

Worship and Action Update, 3/19/03

Dear Friends in New York Yearly Meeting:

We are part of this world and these times. We are linked with people around the globe. God flows through all people.

We grieve with one another at the unfolding history of which we are a part. We may be in tears with pain and fear and frustration and loss. We suffer knowing that consequences are to be borne much more by some than by others.

Even as we experience our emotions, we can be vessels or channels of the Light. We can open ourselves to forgiveness, reconciliation, and creative initiative. We may influence and sustain one another as we engage events. As we make our choices today and tomorrow and tomorrow, we can uphold one another.

We seek truth and caring. We long for the relief of truth telling in public affairs.

We hear a new call. A great outpouring of love and concern has welled up and shone forth around the world. These are our times.

We are called to seek and live clear commitments. We can invite others to change out of our own openness and commitment.

We are called to repair the world, to mend our broken relationships and communities, to attend to our local and global households.

Meeting together, we can listen together. We can uphold one another in responding. We can open ourselves to change. These days filled with energy and care are a good time for the world to move to a new level of purpose, a new clarity of direction.

We begin in worship; we continue in shared worship. Let each of us name times and find ways to gather daily in worship: lighting candles at 7:00 A.M.; joining hands before meals; sharing quiet time and vigils with fellow workers and neighbors; gathering with others in their churches for morning or evening prayer.

Meetings' Plans to Worship

Many Meetings are making plans to gather in worship on the evening war begins. Friends in New York Yearly Meeting are organizing to open meetinghouses for daily or frequent times of worship and sanctuary during these difficult days. And we continue to gather with friends, neighbors, and new friends in vigils of peace, as many did this past Sunday evening in response to the call of Bishop Desmond Tutu.

March in New York City on Saturday

On Saturday, March 22nd, commencing at noon, a March for Peace and Democracy organized by United for Peace and Justice will be held in New York City. The march will

proceed from the Times Square area (just south of 42nd Street) down Broadway to Washington Square Park (in Greenwich Village). A minute of silence will be celebrated at 2:00 P.M. While there will be no speeches or other planned program, and people will be asked to leisurely disperse after arriving at Washington Square Park, all are encouraged to carry banners and signs (no wooden sign poles) and to make music and a joyful noise as they march.

Fifteenth Street Meeting invites Friends to join with them in worship on Saturday morning from 10:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. in preparation for the march.

United for Peace and Justice asks participants to assemble at noon on Broadway and the cross streets between 35th and 41st Streets. Friends are invited to gather on 37th Street between Broadway and Sixth Avenue, where religious groups will be assembling.

United for Peace and Justice has announced that the March will proceed whether or not war has begun, and will not be canceled for any reason. (If New York City withdraws the permit, however, marchers may wish to consider that they could be engaging in an act of civil disobedience.) (Additional information is being posted continuously on United for Peace and Justice's Web site at: www.unitedforpeace.org.)

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To give ourselves to what we trust and believe in is joy. We know this joy in our lives as lovers and parents and children and teachers and learners and workers. Let us share news of our joys; let us invite one another into that Life and Power which takes away the occasion of war. Let us encourage one another by joining together and by sharing news of our worship and our actions.

What life commitment, large or small, do we make?
What hope for change do we speak?
How are we acting toward a new way forward?

We can listen and act in the strength of love and truth which abides, which does not change. Let us uphold one another as we seek through daily practice to become, provide, and bear witness to the peace the world so longs for. God flows through us here and now.

Peaceable Greetings,

Linda Chidsey, Vicki Cooley, Fred Dettmer
NYYM Worship & Action working group

"The God of life summons us to life; more, to be lifegivers, especially toward those who lie under the heel of the powers."

Daniel Berrigan