

## **Statement Concerning Recent National Events**

### **Westtown Monthly Meeting**

*Sunday, January 17, 2021*

From the early years of Quakerism, Friends have felt themselves called to make public statements on current affairs. We offer this statement in that spirit.

We, the members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) of Westtown Monthly Meeting, are committed both to upholding the equal rights of every member of our society and to the search for truth. When we comport our lives with integrity, there is a fundamental integration of our beliefs and harmony in the manner in which we act in daily life.

Our founding principles as a nation are under grave assault as both truth and our very democracy are at stake.

On January 6, 2021, armed rioters, enflamed by false rhetoric claiming a stolen election, carried flags symbolizing white supremacy and anti-Semitism into the halls of Congress and attempted to stop the orderly transfer of presidential power. This deadly insurrection drew strength from language and symbols intended to denigrate and harm members of our national community. It was a tragic breach of our most cherished values.

Racism and a belief in white supremacy are closely interwoven in these assaults on democracy. When coupled with violence as a means to an end, they threaten both our system of government and our fundamental belief that every person has the right not only to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, but also to participation in our democracy through fair and open elections. The integrity of the 2020 election has been certified by local, state, and national authorities, and challenges to those findings have been dismissed by courts across the nation, including the United States Supreme Court.

As we commemorate the life and work of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and as we witness the transition of power in our government, we recommit ourselves to realizing Reverend King's vision, articulated in his 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech and in his belief that the moral arc of the universe is long, and it bends towards justice. That trajectory can happen only when our actions make it so.

We ask every faith community and every individual in our society to join us in affirming equality and truth, principles which are essential to a healthy, flourishing society.