



# Knox United Church

*United by God's Love & Justice, Affirmed in a Community of Diversity*

17 January 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Brandon Islamic Centre in support of their application to receive charitable status under Canada Revenue Agency rules as a religious organization. I currently serve as the Minister of Knox United Church and Chair of the Assiniboine Presbytery in the United Church of Canada.

The Bradon Islamic Centre is an essential assest to the religious diversity of Brandon and the Westman region and is a vital community of faith that sustains our Muslim sisters and brothers - a growing population here. The community currently meets at 834 10th Street in Brandon and I have attended meetings and prayer services there. I am aware that they hold daily prayer services there and offer religious education for children, youth, and adults.

Knox has worked closely with members of the Brandon Islamic Centre in our work with providing support and sponsorship for Syrian refugees. Both current and past presidents of the Centre and its members have provided vital support as our community has organized to assist in providing a home for these new Canadians. The Islamic Centre serves as a spiritual and cultural oasis for these familes and I have first hand experience with seeing what a difference the centre makes in their lives. Members of the Centre have been active in partnering with us to provide clothing and household items, transportation, and counselling as refugee families arrive.

We have a number of international students who attend Brandon University, self-identify as Muslim, and are active in participating at the Islamic Centre. The Centre is also active in promoting religious education about Islam with its neighbours here in the Westman region and they have hosted multiple religious communities at their weekend events.

It is my privilege to be able to write on behalf of the Brandon Islamic Centre and I hope that their application will be expedited in order to support the religious and charitable work that is thriving at the Centre. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Rev. Craig S. Miller, Minister