



**Statement of the Church Council of Greater Seattle
Lamentation and Call to Commitment
October 2, 2015**

The Church Council of Greater Seattle shares our deep sorrow with the family and friends of the victims of the horrific shooting tragedy yesterday at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon. Taking the lives of these members of the college community was an act of senseless violence that violates our common humanity.

Every life is precious in God's eyes. Each person has an inviolable human dignity as a child of the Creator. The lives of all who were shot by the perpetrator are unique, God-given and have ultimate value. We pray for all impacted by this terrible event, for the Roseburg community, for the victims who died and for those who are being cared for at local hospitals.

Whether Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Sikh, Muslim, Hindu, Unitarian, of any spiritual practice, Agnostic, Atheist, we are first and foremost human beings. Targeting people on the real or perceived basis of religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, or gender identity is an affront to us all and must be confronted. Certainly, these forms of violence made more possible by the idolatrous addiction of our society to unfettered access to guns must be challenged by people of faith and good will.

Nine victims yesterday in Roseburg, Oregon. Nine victims of racial hatred four months ago at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. We call on all people to say no to acts of hatred; to say no to the diminishment of some lives in order to aggrandize other lives; to say no to any devaluing of human life on the basis of any kind of objectification or commodification.

We say yes to the God of life; we say yes to the conviction that no matter how it will happen, God will overcome; we say yes to the genuine solidarity of love that knows no borders; and we say yes to joining our hearts in this time of heartbreak for in faith and prayer God's justice will prevail. May God bless and shower his mercy upon the people of Roseburg, Oregon, and continue to accompany all of us toward a nation with the capacity to embrace all, tearing down the walls that separate us, and leading us ever closer to the dream of the Beloved Community.