



Press Statement (dated October 19, 2009)

We confirm that Rodney Watson is presently in the building at First United Church.

He came into this building on the evening of Friday September 18th and has joined about 150 other people who at this time use this building as a place of refuge while they and we work towards addressing some of the challenges that confront them.

We expect that the Authorities will continue to respect Churches and Temples as places of refuge and Sanctuary – as it has at First United Church in past months and years, and as it has specifically in the case of refugee claimants (currently at the First Lutheran Church and recently at the Surrey Guru Nanak Sikh Temple

We believe there is significant justification for welcoming Rodney who has sought sanctuary here, based on our faith and our history as a community. First United Church remains committed to and respectful of the due process of the law even as we seek to be true to our calling to uphold justice and fairness in all its dimensions.

Attached are details and background to Rodney Watson's circumstances.

In addition, the United Church of Canada's theological position on Sanctuary, on Conscientious Objection and on the Iraq war is attached.

Ric Matthews
Minister of the Mission and Community life

First United Church Mission

320 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 1P4
www.firstunited.ca

Tel: 604 681 8365 / Fax: 604 681 8928
mission.office@firstunited.ca