

July 17, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the work of the Murfreesboro Muslim Youth in general and the "Love Your Neighbor" picnic specifically.

I have served as a pastor of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Murfreesboro, TN for just over six years now. It was within the second year of my time in Murfreesboro that I became aware of the work of the Murfreesboro Muslim Youth and got involved with the "Love Your Neighbor" picnics.

The "Love Your Neighbor" picnics were started as a way for people from the community with different faith backgrounds to get to know one another. This was particularly important in Murfreesboro, where there were protests against the establishment of an Islamic Center in the city. Many from Christian churches in the city were afraid of the establishment of the Islamic Center. They said hateful things. They marched. They threatened and intimidated.

The Islamic Center stands in Murfreesboro now, even though it has been vandalized on multiple occasions. The Murfreesboro Muslim Youth group was formed in Murfreesboro simply to be a force for goodness in the city, and I think they have made a great impact on how people view our Muslim neighbors.

I don't know how many minds have been changed, but anyone who sees what the Murfreesboro Muslim Youth are doing has to see that they are doing good work on behalf of the needs of the city. They care for the homeless. They raise money for those in need. They show up when there is a problem. They are caring for the people of Murfreesboro in a way that few organizations can or will.

The establishment of the "Love Your Neighbor" picnic has allowed many people of different faiths, like me, to come to know our neighbors in Murfreesboro. I have met people from many different faiths at these picnics. I have played soccer with them and broken bread with them. We have come together and loved one another.

I am grateful for the Murfreesboro Muslim Youth, and the picnics, because through them I have met some of my closest friends in Murfreesboro. Through these organizations and events I was able to stand with my friends in the Murfreesboro Loves event as we stood against a planned rally for white supremacy in our city.

I have no reservations recommending the Murfreesboro Muslim Youth for help from any organization. They do good in our city. They care for people, especially the least of these, in our city. They show the love of God to me and to all of their neighbors.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Rev. Chris Warren

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