

March 17, 2019

The Network of Religious Communities and the vast majority of houses of worship throughout our region wish to express our condolences and heartfelt prayers for the victims and families of the horrific attack at the Mosques in Christchurch New Zealand. We also stand with our Muslim brothers and sisters here in Western New York who daily experience the consequences of Islamophobia and remember, all to well the attack that occurred at a Mosque in Quebec City just two years ago.

However, even as we gather in grief and speak out against this most recent violent attack on Mosques, let us remember that houses of worship of other religious traditions have also experienced violent attacks on their worshipping community

Last fall a gunman killed 11 at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Squirrel Hill, PA. Just four years ago a gunman killed 9 at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC. There have attacks on worshippers at a Christian Church in Sutherland Texas, a Unitarian Church in Knoxville, TN, a Sikh Temple in Wisconsin to name just a few.

Together let us condemn this attack against Muslims worshipping in their Mosques as well as attacks against all peoples of faith who gather to worship in their own tradition. Let us all stand together against the growing Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and white supremacy sentiments that are spreading throughout the world.. Together, may we commit ourselves to combating hate and violence in our own communities and to stand firmly in our commitment to interfaith understanding and cooperation.

Together we are strong. Separate we are individually vulnerable.

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