

MORAL MONDAY

Declaration of Nonviolence & Prayer of Commitment

For Moral Monday Against Unholy War and Societal Violence

Scripture

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” — Isaiah 2:4 / Micah 4:3

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” — Matthew 5:9

Voices for Nonviolence

“Starving a child is violence. Suppressing a culture is violence. Neglecting school children is violence. Discriminating against a working man is violence. Ghetto housing is violence. Ignoring medical need is violence. Contempt for poverty is violence.”

— Coretta Scott King

“The greatest challenge of the day is how to bring about a revolution of the heart — a revolution which has to start with each one of us.” — Dorothy Day

Declaration

In this season, we re-dedicate ourselves to the work of love, truth-telling, and justice, and to the methodology of moral fusion: moral analysis, moral agenda-building, and moral nonviolent action. We are committed to challenging the violence in our society — both at home and abroad. Nonviolence is not weakness. It is courageous power — the commitment that ensures violence is never seen as the answer and will never have the last word. Moral nonviolent action is a commitment to the salvation of the soul of the nation and the world.

The violence that must be challenged with every nonviolent and moral effort possible is our most urgent consideration now:

- War is unholy and violent
- Demeaning entire cultures is violence
- Denying human beings fundamental human rights is violence
- Political leaders refusing to vote against unjust, unnecessary war is violence
- Systemic racism, systemic poverty, low wages, and ecological devastation are forms of violence
- Denial of health care, militarization of our communities, and violation of equal protection

under law are forms of violence
Violence is an impure spirit seeking to occupy every corner of our society. We must raise a moral critique, a moral challenge, and a nonviolent confrontation.

Nonviolence is not an “opting out” of the struggle against this world’s injustices; it is an “opting-in” — training and preparation for a force more powerful than fists or guns, bombs, or total war.

Our moral movement must invest in recruiting and training young people for nonviolence. The U.S. military spends billions recruiting poor and marginalized youth, sponsoring games and events that promote violence. As we escalate our moral witness at congressional offices, we pledge to be a space where young people can gather with elders who know the power of nonviolence and make a public profession as conscientious objectors. We must challenge any system where our youth risk being devoured by a war machine serving the selfish interests of billionaires.

The Pledge

- I commit to walk in the power of love, truth-telling, and justice.
- I reject every myth that claims a world can be built by destroying my enemies, and I affirm every tradition that teaches life is a gift.
- In gratitude for the gift of my life, and knowing service is the rent we pay for our space here on earth, I commit to nonviolent struggle against every form of violence.
- I refuse to accept the violence that starves a child, denies someone healthcare, keeps people in poverty, denies people a place to belong, or says some people do not deserve the respect that the inherent dignity of every person demands.
- I understand the power of love in action. My resistance to violence is not passive.
- I commit to using every nonviolent tool available to resist evil and build beloved community.
- I will pursue truth by speaking directly with people whose actions I oppose.
- I will petition my representatives and engage in

mass education through nonviolent protest, vigils, marches, and mass assemblies.

- I will exercise the nonviolent tool of voting, and work to educate, register, and mobilize voters alienated from the democratic process.
- I will keep my intentions pure through fasting, prayer, meditation, and self-reflection as means of fighting the violence within me.
- I will refuse to cooperate with evil, and I will join others in boycotts, strikes, sit-ins, pray-ins, stand-ins, and shut-downs.
- I commit to engaging in nonviolent civil disobedience to resist evil.
- I make this pledge in the company of a beloved community, trusting that the power of love, truth-telling, and justice — working through me and others like me — can transform the world that is into the world that ought to be.

The Many Forms of Moral Nonviolent Action

Prayer can be a form of nonviolent direct action — and we will use it.

Preaching can be a form of nonviolent, moral direct action — and we will use it.

Protest can be a form of nonviolent moral action — and we will use it.

Organizing is a form of nonviolent moral action — and we will use it.

Litigation is a form of nonviolent moral action — and we will use it.

Agitation is a form of nonviolent moral action — and we will use it.

Voter education and mobilization is a form of nonviolent moral action — and we will use it.

Nonviolent civil disobedience is a form of moral direct action — and we will use it.

The Prayer

We pray and commit, declaring our decision to engage in a season of moral nonviolent direct action — right here, right now. We seek the strength of the Almighty. We hear the deep call of the moral arc of the universe requiring us to act in this moment.

Holy One. Spirit of Life. Sacred Presence at the center of what is true and what endures.

We pray and commit ourselves right now — in the midst of unholy war of choice, threats to annihilate entire civilizations, bombs falling on innocent people whose names we will never know. In the midst of leaders claiming messiah-like status to

promulgate war. In the midst of budgets that rob the poor, choose weapons over children, war over care, domination over life. In the midst of violence that boldly reached into a room full of journalists and officials and reminded us, again, that the spirit of destruction does not know how to contain itself.

We pray and declare and commit to nonviolence — not in despair, but in defiance.

Holy One, help us remain defiant.

Defiant of the lie that this is the best we can do.

Defiant of the myth that violence is strength.

Defiant of the silence that complicity calls peace.

We ask for the gift of steadiness. Steady us when the headlines try to break us. Steady us when grief arrives before we have finished mourning. Steady us when we are afraid. Steady us when we are angry enough to lose our discipline. Steady us when power tries to exhaust us into giving up.

We ask for the courage to confront without cruelty. The wisdom to resist without reproducing what we resist. The discipline to turn outrage into strategy, strategy into action, action into change.

We pray for journalists under threat. For families living under bombs they did not choose. For the poor, who bear the heaviest cost of every war and every cut. For young people recruited into violence before anyone offered them purpose. For veterans honored in rhetoric and neglected in policy. For communities whose survival depends on whether anyone in power remembers they exist.

We pray for ourselves — that we will not grow weary. That we will stay with this work tomorrow, and the day after. That we will take care of one another well enough to keep going. That we will be honest about our limits and generous about our gifts.

We make this prayer as people who have agreed that this moment, this movement, this moral demand — requires us.

May the courage we need be already rising in us.

May the connections we make today hold us through what is coming.

May the world we are building become more visible with every act of disciplined love.

May every conscience in this place be steadied, sharpened, and sent.

Amen. And may it be so.

Forward Together. Not One Step Back.