



Sparta Church Joins People of Diverse Faith Traditions to End U.S.-Sponsored Torture

“Torture Is A Moral Issue” says the banner that hangs in the front of the Sparta United Methodist Church, located at 75 Sparta Avenue, in Sparta.

The congregation of the Sparta United Methodist Church has joined the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), a coalition of more than 250 religious organizations, including representatives from the Roman Catholic, evangelical Christian, mainline Protestant, Unitarian, Quaker, Orthodox Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Baha’i, and Sikh communities, who believe that torture is always wrong and call for accountability to ensure it never happens again.

The coalition’s goal is to encourage President Obama to establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate U.S.-sponsored torture that occurred post 9/11. People of faith support such a commission as the most effective means of helping the nation move beyond this chapter in its history, and to ensure that such acts of torture never happen again.

The NRCAT has designated the month of June to be Torture Awareness Month. After a major public event in front of the White House on June 11th, more than 25 religious leaders had the opportunity to meet with key White House officials and present the case for a Commission of Inquiry.

During the month of June, people of faith in communities across the country will display the “Torture Is a Moral Issue” banner, organize visits to Members of Congress, hold film screenings, panel discussions, prayer vigils, and letter writing campaigns.

Rev. Dianne Koob, the pastor of the Sparta United Methodist Church, said that during the last two years, the Sparta United Methodist Church, has displayed the “Torture Is A Moral Issue” banner, has shown a film, followed by discussion, circulated a petition to Congress, and has written letters to members of Congress and the President. She added, “I am pleased that the congregation has been calling for the end of U.S.-sponsored torture because people of faith strive to be compassionate, pursue justice, and defend each individual’s dignity and humanity.”

On June 26th, a public witness, procession, and interfaith service to mark UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture will be held in New York City.

For information about the campaign contact: www.nrcat.org; to contact the Sparta United Church go to www.spartaumc.org