

PRESS STATEMENT

For release December 7, 2015
Montana Association of Christians

Contact Peter Erickson
Phone: 406-407-5184
peter@oursaviorscfalls.org

Statement by the Leaders of the Montana Association of Christians

We, the leaders of the Montana Association of Christians (MAC), made up of eight denominations, as well as numerous congregations and individuals, across Montana, stand in solidarity with the victims of persecution and violence at home and across the globe. With each new mass shooting or act of terrorism, we too experience anxiety and are tempted to succumb to fear. Yet, grounded by God's peace which passes our understanding, and inspired by the biblical call to love God, and to love our neighbors as ourselves, we recognize in this stressful time a call to courage. Let us not only pray 'thy kingdom come, thy will be done,' let us do it.

We at MAC invite all Montanans, many of us the sons and daughters of immigrants ourselves, to welcome those fleeing persecution in other countries, including refugees seeking asylum from Syria. Consider that Joseph and Mary protected Jesus from Herod, by becoming refugees in Egypt. Consider further, the possibility that extending opportunity and hope to those fleeing the brutality and oppression that threaten their lives, might also lay the groundwork for a safer tomorrow. Scripture instructs God's people, who themselves have been sojourners, refugees, and immigrants, to defend, protect, and honor the rights and dignity of the stranger.

We encourage our fellow Montanans to follow the laws and protocols currently in place in our nation and to continue to welcome those fleeing persecution from other countries including Syria. We urge Montanans not to allow fear to degrade our citizenship, but with wisdom and judiciousness to seek a course that upholds the humanity not only of the stranger in our midst, but by extension of ourselves.

The Rev. Peter Erickson
President of MAC, and ELCA Lutheran Pastor

The Rev. Valerie Webster
President (Elect) of MAC, and Episcopal Priest