the outrage.

On Jan. 9, dozens of mourners and faith leaders gathered at the same intersection for an impromptu memorial — one of multiple in the area — for Good. As neighbors and dignitaries that included U.S. Sen. Tina Smith, Democrat of Minnesota, shuffled carefully over a patch of ice stretching alongside the growing mountain of flowers, candles and photos, three clergy members belted a rendition of the hymn "We Rise."

Good's killing by a federal agent has kicked off a wave of protests across the country. And while President Donald Trump's administration has insisted the ICE agent who shot her was acting in self-defense, Minnesotans gathered at Good's memorial who saw video footage of the incident were unconvinced and frustrated by the continued actions of ICE and Department of Homeland Security agents enacting the president's mass deportation agenda across the city.

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"We're gathered because somebody was murdered by agents of the government," the Rev. Dana Neuhauser, a United Methodist minister who sang with the group, said in an interview. "But we've been showing up in a variety of ways because our neighbors are being snatched. Parents being snatched in front of the school."

She added, "It's all just too much, but my faith requires me to show up."

Around the corner from the memorial, another group gathered in front of Park Avenue United Methodist Church, the house of worship nearest the scene of the shooting. The Rev. Jennifer Ikoma-Motzko, a pastor at the church, opened what was described as a "solidarity service" by reflecting on her background as a Japanese American who grew up hearing stories of Japanese internment during World War II.



The Rev. Jennifer Ikoma-Motzko speaks during a solidarity service for shooting victim Renee Good at Park Avenue United Methodist Church Jan. 9 in Minneapolis.

(RNS/Jack Jenkins)

Her family, Ikoma-Motzko said, "saw personally what happens when executive order, when government weaponizes fear against its own people." She said her grandmother would send her stories and even comic books about the experience of internment.

"It astounds me and it grieves me to carry out her legacy consistently year after year, and even today to see that same sort of fear and violence happening here in our communities," Ikoma-Motzko said.

She was echoed by the faith leaders back at the memorial. The Rev. Ashley Horan, the vice president for programs and ministries at the Unitarian Universalist Association lives just a block from where Good was killed. Horan was one of several people who rushed to the scene shortly after the incident, livestreaming as bystanders confronted DHS officials who responded with tear gas and pepper spray.

"I'm here because this is our city, and this is how we show up," she said. "We have always taken care of each other because we know that the government is not doing that for us."

Horan said Good was reportedly operating as an "observer" when she was killed — a practice that has sprung up around the country since the president began his mass deportation campaign. Observers often follow and monitor ICE agents in public places, blowing whistles to alert nearby people and filming officials to document their activities.

It's a practice taken up by a wide range of advocates — including, Horan said, clergy like herself.

"She could have been any of us," Horan said, referring to Good.



People gather around a makeshift memorial honoring Renee Good, who was fatally shot by an ICE officer, near the site of the shooting in Minneapolis, Friday, Jan. 9, 2026. (RNS/Jack Jenkins)

Observers still appeared to be operating throughout Minneapolis on Jan 9. Earlier that morning, the Rev. Susie Hayward — a United Church of Christ pastor who was among those shoved by DHS officials and hit with pepper spray the day Good was killed — pointed out a person with binoculars standing on a street corner in a nearby neighborhood. The person, she said, was an observer attempting to identify ICE agents in their cars, as the enforcement officials often operate in unmarked vehicles.

Nearby at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, faith leaders joined union members and advocates for a demonstration. Standing in front of a banner reading "Minnesotans were abducted here," the Rev. Paul Graham, an Evangelical Lutheran Church of America pastor, condemned the detention and deportation of airport workers by ICE, as well as deportation flights operating out of the facility.

"Love of neighbor is essential for our communities to thrive and for us to live together as God intends," Graham said. "The ICE activity in Minnesota is a violation

of my faith as I understand it."

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Graham also demanded ICE leave the state of Minnesota "immediately," and for the ICE agent who killed Good "to be held accountable."

"We call for peace and justice in our communities," Graham said. Moments later, the airport group, which consisted of dozens of people, began singing "We Shall Overcome."

Afterward, Graham talked with reporters alongside Rabbi Eva Cohen, who leads Or Emet, a local Humanistic Jewish synagogue.

"In Jewish tradition, when a person dies we say may their memory be a blessing," Cohen said. "So thinking about Renee Good — a good person, a decent person, a mother, someone who cared about her community and standing up — may the loss of her life not be in vain. May her memory inspire us to continue to peacefully stand up for what is right."

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Cohen also said her young daughter, who was playing at her feet, was with her at the demonstration because of the actions of immigration agents. Schools in the city have been closed since Jan. 7, when U.S. Border Patrol officers arrived at a local high school property and began tackling people and releasing chemical weapons on bystanders. According to Minnesota Public Radio, at least two school staff members were handcuffed during the incident.

"Many families of children at my daughter's school are very frightened," Cohen said.

Graham said raids at schools have impacted his daughter as well, who teaches first grade in the city. He said his daughter spent the day Good was killed "on lockdown" with her students and has observed people being detained.

"She witnessed a cafeteria worker hauled out of the school," Graham said. "These things just should not be normalized, they're not OK, and we need to keep saying that over and over and over again."

This story appears in the **Immigration Protests in Minneapolis** and **Immigration and the Church** feature series.