



UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

The Union of Progressive Judaism and the Rabbinic Council of Australian, New Zealand and Asian Progressive Rabbis were horrified to learn of the attack on Christchurch Mosques. All people of faith, indeed all humanity, are connected one to another, and this attack is an attack on all of us. Our hearts turn to the families of those who were killed, and our prayers of healing to all that were injured. We stand with people of all faiths (and no faith) in condemnation of such murderous violence.

Sadly, we live in a world where Islamophobia, Antisemitism and all forms of bigotry are on the rise, where people are increasingly turning towards hatred and violence. At times like these words and even prayers are insufficient. Instead together people of all faiths must take up the challenge to change the world to make it a better place for our children and grandchildren. We must never stand silent or fail to act in the face of hatred, bigotry and violence.

Muslims, Christians and Jews pray to the same God, and together we have found peace and acceptance in New Zealand. Today's attack is a wakeup call not to take our acceptance and security as a given. We call on people to think of the many action steps that each of us can take to create an environment of understanding and acceptance of diversity. Visiting a mosque to offer support or reaching out in friendship to a family from a different faith are just two steps that can be taken. Attitudes must change. We must learn not to judge people for differing modes of dress, language or tradition but instead value both our common humanity and our shared, though diverse, quests to understand the divine.