



AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF WISCONSIN

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The Board of Managers of the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin calls upon our churches as well as other related organizations and partners to be educated on the Hindutva movement (Hindu Nationalism) which believes that Hindu faith and culture should shape the politics and government of India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a Hindu Nationalist, under whose regime both anti-Islam and anti-Christian sentiment has become widespread. In May 2023 alone, 249 churches in the state of Manipur were burned to the ground resulting in the deaths of 120 people, all Christian and of an ethnic minority. Open Doors USA, a watchdog organization monitoring the persecution of Christians globally, ranked India as #10 in the world for the past four years. In the United States, Hindu nationalist groups have held fundraisers supported by U.S. lawmakers that include funding for “demolition of illegal churches.” Persecution of Muslims in India including destruction of mosques and beating of Muslims, along with other ethnic and religious minorities, is on the rise.

We call upon our churches as well as other partner organizations to raise awareness of U.S. support for Hindu Nationalism and to denounce and defund such actions. We stand with all persecuted people of faith and denounce nationalist views based on any religion, including Christian Nationalism in the United States. We call upon individuals and organizations to contact local legislatures to include caste as a form of discrimination in non-discrimination laws. We further call upon individuals to contact their elected officials to bring awareness of the human rights atrocities in India and the fundraising happening in the United States that specifically supports such acts of hate and terror, and to recommend that the U.S. Department of State designate India as “a particular country of concern.”

We support practicing Hindus and renounce any actions that interfere with free expression of religious belief. We support Hindus for Human Rights in their efforts to resist Hindu Nationalism and caste discrimination. As American Baptists, we recall that the First Baptist Church in America was founded by Roger Williams under our Baptist principle of separation of church and state. We believe no religion should shape politics or government in ways that control, dominate, oppress, persecute, harm, and destroy believers of any religion and their free exercise thereof. May we continue to pray for our Christian siblings in India as well as other religious minority groups, who are an example to us of the faith, “for in spite of persecution [they] received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit” (1 Thessalonians 1:6b).

Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell, Executive Minister
On behalf of The Board of Managers
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