

**NO. 1116
(SENSE-OF-THE-ASSEMBLY)**

ADDRESSING ANTI-MUSLIM ACTION IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

WHEREAS, we have been called to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9) and we are to “pursue peace with everyone” (Hebrews 12:14); and

WHEREAS, all people are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and are loved by God (John 3:16) and are rightfully loved by us as our neighbors (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:36-40); and

WHEREAS, over six million Muslims in the United States and nearly one million Muslims in Canada live peacefully and contribute in positive ways to society; and

WHEREAS, the number of people in the United States who hold “unfavorable opinions” about Islam is the highest level since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, according to a Washington Post-ABC poll released in September 2010; and

WHEREAS, the protest of the proposed Muslim Community Center in New York City near the site of the 9/11 terrorist attacks – over which there are legitimate differences of opinion – was often expressed in intensely anti-Muslim terms; and

WHEREAS, acts against mosques such as graffiti, arson and property damage have occurred during the past year*; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 General Assembly Resolution 0519 “Encouraging Interfaith Engagement” states, “[W]e see interreligious relationships as one of God’s special callings in our time;” and

WHEREAS, we, as members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada understand ourselves to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world and therefore are called to welcome others even as we have been welcomed by God;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Nashville, TN, July 9-13, 2011, condemns anti-Muslim speech and activity and calls upon the Church to promote respect, civility and love toward our Muslim neighbors; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that in addition to the ongoing work being done by the church concerning Muslim-Christian relations, this General Assembly urges all expressions of the church to engage in interfaith dialogue and action so that mutual regard and understanding between Muslims and Christians will be deepened.

Disciples Peace Fellowship

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT Business Item No. 1116. (Discussion time 12 minutes)

* **Jacksonville, FL, May 2010:** Vandals firebombed the Islamic Center of Northeast Florida.
Sources: www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2010/05/12/Mosque-in-Jacksonville-Fla-firebombed/UPI-85931273693653/

Phoenix, AZ, August 2010: Vandals threw paint on the floor, shot out windows, and wrote anti-Muslim slurs on the walls of a local mosque.
Sources: www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2010/09/08/20100908phoenix-mosque-vandalized-abrk.html#ixzz0zdBKQd7w

Bridgeport, CT, August 2010: Picketers targeted a mosque during Ramadan and shouted "murderers" and "Jesus hates Muslims" at worshippers, including children.
Sources: www.ctpost.com/news/article/Angry-protesters-descend-on-mosque-606515.php

Detroit, MI, May 2010: Vandals damaged a local mosque twice in one week.
Sources: www.ww4report.com/node/8625

Hudson, NY, September 2010: Three men spray-painted an anti-Muslim epithet on the back wall of a mosque.
Sources: <http://online.wsj.com/article/APebf11f7773e04470bfe7007e7b474aa1.html>

Murfreesboro, May 2010: Opponents of a planned mosque have vandalized the mosque site, including setting fire to construction vehicles.
Sources: <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/murfreesboro-tennessee-mosque-plan-draws-criticism-residents/story?id=10956381>

San Antonio, TX, September 2010: A mosque was vandalized with spray-paint and worshippers' cars were targeted with graffiti and anti-Muslim messages.
Sources: <http://www.kens5.com/news/Local-Mosque-Vandalized-102283944.html>

Wilson, May 2010: A new mosque was vandalized shortly after it opened following a long anti-Mosque campaign conducted by local residents.
Sources: www.fox6now.com/news/witi-100505-sheboygan-muslims.0.4795698.story

Hamilton, Ontario, January 2010: Vandals firebombed a mosque and school.
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/story/2010/01/04/hamilton-mosque-firebomb.html>