

Minute from Duluth Superior (MN) Friends Meeting – Approved Nov. 5, 2023

We members of the Duluth Superior Friends Meeting (Quakers) call publicly, strongly, and urgently to advocate for a ceasefire, restraint, and strict adherence to international laws against civilian harm in the current violence in Israel and Gaza.

Duluth Superior Friends Meeting is heartbroken by the escalating violence in Israel and Palestine. War, including occupation and terrorism, causes suffering and harm to people on all sides. We call for restraint and de-escalation in the current situation, putting human lives first as a consideration. And we urge thoughtful solutions that address the root causes of this conflict.

We strongly condemn the past and recent Hamas attacks and also the indiscriminate, brutal response from Israel. Both show a callous disregard of innocents.

The root causes of this conflict are well known. The long history of this region and current conditions reach back to centuries-old conflicts, the horrifying attempted genocide of Jewish people during World War II (and throughout history), and the displacement of Palestinian people and current 16-year blockade imprisoning the people in Gaza, as well as the ongoing military-enforced control of Palestinians in the West Bank. We must also take a critical look at our country's military aid and how it perpetuates this conflict.

We recognize the humanity of all peoples of Palestine and Israel. As Quakers, we also believe the light of God resides in everyone, and violence against people cannot be acceptable.

We call for an immediate ceasefire from Israel and Palestine.

We call for basic needs to be provided to Gazans.

We call on the U.S. to provide only humanitarian support to Israel and Gaza.

The miracle of healing, the miracle of community, can only happen when guns and bombs are silenced. Retribution is not going to change the situation. Restorative justice and reconciliation are the hard work that may finally bring some peace to the region. It won't be easy, and it will require all of us to re-examine and perhaps change our priorities and opinions.