



***St. Paul's Free Methodist Church  
813 E. College Ave.  
Greenville, IL 62246***

February 19, 2017

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Mother Emanuel:

We want to express our deep gratitude for your witness to us and the world since the martyrdom of your members in June 2015. Your witness stands with that of Christian martyrs across the centuries, and inspires us to live lives that are cross-shaped, for the glory of God. Your congregation has modeled for us the extravagant love of God as you have prayed for, received, embraced, and remained vulnerable to those who might seek to do you harm. By receiving the stranger you have faithfully imitated the self-emptying love and welcoming hospitality of Jesus. Like him, your martyrs died demonstrating God's love to the greatest possible extent.

We are in solidarity with you. We pray for you, weep with you, and stand with you. We thank God for the compelling power of your witness, and we pray that we will display your courage and steadfastness in the faith, should we ever face such evil. Thank you for showing us all the subversive power of forgiveness and mercy, and giving us hope for the healing our country and church so desperately need.

The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not, does not, overcome it. You are shining! And we praise God for you, and pray for you.

May the peace of Christ be with you!

The Board and Pastoral Staff of St. Paul's FMC