



Response of Western Young Friends (Quaker) to National Rhetoric, Violence and Hateful Speech

Beth Burbank, Sunday 05 February 2017 - 14:22:10

Member Adrian Nelson, forwarded to Northside Friends Meeting a statement that is being sent out to Friends everywhere from Youngs Friends on the West Coast about the national rhetoric, violence and hateful speech that highlights both the nation's history and current mood as regards other communities of faith and national heritage. The full "Minute" is printed below. Northside Chicago Quakers are in accord with this document and will be attending events in Chicago this month that speak to these concerns. February 19th is the 75th Anniversary of the order signed by President Roosevelt to intern Japanese Americans during the Second World War. the Japanese American Service Center is sponsoring a commemorative event at the Chicago History Museum that afternoon. (See previous article) Also on the 19th, the Muslim Community Center at 4380 N Elston in Chicago is hosting an Open Mosque Day from 2:00-4:00 pm. Northside Quakers are encouraging Friends to attend one of these events. The full text of the Young Friends Minute follows:

"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning"--Luke 12:35 (NIV) Enduring the past year's national rhetoric, and watching the spread of violence and hateful speech, we see that we are in times that demand more from the Religious Society for any hope of love and justice and peace. As the Western Young Friends New Year's Gathering, we call on meetings of every size and kind to consider: How can we prepare for the times ahead? How can we join hands with other communities of faith, honor our tradition and history of action, and find courage in the face of fear? For five days at the closing of each year, this Gathering draws young Friends from along the West Coast and beyond to bring a small Quaker community into being. We create the community in which we wish to live, filled with peace and vitality. This takes loving labor, but we know, experimentally, that it is possible to live with intention while responding quickly to challenges. **Living in this possibility, we call on our elders, national Quaker organizations, and meetings at all levels to help us prepare ourselves to be the right tool in the hand of the Spirit for our times.** Because of these Gathered experiences, we understand that the process and strength that comes from unity can take time. This creates in us a sense of urgency to begin the work now. We offer our energy, ideas, and commitment to change; we ask that the broader Quaker community, including all branches, offer its wisdom and resources. We see faithful individuals and small groups acting on Quaker testimonies, with support from their respective meetings. But we of this Gathering hunger for action that we have not seen taken recently by *bodies* of Friends, actions equal or greater to anything we have done before. We ask that meetings heed this call to communal action, and discern their right collective contribution towards national and worldwide work. Although recent history shows the long arc bending toward justice, there is no guarantee that such a path is inevitable. It requires the work of many hands. George Fox asked: What canst thou say? We ask: What can *we do?*