



Thank you to [Jeri Uhrich](#) for donating her photo.

WYOMING INTERFAITH NETWORK

"Safety and security don't just happen, they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children, the most vulnerable citizens in our society, a life free of violence and fear."

— Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa

Dear WIN Community:

I reach out to you today with a heavy heart in the wake of yet another school shooting, this time, in Santa Fe, Texas. I write today to share with you from my heart and from my life's work in children's health, mental health, education, and social services. I write to you with a sense of clarity and purpose as the director of this powerful network, made up of compassionate, loving humans who have committed to join together in prayer, discernment, leadership, advocacy, service and study for the good of the people.

At the Annual WIN Conference in October of 2017, WIN identified a focus on children and youth well-being as a priority for WIN. When I applied for the position of director of WIN, I felt inspired by WIN's mission and philosophy, as well as the vast possibilities to work with an organization brought together in

hope, humility, and compassionate strength to work together for good. I believe I was lead to WIN for many reasons. The most important of those reasons seems, today, to be WIN's commitment to children and youth.

It seems we are being called upon as a network to gather around our children, youth, and families, right now. May we draw upon our common humanity and the richness of our varied religious traditions that are deeper than our divisions, to help soothe these deep wounds of isolation, fear, trauma, depression, and loneliness and build safe, supportive, socially just and connected communities and spaces for all, where we grow, live, learn, work, play and pray. In all of my research and work, the power of relationships and connectedness seems to be a protective factor -- a key to health and well-being for all, especially our precious children.

I'm meeting with some potential funders, organizations, and faith community leaders in the next month to explore concrete ways for us to do this work together through WIN. I will report back to you soon with more information.

Meanwhile, I send love and hope for peace to you. May you find such comfort in your own connection with your Holy One, as well as in your own relationships with others in your communities.

With Gratitude and Peace,
Susie Markus

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