

DURHAM CONGREGATIONS IN ACTION

Resolution Against Religious Hate

March 21, 2017

We are in a time when the value and importance of Durham's religious diversity must be re-asserted. We are home to a long-standing Jewish community that gave the city Mayor E.J. Evans in the 1950s and 60s, and we are also the home of the oldest Muslim community in North Carolina at the Ar-Razzaq Islamic Center. During the past decade, Durham also has become home to Muslims and Christians made refugees by the Iraq war and its consequences.

Since the beginning of the year, there has been an increase in threats, vandalism and arson against Jewish and Muslim communities across the U.S., and this has touched Durham also with a bomb threat against a Jewish day school in February. Prejudice toward Muslims has increased in political rhetoric and become a driving force in immigration and refugee policies.

Durham Congregations In Action, an association of spiritual communities of diverse religious traditions in the Durham area, has built bridges of understanding and respect across these traditions for 48 years. We call on all of Durham's faith-communities to stand up and speak out against hate and disdain toward other religions, and to highlight the Golden Rule of love for one's neighbor as oneself that is held by all major religions as a moral principle.

Jewish and Muslim centers should not have to increase staffing and training for security purposes. Immigrants should not face abuse and ridicule in our streets and schools, whether for their religious identity or their native ethnic or national identities. Our houses of worship and education should serve as places of learning, prayer, beauty, refuge and peace – not objects of threat and terror. In Durham, neighbors are entitled to respect and care without discrimination, persecution or hate.

Durham has gone through a great deal of struggle to achieve greater equity between races and religious communities in its history, and we know we have not yet arrived where our values call us. But we cannot tolerate hatred and prejudice to drag us away from the path of hope. We will stand united to oppose the swell of fear and

enmity toward Muslims and Jews in our society. We will speak out against verbal and social media attacks of religious and ethnic hate. We will reject and resist any hostile actions toward neighbors of other faiths or their property. We will build relationships with our neighbors based on respect, care and willingness to learn, and those relationships will be the basis for a common security and a shared future of peace.

We call on all of Durham's religious communities to stand for and claim that security and peace for all of us together.