

Minute of Declaration and Commitment of the Ujima Friends Meeting

In an act of declaration and commitment, we, a people of African descent, our families and friends, respond to the movement of the Spirit among us to form Ujima Friends Meeting within the Religious Society of Friends. Ujima Friends Meeting is a community of faith without borders, dedicated to bearing witness to peace, justice, and love.

We are a worshipping community of people of African descent who come together in the liberatory spirit of Ujima, recognizing that our brothers' and sisters' problems are our problems and committing to solving them together.

We recognize the power and richness of the historical and cultural heritage that nurtures our African centered experience among Friends. We gather together out of this common experience: the spiritual experience of the divine Light in everyone, regardless of social status, and the cultural experience, not of being born in Africa, but of Africa being born in us.

We celebrate the transformative leading of the divine Spirit which brought forth the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent in 1990, the Ujima Friends Peace Center in 2017, and which now calls us into an interconnected and independent spiritual community. We affirm our faith as Friends in this spiritual path that lifts up our common humanity, the direct guidance of the Spirit and the continuing revelation of Truth.

As people of the African diaspora within the Religious Society of Friends, we continue to endure the social insult and practical indifference of the settler colonial enslavement culture which infects the western religious experience. With this act of kujichagulia (self-determination), we establish a spiritual and cultural space to protect ourselves from the undue influences that would attempt to define the character of our worship and our work. We will not be exclusive, yet we also will not allow ourselves to be dominated. We will be vigilant against intrusions motivated by curiosity, the desire to correct or control, or the wish for absolution from ancestral guilt.

We gather after the manner of Friends, establishing an open and meditative space, without hierarchy or judgment, dogma or creed; a space where we can breathe, worship, listen and respond to the call of the Spirit. We are confident that through the inspiration of intentional silence and spontaneous prayer, music and song, we will be led to right action; action that bears witness to the liberation of this planet and all of its people, particularly those who are disinherited, suffering and oppressed.

With gratitude to God, who has been both Mother and Father, we stand on the shoulders of the spiritual ancestors who came before us, those whose work and whose lives continue to lead us toward this way. Inspired by the teachings of Jesus, we place our time and our resources on the altar of service for others. At the same time, we gratefully acknowledge our own need to be encouraged and supported by this Ujima Friends Meeting community as we travel on the journey of life together.

*Ujima Friends Meeting
June 20, 2021*