

December 11, 2015

Statement in Solidarity with our Muslim Brothers and Sisters

Idriss Mosque, Seattle, WA

Michael Ramos, Executive Director, Church Council of Greater Seattle

I would like to speak on behalf of the 16 denominations and the 320 congregations of the Church Council of Greater Seattle. The truth of our common humanity demands that we speak out today. When our Muslim brothers and sisters are verbally or physically labeled, attacked, or dehumanized, we cry out that such actions constitute an affront to all people of faith and good will and an insult to the principles upon which this country was founded. We stand with our dear friends at Idriss Mosque as we did in vigil 24-7 through the “Watchful Eyes” program here after 9/11, so that these neighbors can pray, worship and congregate in peace. And, we call upon the Christian community to be willing to act in this way with kindness and solidarity at other mosques in the Puget Sound Region if called upon.

When a climate of fear is created and advanced in the fabric of our society, we have seen over and over again the false solution of scapegoating certain peoples – over the last year alone, first Central American children, then Syrian refugees and now Muslims who are part and parcel of our country’s success story of unity out of diversity. If the root of war is fear, then so too fear is the source of violence and oppression that diminishes our civilization, denies the contributions that all have to make, and distorts our sanity.

President George Washington wrote in 1790 to the Hebrew Congregations of Newport, Rhode Island: “May the children of the stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants; while everyone shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid.” Our Muslim brothers and sisters are also children of Abraham; we are here to proclaim that this message applies equally to them as well.

In the face of the building of bigger walls against Syrian refugees and barriers that discriminate against the living out of the Muslim faith as a resident of the United States, we preach a message of love. Love is the ground and compass for our actions, a love without exclusions. Love is the vehicle to a healing and liberating wholeness whereby the “other” becomes part of a “we” together.

Even in the darkest days of the year, we proudly offer our hearts to our Muslim brothers and sisters and declare that despite the virulent rhetoric of hatred, love wins. The Christian tradition is built on the foundation of life, light and love birthing anew among us in this season. Let us join together to turn the tide of fear into a culture of life-affirming dignity, compassion and joy so we can all celebrate each other at one great banquet table as one community.