



New Wilmington
Presbyterian Church
Deeper in Scripture • Wider in Service

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November 22, 2017

First Baptist Church
216 Fourth Street
Sutherland Springs, Texas 78161

Dear Members and Staff of First Baptist,

It is with great grief but also great respect that I write this letter to the staff and congregation of First Baptist Church. Writing on behalf of our congregation (authorized by our ruling elders to do so), I wish to express our congregation's deep sorrow over the recent shooting within the walls of your church and the death of so many members of your congregation.

We weep together over the loss of life, the loss of potential, and the suffering of your congregants and their families. We pray for those who died and for their families, for your church, and for Sutherland Springs. While we mourn today, our hope is in the ultimate power of God, using us as his hands, to make the world right so that one day justice might rain down like water.

We are a Presbyterian congregation of four hundred and fifty persons situated in a small, rural community in northwestern Pennsylvania, sixty miles north of Pittsburgh. In outward appearances, we might seem somewhat different from your congregation. However, our common faith in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ make us, the congregation and staff of New Wilmington Presbyterian Church and the members and staff of First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, part of a single community of believers, separated by miles, but joined by a common trust in God and hope in the resurrection. We can only imagine the struggle you face in formulating a plan for your congregation's future and offer prayers of support for your efforts. However, we are confident that God finds a way where there is no way.

While words are inadequate at times such as these, please accept this letter as a reflection of our congregation's sorrow and concern for your congregation and for your town. Please know that we will be praying for you and with you in the days ahead.

In Christ's love,

Timothy Cuff,
2017 Clerk of Session