



Official Statement from Visalia First

On behalf of the community of faith at Visalia First, we express our profound heartbreak at the tragic loss of Charlie Kirk, who was taken from us through an unspeakable act of violence at Utah Valley State University.

Just one week ago, we had the privilege of hosting Charlie for the Tulare-Kings Resources for Life event. With such a recent and meaningful interaction, news of his passing feels both surreal and unimaginable.

Though known by many as a larger-than-life figure, Charlie was also a man of deep conviction, a brilliant mind, and most importantly, a genuine follower of Jesus. We honor his faith, his courage to stand for truth, and the impact he made on countless lives.

In this moment of national grief, we make a heartfelt appeal: let us be a people who rise with renewed determination to champion the sacredness of life “from the womb to the tomb.” We condemn this barbaric act of violence, yet we choose to respond not with hatred, but with prayers for God’s mercy and grace to be poured out on our broken land. We are determined to “lower the temperature” rather than escalate the rhetoric that is swirling around this moment of national tragedy.

As followers of Jesus, we are resolved to reflect His love in our words, our actions, and our identity. Together with many across the nation and the world, we lift up Charlie’s wife and two children, asking God to surround them with supernatural peace and comfort.

We invite our community to join us for a special Prayer Service tonight at 7:00 p.m. at our Visalia First campus (3737 S. Akers Street, Visalia, CA).

Our prayer is that God will have mercy on us, and that He will awaken this nation with revival once again.

Dr. Mark Merrill, DMin
Lead Pastor | Visalia First