

MIDLOTHIAN FRIENDS MEETING

CALL FOR THE END TO WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST INCLUDING THE SUSPENSION OF UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR THE STATE OF ISRAEL

As Quakers, we are called to answer “that of God in everyone.” We believe an Inner Light abides in each of us; that we are equal and interconnected. The Light lends us dignity and can lead us to grow and change. We rely on Quaker Testimonies to guide us and give public witness to our faith.

The Quaker Peace Testimony urges us to oppose violence in all forms. We know that war is never the path to peace. We are called to reconcile enemies and serve the needs of all sides torn by violence.

Our Testimony of Equality leads us to recognize and nourish the spiritual worth of each other, the universal right to live safely and without fear, and to act to end discrimination and injustice.

Our Testimony of Integrity calls us to authenticity and consistency between our values and actions, to speak and live according to the deepest truth we know.

We recognize that the State of Israel is not equivalent to the Jewish faith and believe that opposition to the policies of the State of Israel is not a condemnation of Jewish people.

All sovereign states have the right to self-defense, but none has the right to violate international and humanitarian laws.

We oppose the violence perpetrated by the State of Israel against Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. We abhor its military attacks, starvation campaigns, mass displacement, settler violence, and agricultural destruction. These are not instances of isolated injustice; they are the continuation of a 78-year history of displacement and denial of Palestinian human rights. The United States directly and indirectly funds these atrocities, persecutes protestors under the guise of combating antisemitism, and protects the State of Israel from international sanctions.

Remaining silent makes us complicit.

We further oppose the sudden initiation of a war threatening the destruction of Iran by the United States and the State of Israel.

Finally, we oppose the campaign of devastation and occupation of Lebanon by the State of Israel.

We call for:

- Immediate ceasefire by all parties to the violence in the Middle East followed by good-faith negotiations leading to a permanent and just peace in the region.
- Open borders allowing the free flow of food, water, healthcare, and other essential services to displaced people and all victims of violence in the Middle East.
- Adherence to international law and accountability by all parties to these conflicts.
- Suspension of financial and military support (including arms sales and transfers, and military intelligence) by the United States to the State of Israel until it ends its assault on Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon and Iran.
- Protection of free speech, free press, and the right to protest by all parties to these conflicts.

We “Hold in the Light” all people suffering from violence and trauma in the Middle East. We hold in our hearts the oppressed and the oppressor, the prisoner and the guard, the soldier and their enemy, the vengeful and the peacemaker. We long for transformation in those who believe that disputes over ideology and resources legitimize violence.