



Faith Communities Standing Together Against Hate Based on Religious Identity

28 October 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 Executive Committee members.

Shaila Carter

Co-Chair, The Canadian Interfaith Conversation

Pastor Peter Noteboom

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Muslim Association of Newfoundland and
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St John's and Newfoundland Religious Social
Action Coalition

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

Faheem Affan, Director

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada

Most Reverend Linda Nicholls, Primate

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

Yumna Siddiqi JD, President
Association of Progressive Muslims of Canada

David Ruis, National Director
Association of Vineyard Churches Canada

Mike Gordon, Lead Minister
Bethel Christian Assembly, Brandon Manitoba

Greg Neuman, Senior Pastor
Big Church, Barrie, Ontario

Rev John Estabrooks, Lead Pastor
Bonavista Evangelical Missionary Church, Calgary, Alberta

Michael B Pawelke, President
Briercrest Christian Academy, Saskatchewan

Ryan Anderson, Lead Organizer
Calgary Alliance for the Common Good

Dr Harjot Kaur Singh, Chair
Calgary Interfaith Council

Robbie Oleniuk, Pastor
Calvary Evangelical Missionary Church, Owen Sound, Ontario

John Pellowe, CEO
Canadian Centre for Christian Charities

Rev Amanda Currie, President
Canadian Council of Churches

Nuzhat Jafri, Executive Director
Canadian Council of Muslim Women

Celia Cheatley, Presiding Clerk
Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

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
Citizens for Public Justice

Rev Len Goddard, President
Community Christiana Fellowship Church of Canada

Rev Dennis Friesen, Lead Pastor
Dalmeny Bible Church, Saskatchewan

Robert A Watson, Secretary
Devine Street Gospel Chapel, Sarnia, Ontario

Gail Allen, President
Netta Phillet, Co-ordinator
Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education & Action

Karen Mock CM, Chair
Enhancing Social Justice Education

David Guretzki PhD, President & CEO
Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

Rev William Taylor, Executive Director
Evangelical Free Church of Canada

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

Rev Maurice Hatfield, Pastor

Fredericton Junction United Baptist Church

Tracy United Baptist Church

Rev W Steven Mills

Grace Evangelical Free Church of Thunder Bay, Ontario

Rev Drew Mersereau, Senior Pastor

Gunningsville Baptist Church, Riverview, New Brunswick

Ronald A Kuipers, President

Institute for Christian Studies

Halil Yurtsever, Executive Director

Intercultural Dialogue Institute

Maytal Kowalski, Executive Director

JSpaceCanada

Glenn Gerbrandt, Pastor

Lashburn Community Church, Saskatchewan

Doug Klassen, Executive Minister

Mennonite Church Canada

Liu Lafontaine, President

Multifaith Saskatchewan

Sherry Marceil, Chair

Multi-Faith Summit Council of BC

Zul Kassamali, President

National Alliance for the Advancement of Pluralistic Societies

Toronto Area Interfaith Council

Rev Tula Van Gaasbeek, Co-Chair

National Christian Muslim Liaison Committee

Rizwan Mohammad, Senior Advocacy Officer for Government Affairs & Public Policy

National Council of Canadian Muslims

Chris Barrett, National Director

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

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

Rev Dr Brent Hawkes CM, Executive Director
Rainbow Faith and Freedom

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

Rev Barry Buhler, Senior Pastor
Russell Alliance Church

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

Rabbi Ed Elkin, President
Toronto Board of Rabbis

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

Rev Mark MacKnight, President

Vanguard College

May Shihadeh, Chair

Sheila Flood, Executive Director
Victoria, BC Multifaith Society

Mike Stone, Executive Director
Vision Ministries Canada

Rev Dr Stephen Elliott, National Superintendent
Wesleyan Church of Canada

Ven Bhante Saranapala
West End Buddhist Temple and Meditation Centre

Rev Dr James R Graham, Lead Pastor
Whitewood Evangelical Missionary Church, Saskatchewan

Barry Duguid, Chair
Willowdale Baptist Church