



December 9, 2015

Islamic Center of Johnson County
[Address Redacted]
Overland Park, Kansas 66221

Dear brothers and sisters:

As-salamu alaykum.

These days appear to be trying times for followers of Islam in our country. As the Pastor and spiritual leader of The Kirk, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and your neighbor in the Kansas City community, I extend to you a greeting of peace and love.

This is a particularly holy season for those who claim the name Christian. We await the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, whom we call the Prince of Peace. We believe that Christians are called at all times to imitate Jesus' welcome and compassion, to love all people as God has loved us in Jesus Christ, to be peacemakers.

In this spirit, I am writing to extend my support and encouragement to your community and to all the families who find nurture there. My heart breaks at the hate speech and vile behavior toward Muslims recently expressed by some politicians and Christian leaders in our country. It is my prayer that this reprehensible behavior has not adversely impacted your community, and that you can continue to practice your faith and live your everyday lives in freedom, peace, and mutual harmony.

If we can extend to you something beyond this word of encouragement and support, please do not hesitate to ask. In particular, I would hope to explore whether there is some opportunity for our communities to come together over a shared meal or social activity, so we might come to know one another better.

Peace to you this Advent season.

In Christ,

Rev. Chad Andrew Herring
Pastor
The Kirk of Kansas City