

**Statement on the November 13, 2015 Paris Attacks
By the Bishops of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut**

On November 13, 2015, our world was yet again brought to a place of sadness, confusion, fear, and anger as we heard of the violence unfolding in Paris. Our hearts were broken by the terror and uncertainty that surrounded sisters and brothers of our global community. The 231st Convention of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, meeting when the news broke, paused to pray for all in Paris even as we recalled the violence we have known here in our own lives. As Bishops of Connecticut we immediately reached out to The Rt. Rev. Pierre Whalon, Bishop Suffragan of the Episcopal Churches in Europe who is located in Paris. We have since connected with Bishop Pierre and have assured him of the love, concern and prayers of the people of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut.

Our prayers continue for the people of Paris and all affected by this violence. We pray for those who have been killed, and those harmed with wounds seen and unseen. We pray for their families and friends in their uncertainty and their concern, even as we pray for the perpetrators of the violence. And we also offer prayers of thanksgiving for all who attended to the injured and dying - those in official capacities: police and firefighters, emergency medical professionals, doctors, nurses and chaplains, - and those in unofficial capacities: friends and strangers who provided comfort, safety and care. They are icons of God's incarnate love in Jesus.

And now we ponder prayerfully what to do. In addition to prayer, what is our response to this violence? How do we move from our places of fear, confusion, anger and loss? Thinking on St. Benedict, we need to listen. Listen to God calling us to be peacemakers and ones who hunger and thirst for righteousness. We must work for peace seeking to repair broken relationships locally and globally, creating space for listening and dialogue. We must speak out against violence, joining in solidarity with our Muslim neighbors here in Connecticut and around the world who also are outraged by extremists' actions. We can build beloved communities of hope, possibility and new life. Now is truly a time to be grounded in the work we have pledged to do in our Baptismal Covenant – the work of resisting evil, seeking and serving Christ in all persons loving our neighbors as ourselves, and striving for justice and peace among all people.

"O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son; Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*" (Book of Common Prayer, page 815)

The Rt. Rev. Ian T. Douglas
Bishop Diocesan

The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens
Bishop Suffragan