

# Community of Christ

June 17, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are deeply saddened by the shooting that took place in a dance club in Orlando, Florida on Sunday morning. In the days that followed many words have been spoken that cry for an end to hatred, violence, and disregard for life. These words encourage all of us to choose love over hatred, fear, and division.

Challenging words spoken by President Veazey in his closing address to the World Conference on Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup> inspire our response.

“...since the time of Jesus and his first followers, God has called for the rise of communities of disciples that live in oneness and equality as a witness of the power of the gospel to reconcile and bring peace. As we go forth from this Conference focused on “One in Christ,” we must resist the efforts of those trying to hijack the gospel and the church to promote their visions of intolerance, prejudice, and hate in the name of Christ.

All my life I have heard sermons, sung hymns, and listened to discussions about Zion. According to the vision before us, God sees a church that doesn't just speak and sing of Zion. God sees one that “live[s], love[s], and share[s] as Zion: those who strive to be visibly one in Christ, among whom there are no poor or oppressed” (Doctrine and Covenants 165:6a).

Dedicated to love, live, and share as Zion we join with other organizations committed to God's alternative vision for our world. We support the statement issued by the National Council of Churches in response to the Orlando shooting and value our mutual association as one of the 38 Christian communions willing to stand together as one against intolerance, prejudice, and hate.

[\(http://nationalcouncilofchurches.us/609-2/\)](http://nationalcouncilofchurches.us/609-2/).

As we join in prayer with our brothers and sisters in other faith communities for the families and loved ones impacted by this tragedy, may the words of our prayers grow into actions of reconciliation and peace.

In the Peace of Jesus Christ,

USA Apostles

Linda Booth, Barbara Carter, Janné Grover, Ron Harmon, Robin Linkhart, Lach Mackay