

**West Knoxville Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
1517 Meeting House Road / Knoxville, TN 37931 USA / (865)-694-0036**

**Minute on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
December 2, 2018**

"We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever; and this is our testimony to the whole world. ... [T]hat the spirit of Christ, which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world."

--George Fox and others (1660)

The humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear war on any scale are existential in scope and nature. According to Physicians for Social Responsibility, a "medical response to a nuclear attack would be inadequate—any use of nuclear weapons would have devastating health, humanitarian and environmental consequences ... a meaningful medical response to any use of nuclear weapons would be impossible. We can't prepare for nuclear war, we must prevent it."

Quakers are recognized as one of the historic peace churches with a long history of opposition to war and, since the 1950s, activism on behalf of nuclear disarmament. As Quakers and as the monthly meeting of Friends closest to the massive plant in nearby Oak Ridge that manufactures essential components of every nuclear weapon in the U.S. arsenal, we feel a special moral responsibility to speak out in favor of recent efforts by the United Nations to insure a nuclear weapons-free world.

Thus, West Knoxville Friends join with other Friends' Meetings and Quaker organizations in calling on the U.S. government to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We further urge our government to use its influence to lead other countries with nuclear weapons to also sign the Treaty so that disarmament will be multilateral.

As to our responsibilities, we concur with the following statement recently released by a diverse group of faith communities, including AFSC (American Friends Service Committee) and FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation):

"It is now vital that the principles and norms of this Treaty be widely disseminated among the world's peoples in order to achieve its universal adoption and implementation. As people of faith we accept as our special responsibility the work of raising awareness of the risks and consequences of nuclear weapons for current and future generations, awakening public conscience to build a global popular constituency in support of the Treaty in order to achieve and sustain a world free from nuclear weapons."

Living in proximity to Oak Ridge, we think it is important to affirm that our support for the UN Treaty does not reflect a general aversion to science or nuclear technologies in particular, both of which we believe can be and has been put to great positive use in the service of life. We further acknowledge the importance of having good jobs for people of our region. We look to the day when our region is home to a thriving peace economy in which science and various technologies are used to enhance the health and well-being of all people and Earth itself in a world free of nuclear weapons.

Presented at Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, 2 Dec 2018. "Friends approved the minute on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. A Friend stood aside because of conflicted feelings concerning the George Fox quote at the opening of the minute." (Minute 2018-12-07)