

Church Organist Admits to Defacing Sanctuary With Anti-Trump Vitriol

A church organist vandalized his own employer's sanctuary with anti-Donald Trump vitriol and other offensive slogans after the networks announced Trump's presidential victory.

George Nathan Stang, a gay man who played the organ at St. David's Episcopal Church, was fired for spray-painting "Heil Trump," a swastika and a gay slur on the walls of the church building.

Stang wanted to "mobilize a movement," according to an NBC affiliate.

"I suppose I wanted to give local people a reason to fight for good, even if it was a false flag," he says. "To be clear my actions were not motivated by hate for the church or its congregation. I of course realize now, this was NOT the way to go about inspiring activism."

The Right Reverend Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis says Stang was fired for his actions:

This was a hurtful, dishonest, and profoundly misguided action that stands against the values of the people of this diocese and the Episcopal Church, and we will continue to cooperate with the authorities who are pursuing this case. We are living now in a political climate that is so divisive and highly charged that people from all across the political spectrum are making thoughtless and hurtful choices that they believe are justified by the righteousness of their causes. As people who follow Jesus, we must find a different way.

Christians are called to hold one another accountable for our choices and actions, but also to offer one another love and forgiveness. I do not know Nathan, who is not a member of the diocese and has worked at the church for about a year, but media reports indicate that he felt frightened and alone in the wake of last year's presidential election and that he was attempting to catalyze a movement by instilling a sense of fear in the congregation and community.