

The United Churches of the Semiahmoo Peninsula



Mr. Asad Syed, President
White Rock Muslim Association

January 30, 2017

Dear Friends of the White Rock Muslim Association,

It was two years ago this month when, in response to the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris, we first reached out to you. Our desire was to develop a relationship and a path for communication. We wanted to show our solidarity with you, to let you know that we know that those who commit such acts in the name of Islam represent neither the vast majority of Muslims, nor the spirit and goals of the Muslim faith.

Less than a year later, when another attack took place in Paris, we gathered together at the beach in White Rock to pray publicly and to speak with one voice as people of faith for peace and mutual respect for all God's children. We have eaten together, prayed together, and sponsored a family of refugees from Syria together. You are our friends, our sisters and brothers.

Now we reach out again to express our sadness and shock at the shootings in the Centre Culturel Islamique de Quebec on Saturday evening. Not only has the great sin of taking human life been committed, but a horrific violation of a Muslim place of worship as well. We will be praying for those who have been killed, for their families and friends, and for the Muslim community in Quebec City and across Canada. (We pray as well for the Muslim community in the United States, who presently confront similar forces of division, albeit government sanctioned.)

In her letter to the Muslim community published earlier today, the Moderator of The United Church of Canada, The Right Reverend Jordan Cantwell wrote:

“This heinous violent act and other recent attacks targeting Muslims in Quebec and elsewhere are designed to instill fear and division within and between our communities. We will not let this happen. The United Church of Canada stands with our Muslim neighbours. We share your grief, as we share your determination to stop the forces of hate that seek to divide and destroy us. Trusting in a compassionate and just God, we will resist fear and prejudice with love.”

To her voice we add our own, pledging our support and solidarity. In the Hadith the Prophet, peace be upon him, wrote: “I affirm that all human beings are brothers unto one another.” We too reaffirm that, as your sisters and brothers and fellow children of the One God, we will continue to stand with you, offering our support and our love.

On behalf of the United Church of Canada congregations on the Semiahmoo Peninsula we remain sincerely yours,

The Reverend Scott Swanson, Sunnyside United Church

The Reverend Janice Young, Crescent United Church

The Reverend Louise Cummings, First United Church White Rock

The Reverend Bruce McAndless-Davis, First United Church White Rock