

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NY, NJ, and CT Quakers Condemn Anti-Asian Violence

Anti-Asian violence is anathema to Quaker beliefs of equality, justice, and peace

[April 2, 2021; New York, NY] New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) strongly condemns recent anti-AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) violence. The recent shooting of eight people – six of them women of Asian descent – in Atlanta has made this urgent declaration necessary. The racial and misogynist aspects of this crime cannot be ignored. Quakers cannot be silent in the face of anti-AAPI violence or allow anti-Asian bias to permeate our society.

Quakers answer the question, “what can people do?”

- First, awareness needs to be raised about the forms and history of anti-Asian bias and violence. There needs to be broader education about the lynching and mass murder of Chinese workers in the 19th century, the ongoing stereotyping of AAPIO immigrants including the hypersexualizing of Asian women, the conflating of all AAPIO nationalities as having the same values and cultures, and countless other forms of ignorance and misunderstanding of Asians in America.
- Second, anti-AAPIO speech and attitudes should be called out when they are encountered. People can choose to be activists for safety, for a just society that provides full inclusion for AAPIO, for a community that makes no one the “other.”
- Third, people can prepare themselves to intervene if they witness a bias incident. This article helps to prepare people to disrupt harassment in progress: [American Friends Service Committee guidance on bystander intervention](http://www.afsc.org/bystanderintervention) (www.afsc.org/bystanderintervention)
- Fourth, acknowledge that anti-AAPIO violence is part of racism in America. The system of White Supremacy in the United States is strengthened by division among oppressed groups. To counter this system, we must encourage mutual support and unity. (Some organizations working on this are standtogethersf.org, www.tsuruforsolidarity.org, www.ihollaback.org). Until everyone is safe from violence, no one is safe.

Quakers believe that all people contain a divine spark

Quakers believe that the Light of the Spirit, or God, is within everyone, and we are all connected. Violence against a person is violence against God. Through the testimony of non-violence, Quakers

affirm the divine Light in every human being and the need to act on the belief that truth and love can overcome ignorance and hate.

The work of anti-racism is for everyone, no matter their skin color, gender, or cultural orientation. Quakers encourage everyone to ask themselves, “how can I become more aware, how can I prepare myself to act, and what actions are mine to take?”

About New York Yearly Meeting

New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is the organization encompassing the Quaker meetings (congregations) in New York State, northern New Jersey, and southwestern Connecticut. First established in 1695, New York Yearly Meeting currently has approximately 3,000 members. It is called a “yearly meeting” because its members gather annually to consider the work laid upon it by God’s Holy Spirit. For more information about the yearly meeting, visit www.nyym.org or call 212-673-5750.

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