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KansasInterfaithAction.org

Rabbi Moti Rieber, Executive Director
Rev. Dr. Annie Ricker, Board Chair

January 31, 2024

Dear Kansas Legislators:

As we prepare for the new legislative session, we write to you as clergy and leaders of faith communities throughout Kansas. Our faith is the foundation on which our political priorities are built. We care deeply about our neighbors - all of them, and especially the most vulnerable among us. As you know, people of faith make up a significant part of your constituency. We remain fully engaged and trust that you will continue as steadfast partners in creating needed change.

Mainstream faith communities across Kansas share values of safety, equality, and dignity for each and every person. We're called to do no harm, and to do all the good we can. Discriminatory legislation that targets individuals based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity is an affront to the values we hold as people of faith and as Kansans. Alarmist language, fear-based rhetoric, and general mis- or disinformation fuels discrimination, and discrimination does great harm.

While we may hold differing teachings on LGBTQ+ issues in religious life, we join in common cause against any policy which might cause hurt or harm to people, no matter who they are. We, the undersigned clergy, call on all our elected leaders to hear our collective voice as we urge you to reject any further discriminatory legislation targeting our LGBTQ+ siblings. We believe such legislation has already caused severe damage to our LGBTQ+ friends and neighbors; is antithetical to the rights of equal opportunity and equal protection guaranteed in our state and federal constitutions; is contrary to the human rights to which we are all entitled; and is sinful in the eyes of a loving and merciful God.

As we look across the history of humankind, acts of discrimination have never fared well, and in the end those who perpetuate it are viewed by history as oppressors. Do not allow that to be the legacy of your service in our state legislature.

We are counting on your voice and your vote in the pursuit of safety, equality, and dignity for all Kansans, including LGBTQ+ Kansans. Let your legacy be one of mercy and justice for all. We pray for you as our leaders.

With both gratitude and great expectation,

Clergy and Leaders of Faith Communities in Kansas

Rev. Mitch Todd
Grace United Methodist Church, Olathe

Deacon Mindy Tillberg
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Salina

Neal Whitlow, Adult Discipleship
Chapel Hill United Methodist Church, Wichita

Pastor Shana Green
New Creation Fellowship Church, Newton

Rev. Chad Langdon
Christ Lutheran Church, Wichita

Pastor Bev Baumgartner
Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge

Pastor Kane McEntire
West Heights United Methodist Church, Wichita

Rev. Amy Truhe
Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lindsborg

Rev. Ashley Prescott Barlow-Thompson
Calvary United Methodist Church, Wichita

Pastor Charles McKinzie
Grace United Methodist Church, Winfield

Pastor Christina Manero
Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita

Rev. Lorraine Cenicerros
UCC KO Conference Minister, Junction City

Rev. Gary Teske, *retired*
Trinity Lutheran Church, Lawrence

Rev. Dr. Peter Luckey, *retired*
Plymouth Congregational Church, Lawrence

Rev. Dr. Isabel Call
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Manhattan

Rev. Dr. Mandy Todd
Bethany Village, Lindsborg

Rev. Dr. Annie Ricker
*Shawnee Heights United Methodist Church,
Tecumseh
Berryton United Methodist Church, Berryton*

Rev. Jill Sander-Chali
College Hill United Methodist Church, Wichita

Rev. Dr. S. David Cox
St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Mission

Rev. Jody Carroll, Canon
Grace Cathedral, Topeka

Rev. Torey Lightcap
Grace Cathedral, Topeka

Deacon Carolyn Garwood
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Manhattan

Pastor Gene McIntosh
Harveyville United Methodist Church, Harveyville

Rev. Denise Dugan
Saint Andrew Christian Church, Olathe

Pastor Melissa Atchison
Manhattan Mennonite Church, Manhattan

Rev. Shelley Page
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Lawrence

Rev. Pat Ireland
First Presbyterian Church, Cottonwood Falls

Pastor Laura Guy
Regional Congregational Engagement Director, DART

Rev. Aaron Roberts
Colonial Church, Prairie Village

Dr. Edith Guffey, *retired*
Former Kansas-Oklahoma Conference Minister, UCC

Rabbi Moti Rieber
Executive Director, Kansas Interfaith Action

Rev. R. Kent Cormack
First Congregational Church, Topeka

Rev. Carolynn Winters-Hazelton
Westside Presbyterian Church, Lawrence

Pastor Roxie Baer
*Oak Hill Presbyterian Church
Faith United Presbyterian Church, Clifton*

