

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

Media Release

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EMO statement on New Zealand mosque shooting

Last week we were given a brutal reminder of how Islamophobia, nationalism and white supremacy are on the rise around the globe. The murders of 50 Muslims—along with many others critically injured and/or traumatized—in two separate New Zealand mosques fill us with equal measures of heartbreak and outrage. But beneath this we also hear the deeper call to prophetic justice and transformation.

Because the suspected killer doesn't represent an isolated viewpoint or fringe perspective, his writings echo a hateful refrain we hear all around the globe, in countless different forms and contexts, from internet chatrooms to local officials to national leaders.

Some of those killed were refugees who had fled from persecution and violence in places like Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan. But this week we are confronted with the fact that no place is immune from the toxic specters of hatred, ignorance, and bigotry—and Oregon is no exception. We can all see how these corrosive spiritual poisons move through our communities, and as people of faith we are all called to become the doctor, the medicine and the antidote, until all our brothers and sisters are healed.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) represents many different kinds of faith traditions and voices, but today we must speak together with one voice and a single purpose. The spiritual peril of our times demands our clear unity and unambiguous focus. We must acknowledge and take responsibility for the fact that the Christian tradition—in sharp contrast to the pacifist teachings of Jesus—has been a chief perpetrator of anti-Muslim violence, either through its own direct actions, its hateful rhetoric, or at times through its inaction and complicit silence.

In the days, months and years ahead this will require different things from us at different times. This week we hope you will join us as we grieve and pray with our Muslim friends, faith communities and institutional allies like the Muslim Educational Trust. But each of us must recognize what God is calling us

to do when such basic human rights are threatened. We are called to stand with and for all of God's children. We are asked to call out and confront violence wherever we find it, whether it meets us overtly out on the street, or implicitly across a kitchen table.

We will each of us know in our hearts what is asked of us when the time comes, but here at EMO, we are committed to meeting these challenges together. Let us continue to hold each other in prayer, shared action and solidarity with our wider Muslim family.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, creation justice and public policy advocacy.