



Faith Communities Standing Together Against Hate Based on Religious Identity

18 June 2024

Canada is home to a vast diversity of people of different national origins, ethnicities, religions, and heritage.

But today, we see fear, division, hurt and grief. Even more alarming, we have also seen violence.

At times, these conditions seem to overwhelm or even subsume our common bonds of citizenship, friendship, and love for one another.

Yet, there is more that unites than divides us.

Love unites; hate divides. Respect unites; bigotry divides. Dialogue unites; ignorance divides. Listening unites; harassment divides.

None can deny the pain of these days. Yet, we see our common humanity.

Rather than viewing religion as a source of conflict and contention, we know that faith traditions can be the basis for deeper conversations and increased cooperation, greater understanding, and shared activity for a common good.

This is why...

We, representatives of Canada's diverse faith communities, solemnly commit to:

- Work for understanding, for justice, and for peace.
- Stand against hate of any kind in Canada. No one should be subject to racism, violence, silencing, or retaliation because of religion, indigeneity, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, or nationality.
- Reject any glorification of the perpetrators of violence and those who sow discrimination and hatred, especially in our own communities.
- Urge our adherents never to allow their faith to become a cause for hatred of another human being.

We call on the Government of Canada to:

- Support Canadian interfaith efforts to provide non-sectarian medical and humanitarian aid to victims – especially child victims – of international conflicts through reputable and trustworthy organizations as a means of advancing peacebuilding abroad and social solidarity in Canada.
- Ensure that faith communities have the proper resources for the security of their houses of worship, educational institutions — including schools, daycare centres, colleges, or universities – community centres, and cemeteries.
- Introduce a comprehensive strategy to foster understanding about online hate based on religious identity.
- Ensure, in collaboration with other levels of government, hate crime units are informed about hate based on religious identity in every law enforcement service, so that targeted groups can feel safe, heard, and respected. To this end we stand ready to offer our assistance.

This Statement of Faith Communities Standing Against Hate Based on Religious Identity has been prepared by the Canadian Interfaith Conversation and is endorsed by its Executive Committee members.

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Co-Chair, The Canadian Interfaith Conversation

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Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador

St. John's and Newfoundland Religious Social Action Coalition

This Statement of Faith Communities Standing Against Hate Based on Religious Identity has also been endorsed and signed by the following fifty-seven additional communities and institutions.

The Most Reverend Linda Nicholls, Primate
The Anglican Church of Canada

Rev. Wesley Mills MLC, President
Apostolic Church of Pentecost of Canada

Rev. Dr. Brent Russett, Minister
Asbury Free Methodist Church, Perth, Ontario

Mike Gordon, Lead Minister
Bethel Christian Assembly, Brandon Manitoba

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Big Church, Barrie, Ontario

Rev. John Estabrooks, Lead Pastor
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Michael B. Pawelke, President
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Ryan Anderson, Lead Organizer
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Dr. Harjot Kaur Singh, Chair
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Robbie Oleniuk, Pastor
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John Pellowe, CEO
Canadian Centre for Christian Charities

The Rev. Amanda Currie, President
The Canadian Council of Churches

Nuzhat Jafri, Executive Director
Canadian Council of Muslim Women

Celia Cheatley, Presiding Clerk
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Rev. Bruce Jones, Lead Pastor
Chalmers Community Church, Kincardine, Ontario

Jean-Daniel Ó Donnada, National Pastor
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Rev. Albert Postma, Executive Director, Canada
Christian Reformed Church in North America

Willard Metzger, Executive Director
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The Rev. Len Goddard, President
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The Rev. Dennis Friesen, Lead Pastor
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Rev. William Taylor, Executive Director
Evangelical Free Church of Canada

David Guretzki, PhD, President & CEO
The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson, National Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

John DeGiovanni, Pastor
Firestview Community Church, Grimsby, Ontario

Dr. Bill Thornton, Senior Pastor
Flamborough Baptist Church, Waterdown, Ontario

The Rev. W. Steven Mills
Grace Evangelical Free Church of Thunder Bay, Ontario

Rev. Maurice Hatfield, Pastor
Fredericton Junction United Baptist Church
Tracy United Baptist Church

Ronald A. Kuipers, President
The Institute for Christian Studies

Halil Yurtsever, Executive Director
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Glenn Gerbrandt, Pastor
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Mennonite Church Canada

Liu Lafontaine, President
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Sherry Marceil, Chair
Multi-Faith Summit Council of BC

Zul Kassamali, President
National Alliance for the Advancement of Pluralistic Societies
Toronto Area Interfaith Council

The Rev. Tula Van Gaasbeek, Co-Chair
National Christian Muslim Liaison Committee

Chris Barrett, National Director
The Navigators of Canada

Johannes Schouten, Pastor
Nelson Ave Community Church, Burnaby, BC

Jeff Edwards, Pastor
Northwest Community Church, Calgary, Alberta

Rob Cave, Lead Pastor
Okotoks Evangelical Free Church

Joshua Bautista, Executive Director
Operation Mobilization

Dr. Laura Lewis, Executive Director
Pregnancy Care Canada

The Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls, Moderator of the General Assembly
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Gordon Ponak, Lead Pastor
Richardfield Christian Fellowship, Edmonton, Alberta

Rev. Drew Mersereau, Senior Pastor
Gunnubngsville Baptist Church, Riverview, New Brunswick

The Rev. Barry Buhler, Senior Pastor
Russell Alliance Church

Commissioner Lee Graves, Territorial Commander
The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory

Rabbi Ed Elkin, President
Toronto Board of Rabbis

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator
The Rev. Dr. Michael Blair, General Secretary
The United Church of Canada

Rev. Mark MacKnight, President
Vanguard College

May Shihadeh, Chair
Sheila Flood, Executive Director
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Mike Stone, Executive Director
Vision Ministries Canada

David Ruis, National Director
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The Rev. Dr. Stephen Elliott, National Superintendent
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Rev. Dr. James R. Graham, Lead Pastor
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Barry Duguid, Chair
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