

# A CALL TO HOPE & ACTION

**As faith leaders on Whidbey Island, we share a common love for our island community and our country.** The recent "Freedom to Worship Protest" held by paramilitary groups on our island mirrors the attempts at intimidation by similar groups across our nation. We lament the rise of religious nationalism in this country and around the world. We are concerned about possible prolonged post-election chaos and violence that will disproportionately affect Blacks, people of color and other marginalized individuals. We also recognize a common experience of grief and fear related to the current coronavirus pandemic, and the ongoing experience of racism and other forms of oppression. Regardless of immediate responses to this election, we have ongoing healing work to do, and we invite all islanders to join us. **In response to this current moment of tension, fear and isolation, we offer our commitment to hope, connection, and vision, beginning in the following ways:**

- 1 We affirm that hope and healing are possible for our nation, regardless of the outcome of this election.** We commit to the inevitably difficult and courageous work to reconcile the deep divisions among us, beginning immediately following the election and into the years ahead. We welcome all who would join us in our communities of faith and in other places of connection across our island.
- 2 We recognize the inherent worth of all individuals.** We acknowledge that people of good will hold differing political perspectives and we pray for respectful dialogue among people of all perspectives. We will continue to honor our relationships and our mutual concern for our island and our nation.
- 3 We specifically commit to standing in solidarity with Black and Brown people and others among us who are at disproportionate risk.** This includes those on our island and in our nation who experience the ongoing oppressions of racism, religious intolerance, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of marginalization. We will confront and oppose ongoing oppression wherever it occurs and commit to transforming systems of oppression.
- 4 We encourage and support deepening of genuine connections throughout our community.** This includes challenging heated media and political rhetoric that inflames anxiety, doing anti-racism work, and supporting ongoing efforts to engage in civil discourse across divides.
- 5 We commit ourselves to the practice of nonviolence.** We will model and promote active nonviolence as we engage in supporting, planning and participating in actions that are consistent with our quest for reconciliation and commitment to seek the common good.

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**Rev. Dave Bieniek**, D.Min, Retired Chaplain,  
Metropolitan Community Church

**Tom Ewell**, Whidbey Island Friends  
Meeting (Quaker)

**Rev. Dr. Catherine Foote**, United Church  
of Christ

**Rev. Richard Fuss**, Pastor, Langley United  
Methodist Church

**Rev. Bill Graves**, Unitarian-Universalist  
minister

**Pastor Jim Lindus**, Trinity Lutheran  
Church

**Rev. Dr. Emily Melcher**, Unitarian  
Universalist minister

**Rev. Meighan Pritchard**, Pastor, United  
Church of Christ

**Rev. David Schoen**, United Church of  
Christ minister

**Fr. Rick Spicer**, St. Hubert Church

**Rev. Nigel Taber-Hamilton**, Episcopal  
Diocese of Olympia