



February 7, 2022

Rt. Rev. Azad Marshall
President and Moderator
Church of Pakistan
Lahore, Pakistan

Dear Bishop:

We have learned with deep distress of the murder of Pastor William Siraj and the wounding of the Rev. Patrick Naeem by unidentified terrorists as they returned from worship in Peshawar on January 30. The General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church stands in solidarity with the Church of Pakistan and the families of the two servants of Christ in this time of loss and grief. We pray for Rev. Naeem's speedy recovery.

Too often your church experiences the sting of violence and the pangs of disrespect, a continuing tragedy for a peace-loving community. We pray that the assailants in this most recent attack will be apprehended and that the government will take action to protect the minority Christian population of Pakistan.

We join other Christians in commending the steadfast faith of the Church of Pakistan. The Rev. Dr. Ioan Sauca, acting general secretary of the World Council of Churches, has well said: "The life and witness of Christians in Pakistan deeply inspires people all over the world. Even in the challenging context of being a minority and often marginalized, Christians in Pakistan continue to be a blessing to the nation, significantly contributing to the wider Pakistani society." And a blessing to the church universal.

Global Ministries values its long-standing partnership with the Church of Pakistan. We have particularly close ties within the Diocese of Peshawar as a result of relationships established there following the 2014 massacre of some 90 worshippers at All Saints Church. We came to know and value Christians there devoted to justice and interfaith collaboration in Pakistan.

May God bless, prosper and protect the Christians of your land and bring peace to all the Pakistani people.

Together in God's mission,

Roland Fernandes
General Secretary