

## **ACT OF WITNESS TO THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT TRUMP TO SCOTLAND**

Note from an informal meeting held online 7pm on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

18 Friends have met online to discuss holding an act of witness at the time of the expected visit of President Donald Trump to Scotland to meet the King. This follows General Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2025 on the theme of peacebuilding. Minute 25/03/14 (Peacebuilding in dark times) included the following paragraph:

“A Friend has asked us if we have opportunity together to cultivate acts of resistance when American President Donald Trump visits the King in Scotland. The clerk will arrange for an online informal meeting for those interested in taking this idea further.”

The clerk has heard of three Friends unable to attend this evening.

This initial meeting seeks to bring together those interested in the idea of witness. It is an informal meeting and we will assess the desire to do this, and how.

We have heard a suggestion of presenting a letter to the President to share viewpoints. It would be good to be able to do this in collaboration with other churches and faiths, and we should liaise with known contacts, such as in Christian Aid, and our representatives (see page iv of the Book of Members & Attenders). As Friends we would see this as a welcome to an elected leader with a mandate, invited by our Government, but a welcome that must speak to the need of the stranger in the midst.

Nonetheless, several of us are conflicted over the idea of welcoming Donald Trump, a person who makes us so angry in the frightening manner in which he acts. We do have opportunity to say something to express our values. We recognise our Quaker validity of seeking to reach all people. We have read, very helpfully, part of *Quaker faith & practice* 24.09.

Our ideas may evolve in the planning. We do see opportunity in publicising any letter or statement and ensure it is copied to our own Government as well. Combining it with some kind of visual motif would be more likely to attract attention. It could also be read out the Sunday before the President arrives. We have also heard of the need for some public prayer and worship where we could hold up the voices of those who are suffering, in America, here and in all the areas of conflict in the world. We might even seek a public sermon along the lines of that given by the Bishop Mariann Budde of Washington at the time of the President's inauguration. Such publicity might influence the visit positively.

The next stage would be to set up a working group to take ideas forward. We have the names of Alastair Cameron, Elizabeth Colwell, Cath Dyer, and Rosemary Hartill will hold the initial meeting, publicising it to others who might wish to join.

Michael Hutchinson, Clerk GMS