Rev. K.O. Noonoo
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Topeka

Rev. Thad Holcombe, *retired*
Lawrence

Revered Marc Giedinhagen, *retired*
St. Luke's Hospital Chaplain

Rev. Dr. Helen Hutchison
First Presbyterian Church, Lawrence

Rev. Ashley Huber
St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Olathe

Rev. Chris Deines
Bethany Lutheran Church, Lindsborg

Rev. Cheryl Hoops
Grace Presbyterian, Wichita

Rev. Adam Wutka
Central States Synod ELCA, Great Bend

Rev. John Brudvig
Salem Lutheran Church, Lenexa

Rev. Jennifer Thomas
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Shawnee

Pastor Austin English
Peace Lutheran Church, Manhattan

Rabbi Jonathan Rudnick
Jewish Family Services Community Chaplain

Rabbi Elizabeth Bonney-Cohen
Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy, Overland Park

Rabbi Mark Levin, *retired*
Congregation Beth Torah, Overland Park

Rabbi Larry Karol, *retired*
Overland Park

Rabbi Michael Zedek, *retired*
Prairie Village

Zen Master Bon Hae Judith Roitman
Kansas Zen Center, Lawrence

Pastor Jerrell Williams
Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton

Rev. Noni Strand
Lutherans Restoring Creation, Olathe

Rev. Rachael Pryor
Associate Conference Minister, UCC, Lindsborg

Rev. Lucille Barb, *retired*
Great Plains Conference UMC, Olpe

Pastor Ben Woodward-Breckbill
Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton

Rev. Loren Drummond, *retired*
Great Plains UMC, Kansas City

Rev. Shannah McAleer
St. Paul United Church of Christ, Eudora

Pastor Laura Goerzen
First Mennonite Church, Newton

Rev. Jennifer Herndon
Chapel Hill United Methodist Church, Wichita

Rev. Mindy Fugarino
Independence Boulevard Christian Church, Kansas City

Rev. Laurie Lewis
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Wichita

Rev. Kaylie Ines
Walsburg Lutheran Church, Leonardville

Rev. Daekyung Kim
Asbury United Methodist Church, Prairie Village

Rev. Russell Anderson
Mulvane United Methodist Church, Mulvane

Rev. Joanna Harader
Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence

Pastor Jeff Graber
First United Methodist Church, Halstead

Rev. Janet Rhind, *retired*
Great Plains United Methodist Church, Leawood

Pastor Nathan Koontz
Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton

Rev. Robert Johnson
Resurrection UMC, Leawood

Rev. Charles Claycomb, *retired*
Great Plains UMC, Wichita

Rev. Dr. Tiffany DeTienne
United Methodist Church, Lawrence

Pastor Todd Seifert
Lawrence Centenary, Lawrence

Rev. Larry Fry, *retired*
Great Plains UMC, Lawrence

Rev. Kara Eidson
McLouth United Methodist Church
First United Methodist Church, Oskaloosa

Rev. Ross Baker
Edgerton United Methodist Church, Edgerton

Rev. Deborah Hull
Old Mission United Methodist Church, Fairway

Rev. Philip Shull
Great Plains UMC, Bel Aire

Rev. John Collins
College Avenue United Methodist Church, Manhattan

Rev. Gage Church
Central Congregational Church, Manhattan

Pastor Julia Gaughan
Peace United Church of Christ, Alma

Rev. Jennifer Collins
Great Plains UMC, Abilene

Deacon Deborah Burns
Trinity Episcopal Church, Lawrence

Rev. Shelly McNaughton
Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Olathe

Rev. Caela Wood
First Congregational UCC Manhattan

Rev. Dr. Jessica Williams
Director of Ministry Education, Kairos Center, Merriam

Rev. Paul Ellis Jackson
University Congregational Church, Wichita

Rev. Doreen Rice
St. David's Episcopal, Topeka

Rev. Mark Harmon
Overland Park

Rev. James "Mic" McGuire, *retired*
Great Plains UMC, Emporia

Rev. Kent H. Little
Newton Trinity Heights UMC, Newton

Rev. Christopher Eshelman
First United Methodist Church, Fort Scott

Dr. Ruth Rosell
Central Baptist Theological Seminary

Pastor Mike Munz
Treasurer, Kansas Interfaith Action

Rabbi David Glickman
Congregation Beth Shalom, Overland Park

Rev. Karen Nyhart
Old Mission United Methodist Church, Fairway

Rev. Jack Gregory, *retired*
Great Plains UMC, Lenexa

Rev. Caroline Dean
Plymouth Congregational Church, Lawrence

Rev. Jennifer Allen
Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, Overland Park

Pastor Valecia Scribner
Woodland United Methodist Church, Wichita

Rev. Jacob Pointdexter
Wichita United Church of Christ

Rev. Jo Mead
University United Methodist Church, Wichita

Rabbi Caitlin Brazner
Congregation B'nai Jehudah, Overland Park

Rev. Melissa Woeppel
Bethany College, Lindsborg