**JOINT STATEMENT BY ECUMENICAL CHURCH LEADERS CONCERNING THE EVENTS IN SOUTHPORT ON 29TH JULY 2024**

As church leaders, and on behalf of those we represent, we share with others across our communities our sense of shock, sadness and horror at the events which took place in Southport on 29 July. Life is a precious gift, and for it to be taken from children so young is truly heartbreaking.

We offer our sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of all of those whose lives have been lost. We pray for those who remain critically ill and injured. We hold everyone affected by this awful event in our hearts and our prayers and call upon people of all faiths and none to come together to support them in whatever way we can.

We express our thanks to the members of the emergency services and to the medical professionals for their commitment and service in the face of this of this horrific attack.

We commit ourselves afresh to standing against brutality and violence in every form and doing all we can to build safe, caring and strong communities.

**Signatories**

Revd Dr Sheryl Anderson
*Chair, Liverpool Methodist District*

Rt Revd Julie Conalty
*Bishop of Birkenhead*

Revd Geoff Felton
*Moderator, Mersey Synod, The United Reformed Church*

The Very Revd Dr Sue Jones
*Dean of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral*

Revd Phil Jump
*Chair, Churches Together in Merseyside*Regional Minister, North West Baptist Association

Rt Revd Beverley A Mason
*Bishop of Warrington*

Most Reverend Malcolm McMahon OP
*Archbishop of Liverpool*

Rt Rev Tom Neylon
*Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Liverpool*

Canon Tony O’Brien
*Dean of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral*

Rt Revd Dr John Perumbalath
*Bishop of Liverpool*

Major David Taylor
*District Commander, Salvation Army North West Division*

**A Prayer for Southport**

The Christian leaders also offered a short prayer for anyone seeking consolation.

Gracious God,
Words alone cannot express our sadness and disbelief
Our heartbreak and anguish
When such precious lives are so brutally stolen.
We offer to you the cries of our own hearts
And pray for those families whose grief and loss
Is impossible to comprehend.
Help us all to cling to hope
Even amidst this senseless brutality.
Be close to all whose lives have been so cruelly scarred;
Surround them with your love;
Hold them fast in their sorrow,
And grant them strength amidst their unbearable pain.
We cannot escape our anger and devastation,
But choose to seek hope even amidst this darkness.
For all its horror, may it spur us even more
To never surrender to despair,
But build a world where peace, hope and love prevail.

*Amen*