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United Methodist Churches of Indiana

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Governor Eric Holcomb
Office of the Governor
Statehouse
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

Dear Governor Holcomb,

Grace and peace to you this Advent season. As we prepare to leave one year and enter another, I am reminded of both the goodness of God our Creator and the work we are still called to do as Christians here on earth.

I write in regards to Indiana's recently-proposed Hate Crime bill. I am fully in support of its passage, as it resonates with the Social Principles that John Wesley so aptly penned for the foundation of the United Methodist Church. "We affirm all persons as equally valuable in the sight of God. We, therefore, work toward societies in which each person's value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened."

As Christians in the United Methodist faith tradition, we believe all persons regardless of their race or ethnicity, are created in the image of God; all are of sacred worth. We also affirm that "no identity or culture has more legitimacy than any other. We call the Church to challenge any hierarchy of cultures or identities. Through relationships within and among cultures we are called to and have the responsibility for learning from each other, showing mutual respect for our differences and similarities as we experience the diversity of perspectives and viewpoints." (Paragraph 161, The Book of Discipline)

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to "Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow," as Isaiah 1:17 reminds us. May we inch ever closer today by denouncing hatred and letting the love Jesus showed overflow into each section of our society.

As one of only five remaining states without a Hate Crime law, it is time that Indiana join the fight against such malevolence. Let us make a stand against allowing hatred to flourish in our state. Let's join forces against such malice and support that which Christ did—love and justice.

Be Encouraged,

Bishop Julius C. Trimble

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