

January 15, 2019

**Love your neighbor as yourself." -  
Leviticus 19:18**

**"Do to others what you would have them do to you." - Matthew 7:12**

**Allah says in the Qur'an as translated: "Fulfill the measure and weight  
and do not deprive people of their due and cause not corruption upon  
the earth after its reformation." - Al-A`raf 7:85**

**"God's grace and love can be experienced when one cares for the poor  
and the destitute." - Guru Nanak, Sikh scriptures**

**"The entire humanity is one family."  
- Hindu Rig Veda - Vasudaiva Kutumbakam**

Dear President Trump, Senator McConnell, and Speaker Pelosi,

As the partial federal government shutdown enters its third week, we, the undersigned interfaith leaders of Washington D.C., Maryland and Virginia, grieve the disproportionate burden the shutdown has placed on federal employees and contract workers. We are deeply concerned for all those whose lives have been thrust into economic uncertainty due to the halt in government services and agencies.

While the effects are felt nationwide, our region is especially impacted. Many in our faith communities are struggling, as are their co-workers and neighbors, and we are concerned for them and their families. Moreover, we are all vulnerable when those whose services we depend upon are under such duress. The long-term consequences of the shutdown are mounting, and we respectfully add our voices to those calling for it to end.

On the issues of border security and our immigration policy, we agree with President Trump that we face a crisis of heart and soul, though we differ dramatically in our understanding of it. Differences aside, we are clear that inventing a new crisis by closing the government and adversely affecting so

many innocent people does not help to address border security.

The humanitarian crisis at the border is real. The reasons for this crisis are many and complex, and they require a multi-faceted response not only at the border itself, but with comprehensive immigration reform, and an approach to foreign policy that addresses the rampant corruption, gang violence, and economic desperation that is causing so many to flee their countries.

In the meantime, people are suffering and we cannot turn away. Our faith traditions call us to treat one another as we would want to be treated, to respond with compassion, for God's compassion knows no borders. Justice requires that we act for the welfare of all. Today we speak with one voice urging our public leaders to meet the obligations of their office and reopen the federal government as they continue to seek just and merciful solutions to those seeking refuge in our land.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. David A. Anderson  
Founding & Senior Pastor, Bridgeway Community Church

Dr. E. Gail Anderson Holness  
Senior Pastor, Christ Our Redeemer AME Church (DC)

Imam Johari Abdulmalik  
Muslim Society of Washington

Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling  
Washington Episcopal Area United Methodist Church

The Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde  
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington

The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

The Rev. Richard H. Graham, Bishop  
Metropolitan Washington, D. C., Synod

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Reverend Dr. Susan T. Henry-Crowe,  
General Secretary, General Board of Church and Society  
The United Methodist Church

The Very Rev. Randy Hollerith  
Dean, Washington National Cathedral

Bishop Sharma D. Lewis  
Richmond Episcopal Area, The United Methodist Church

Rabbi M. Bruce Lustig  
Sr. Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation

Rabbi Gerald Serotta  
Executive Director, Interfaith Council of Metropolitan  
Washington

Imam Dr. Talib M. Shareef, USAF-Retired  
President, Masjid Muhammad, The Nation's Mosque

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The Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton  
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Rev. Dr. Christopher L. Zacharias  
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The Rt. Rev. David Colin Jones  
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The Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston, Retired  
XIII Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Robert W. Ihloff, Bishop Associate

Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Edwin F. Gulick,  
Visiting Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

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