

DECLARATION OF PASTOR BENJAMIN SQUIRES

I, Pastor Benjamin Squires, truthfully testify to the following declaration based on my personal knowledge:

1. My name is Benjamin Squires. I am competent to make this declaration.
2. I am an adult resident of Gurnee, Illinois.
3. I am a pastor at Bethel Lutheran Church, part of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod denomination.
4. Along with other local religious leaders, I serve as a volunteer greeter at Warren Township High School (WTHS), to welcome students in the morning so that they understand that the community supports them.
5. On the morning of October 30, 2025, I was greeting students at the entrance of WTHS's O'Plaine Road campus, which serves 9th and 10th grade students.
6. At roughly 8:20 AM, a vehicle skidded into the parking lot and crashed, with its front tire missing. Two men exited the vehicle and fled toward the building. Federal agents in vehicles followed them shortly after.
7. One man was detained in the parking lot, and another was detained after he entered the school. The entire flight and arrest of the detained men lasted only a few minutes.
8. Both detained men were placed in the back of the federal agents' vehicles.
9. My faith guides me to care about immigrants. One Bible verse in particular makes that duty clear, Exodus 23:9 ("You must not oppress a foreigner, since you know the life of a foreigner, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.") (New English Translation).
10. Another verse directing me to love immigrants is Micah 6:8 ("He has told you, O people, what is good, and what the LORD really wants from you. He wants you to promote justice,

to be faithful, and to live obediently before your God.”) (New English Translation). Jesus Christ cared for immigrants, welcoming a Samaritan, a Roman Centurion, and others.

11. My denomination’s history also drives me to care for immigrants. During the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s inception in the mid-1800s, German immigrants trying to find freedom founded the denomination’s first congregations.

12. When I began ministering, nearly 100 members came from a specific immigrant background, comprising nearly ten percent of my congregation. From then, I noted the substantial contributions that immigrants made on my congregation and on my ministry.

13. I believe that my life is to be a response to the love, grace, and mercy shown to us in Jesus Christ. Salvation is a gift, and so my life can be lived for the sake of benefiting others.

14. My faith made my duty to immigrants clear. So, I joined a local group’s initiative to record any mistreatment of immigrants by federal agents.

15. When I saw the men being detained outside WTHS that day, my faith required me to say something. I pulled out my phone and attempted to record the agents’ actions.

16. During the time in which I had my phone out, one agent (“Agent Doe”) threatened to pepper spray me.

17. I was not obstructing Agent Doe’s car, nor was I trespassing since I was in the WTHS parking lot where I had permission to be.

18. Nor was I physically touching Agent Doe or stopping him from performing his duties. Agent Doe eventually sat in one of the vehicles that arrived.

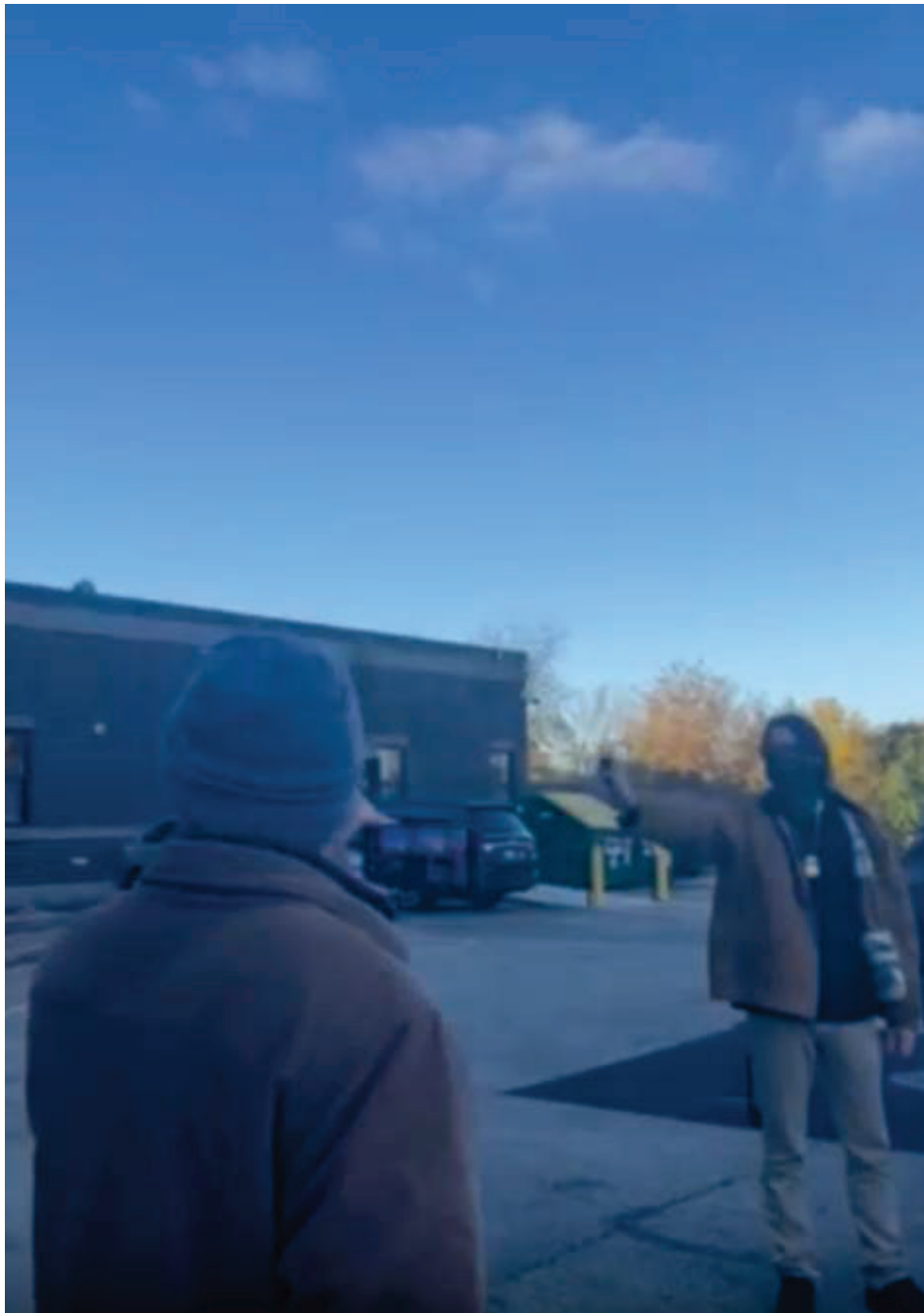
19. I walked back toward the school, dissuaded from recording because of Agent Doe’s threat. At this point Agent Doe got back out of the vehicle and went to another vehicle in the parking lot to drive that vehicle. During this transfer, he again threatened me, and the entire group

