

## Interim Actions

Report by the Clerk and General Secretary to Spring Sessions, 2016

Dear Friends in France,

Our hearts go out to you in this time of grief, loss, and deep heartache. At times like this, words fall short. But please know that we are with you in spirit, sending you our love and prayers.

Having also experienced a devastating attack by terrorists firsthand, we feel we have some sense of what you may be going through. We will be praying for you in the days ahead, that you are able to keep your hearts open in love while so many around you are gripped by fear and thoughts of vengeance. May you, in these terrible times, sow the seeds of love and healing in your stunned and wounded land.

In Loving Solidarity,

Lucinda Antrim, Clerk  
Christopher Sammond, General Secretary  
New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

March 27, 2016

Dear Lucinda and Christopher,

It's very kind of you and New York Meeting to think of Belgium and Belgian Friends. As far as I know no Friends were killed or injured in the bombings, though I do know of two Friends who have friends who are still in intensive care. The nephew of the office manager at the Quaker Council for European Affairs was in the Maelbeek subway train, but escaped uninjured. We are holding the dead, the injured, the emergency services, and their friends and families in the Light. We are, like the rest of Brussels, and Belgium, still considering how we relate to our city's crowded spaces, and how to resist the fear that might change our behaviour. I have found myself very reluctant to go into the city centre for shopping or the cinema, for example, which feels wrong. We'll recover!

I'll send your message out to BLYM [*Belgium and Luxembourg Yearly Meeting*] Friends tomorrow.

In Friendship,  
Kate Macdonald

March 25, 2016

Dear Friends in Belgium,

Our hearts are with you. We mourn for those lost and pray for the friends and families they left behind. We anxiously wait with you, remembering the slow sad dawning of realization in New York's 9/11 aftermath that those missing were among those lost. Healing for all may seem far away, but we pray for it, and we dwell deep with you, waiting for words of wisdom to emerge. We deeply grieve for our world, that humans have not yet learned to live "in the virtue of that life and power that [takes] away the occasion of all wars." And yet we are grateful that we share this vision with you, and share with you the words of this hymn, "The Servant Song."

We are pilgrims on the journey  
We are sisters and brothers on the road  
We are here to help each other  
Walk the mile and bear the load

I will hold the Christ light for you  
In the night time of your fear  
I will hold my hand out to you  
Speak the peace you long to hear.

In Loving Solidarity,

Lucinda Antrim, Clerk  
Christopher Sammond, General Secretary  
New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends