

## ECUMENICAL/INTERFAITH APPEAL (visit of President Trump)

**Minute** 25/03/14 of General Meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (Peacebuilding in dark times) included this 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.

A meeting was called and held and an informal group has been working on an interfaith ecumenical appeal to those in power in response to any visit of President Trump. Susan Mitchell, Assistant GM clerk, has been part of this and reports here.

### Background

This draft appeal to those in power is offered by Quakers to our partners as a framework for further reflection, response and amendment.

The intention is to provide a short, simple, but newsworthy, statement at the time of the 2025 visit of the President of the US.

Our hope is for it to be communicated as widely as possible, and ideally read in the same week in places of worship just before the visit. We envisage it being preceded by a short prayer *[for example in some Christian denominations: May these words and the meditation of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, oh God, for you are our strength and our Redeemer. Amen]* and possibly followed by a sermon or teaching or reflective silence, depending on the faith tradition and context.

We acknowledge the example set to us by Bishop Mariann Budde, who spoke with courage, wisdom and insight at a service for the inauguration of the President.

.....  
**DRAFT**

Dear friends, these words to you all today come to you today not just from me [ie whoever is reading the address], as a minister /representative/leader of 'x' faith community/denomination, but from the leaders of a series of religious groups in Scotland. The same words are also being shared today and this week, in person, in newsletters, and online by ...[names of the various faiths and Christian denominations].

There are so many good and kindly things happening in our communities. Thank you for all you are doing to be a guiding light to others who may need healing or help at this time. Thank you for the peacemakers, thank you for those of you who are pure in heart. You are blessed.

The religious leaders have come together to speak in unity at this time, because around the world, in our own country and many others, things are not always what we long for.

This week, we have a particular opportunity to reflect on our shared values and vision for the world, thanks to the visit of the President of the US.

As spokespeople for Christian and other faiths, we seek to welcome all, seeking to hold each person in the light as best we can and to come to a deeper understanding.

In that spirit, and for the good of the world, we make an important appeal today.

We build on words spoken at the service in Washington for the inauguration of the President.

We see the immense power and influence of those in positions of government. For the good of the world, as people of Christian and other faiths, we appeal to *all* leaders, politicians and representatives to honour every human being and creature with respect and empathy.

We also ask *all* leaders, politicians and representatives for truth and integrity in private and public conversation and exchanges. We ask in particular for integrity in online information provision. We may not always know the truth, but when we do, we need to speak the truth, especially when it costs us to do so.

And we ask *all* leaders, politicians and representatives for the humility which comes from seeing that all beings are of equal significance and are interconnected.

Sharing this statement simultaneously in different ecumenical and interfaith contexts is intentional and significant, speaking to our unity in what matters.

In making this appeal, we affirm the central teaching of all great faith and ethical traditions - that actions speak louder than words, whatever form those words take. Faith is shown in our loving actions, not our words.

We also believe that all of us, whoever we are, not just leaders, is called to build bridges rather than act in ways which deepen division. Do we live in a way which increases suffering, or alleviates it? Do we live in a way which builds or destroys trust?

We are each required to look deeply into our life at this time. Where are the seeds of conflict in our own heart, our home, our neighbourhood, our workplace? We know that we do not have to look too deeply to find judgement of others in our hearts. The harder task is to see the seeds of discord and aggression in ourselves, and intentionally cultivate seeds of peace and compassion.

In silence, we can ask ourselves what kind of world we really want to live in, and then seek to bringing it into being, one action at a time.

In 1943, in the depth of war, Quakers were looking ahead to the peace to come. Our governing body made this statement: *True peace cannot be dictated, it can only be built in co-operation between all peoples ... (The) way of peace ... requires that men and nations should recognise their common brotherhood, using the weapons of integrity, reason, patience and love, never acquiescing in the ways of the oppressor, always ready to suffer with the oppressed... Now is the time ... to declare our willingness to make sacrifices... for the common good* (Quaker Faith and Practice 24.09)

We ask for the strength and courage to be a guiding Light, to honour all beings with respect and empathy, to speak truth to one another in love and integrity, and walk humbly with each other and our God for the good of all.

**Possible news item on these lines:**

Shortly before the arrival in Scotland of the President of the US, faith leaders in Scotland - Christian and other faiths - have issued an unusual collective appeal to all leaders, politicians and representatives. It supports themes highlighted in the sermon at Donald Trump's inauguration by the Bishop of Washington, Mariann Budde.

In a statement to be read out this week in numerous places of worship, the religious leaders appeal to all those in power to honour every human being and creature with respect and empathy. They ask for truth and integrity in private and public conversation and exchanges, particularly online. And they ask those in power for the humility which comes from seeing that all beings are of equal significance and are interconnected

The religious leaders say they seek to welcome all, seeking to come to a common understanding. They urge each of us to build bridges rather than act in ways which deepen division.

President Trump arrives on [whatever day]. His schedule includes meeting religious leaders or worshipping [or not]

Susan Mitchell May 2025