

Manchester Bombing Attack - a year on

North West Baptists will be among the many ordinary citizens across our region and beyond, who will come together in solidarity to mark the 1st anniversary of the Manchester Arena bombing. While we remain appalled and dismayed at the needless harm and loss of life that was inflicted that evening, the city of Manchester has resolutely defied the narratives of hate and division that such actions seek to sow. Amidst the inevitable grief of this poignant anniversary, we celebrate and affirm the many acts of human kindness and goodness that have emerged in its wake.

We continue to affirm faith as that which heightens our awareness of divine love and human goodness, and to renounce any attempt to use it to justify wickedness and harm. Such actions have no place in any civilised society or faith community.

As we offer our prayers and thoughts to everyone affected by this wicked act, let us also renew our resolve to work with all people of goodwill to build communities of hope, goodness and compassion - reflecting the values of God's Kingdom and the principles of love, kindness and self-giving on which our faith is founded.

Phil Jump – Regional Minister

A prayer, originally written in the days after the bombing has been adapted for use on this anniversary.

**God of endless love and unchanging truth,
Our hearts despair at the extent of human wickedness,
And the harm that some seem so intent on inflicting.
Yet we give you thanks that for every act of evil,
There are thousands of expressions of goodness
As human kindness and generosity always prevail.**

**We continue to pray for every life that has been damaged or lost;
For those whose mourning and despair remains;
For those who continue to provide care, support and healing,
And all who face the difficult task of protecting our communities,
And nurturing those values on which our well-being depends.**

**Help us to build a better world;
A world where difference is seen as an opportunity to broaden our understanding;
Disagreement as the chance to learn and grow,
Where faith is reclaimed
As that which brings out the best in us,
And turns our hearts to all that is good and true. AMEN**