of onlookers including teachers, teachers' aides, and other WTHS staff. The threat was specific about pepper spray.

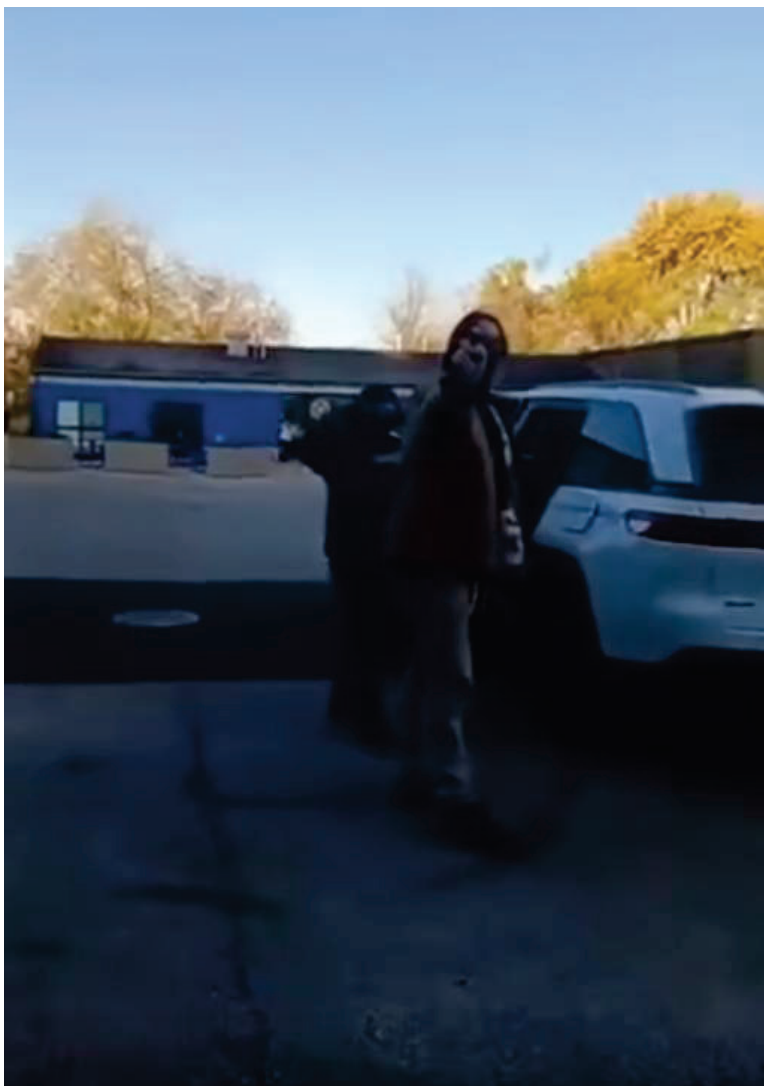
20. It shocks me that federal agents, who had already detained their targets, were now threatening those recording them rather than just leaving the scene. This is a picture I took of an agent accompanying Agent Doe, with an incomplete alphanumeric code on his vest seemingly reading "D-13."



21. Below is an image from a video on social media of Agent Doe pointing pepper spray toward a group of teachers and staff warning them that they were on school property. I am the other person in this picture.



22. Below is a screenshot of another viral video depicting the same agent threatening to pepper spray those protesting the federal agents.




23. The October 30, 2025, incident at Warren has left me unsettled and scared about continuing to observe federal agents.

24. But God's command to care for immigrants is too clear to ignore. So, I will continue to advocate for the immigrants in my community and ensure that they are treated with dignity. That means recording federal agents when they recklessly arrest God's children.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: 11/01/2025


Benjamin Squires