



Pride Winnipeg Festival
Pride of the Prairies
30th Anniversary
May 26 – June 4, 2017
#pridewpg

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement Concerning the Pulse Nightclub Shooting in Orlando

(Winnipeg, MB; June 12, 2016) – On the heels of a successful Pride celebration, Pride Winnipeg is shocked and saddened by this morning's killing and wounding of over 100 individuals attending the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, many of whom are part of the LGBTTTQ* community. While Orlando is over 3,000 kilometres away, the collective heart of Winnipeg's LGBTTTQ* community dropped as news broke of this senseless act of violence.

While mass shootings against the LGBTTTQ* community is rare in North America, it serves as a sobering reminder for the need for advocacy, education and celebration in communities locally and around the World. In Florida, the unconstitutionality of the ban on same-sex marriage was reaffirmed by a judge only a few months ago on March 31, 2016 after the State Government's reluctance to take action in supporting equal rights for same-sex couples.

Government and lawmaker actions provide a framework for LGBTTTQ* rights, however, true social change comes from the ground-up with individuals standing up for equality and inclusiveness. For example, today, the Ukrainian LGBTTTQ* community bravely came together to hold its first ever Pride march in Kiev, which took place without violence. Closer to home, local community members took the initiative to create Steinbach Pride Steinbach and will be hosting their first-ever Pride March on July 9th. Following this weekend's violence, it is our hope that the Florida community remains strong by banding together to create a groundswell for true social change as a follow-up to the ruling on same-sex marriage.

Pride Winnipeg will be holding a vigil on the steps of the Manitoba Legislature on Monday, June 13th at 8:30 pm as an act of solidarity and tribute to the Orlando LGBTTTQ* community. We invite all Manitobans who believe in equality to join us.

Pride Winnipeg – The Pride of the Prairies – is one of the largest celebrations between Toronto and Vancouver of LGBTTTQ* (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer, questioning, intersex, and pansexual) people and their allies, supporters and friends. Our mission is to affirm the lives of everyone by generating and participating in events that celebrate the history, culture, spirit and pride of people within the Winnipeg community. We invite everyone from far and wide to join our welcoming city and celebrate Pride in Winnipeg – the heart of the continent.

For more information about the Pride Winnipeg please visit www.pridewinnipeg.com.

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