

## Meeting of Friends of Ukraine

15 December 2024

in Kyiv, online

8 Friends present.

### Agenda

1. Creation of a media committee
2. Principles of charitable activity
3. Peace and social witness
  - 3.1. Witness on a peaceful end to the war
  - 3.2. Witness against torture
  - 3.3. Support for Friends persecuted for being true to Quaker peace testimony
  - 3.4. Witness on blood donation
  - 3.5. Witness on solidarity with the civil society of Ukraine
  - 3.6. Witness on support to human rights defenders
  - 3.7. Witness on help to starving children in Pakistan
4. Ukrainian spelling of the name of the Religious Society of Friends

### Discernment

#### **1. Creation of a media committee**

We are establishing a media committee to disseminate information about Quaker religion and life in the media, including social media. This is a standing committee which, together with the clerk, will carry out its functions using all available channels of communication. All Friends who are interested in taking part in the care of media witness are invited to join the media committee by contacting the meeting or the clerk. We appointed Artem Denysov, Oleksandr Ivanov, Yurii Sheliashenko, and Serhii Vedmediev to the media committee.

#### **2. Principles of charitable activity**

Charitable activities of members of the Meeting of Friends of Ukraine are carried out individually at their own will, including when the participants of the meeting act in joint efforts. Any form of "tithing," any requirement for mandatory or regular donations or contributions, is contrary to Quaker testimony.

Charitable support for good causes consistent with the Quaker testimony is associated with the hope of upholding the following principles.

Support should be desired and not imposed.

Support must be effective, that is, we care about the efficacy of support and practical benefit, the real achievement of good goals. Also, if there are different ways to achieve good goals, we aim to support the best of such ways.

The work for a good cause that we support must be transparent and accountable. We may ask for financial documents, performance reports, personal testimonies from aid recipients and other factual evidence of the achievement of good goals and proper use of our donations.

We welcome ministries and personal example regarding charitable activities, as well as honest expressions of confidence or uncertainty in following the principles and addressing concerns expressed in order to succeed in charitable activity.

### **3. Peace and social witness**

#### **3.1. Witness on a peaceful end to the war**

We ask our clerk to address the President of Ukraine with a letter about Quaker support for the Christmas truce on the condition that the Russian side stops a full-scale invasion and withdraws troops, as well as about support for nuclear neutrality - Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to prevent nuclear war, which threatens the survival of Ukrainians and humanity as a whole, to reduce the risks related to Ukraine's possible accession to NATO and to promote cessation of Russian aggression.

#### **3.2. Witness against torture**

We ask our clerk to address the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, MPs, diplomatic missions regarding the need to improve the national preventive mechanism and introduce changes to the legislation of Ukraine to prevent torture and inhumane treatment in the context of military mobilization.

#### **3.3. Support for Friends persecuted for being true to Quaker peace testimony**

We are concerned by messages that Andrii Vyshnevetsky and Artem Denysov may face persecution for their adherence to the Quaker peace testimony. We ask that the Care Committee, together with our Clerk, keep in touch with all Friends who are or may be persecuted because of their adherence to the Quaker Peace Testimony, and to give Friends the necessary support and inform the Meeting of the situation.

#### **3.4. Witness on blood donation**

We approve and publish on the website of the Meeting of Friends of Ukraine Artem Denysov's testimony about serving society through blood donation.

#### **3.5. Witness on solidarity with the civil society of Ukraine**

We welcome all manifestations, consistent with Quaker faith and practice, of public solidarity of the Meeting of Friends of Ukraine with the civil society of Ukraine. We were pleased to participate in the Civil Society Development Forum in Kyiv.

### **3.6. Witness on support to human rights defenders**

We maintain support of human rights movement by the Meeting of Friends of Ukraine. We were pleased to support by donation the Center for Civil Liberties.

### **3.7. Witness on help to starving children in Pakistan**

We welcome decision of a Friend to make a Christmas donation to help starving children in Pakistan, and we hope that a further report will confirm that our principles of charity work have been followed.

## **4. Ukrainian spelling of the name of the Religious Society of Friends**

As the Meeting requested, our Clerk asked the National Commission for State Language Standards for advice on the correct spelling of the name of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Ukrainian in accordance with the current state language standards.

The National Commission for State Language Standards informed us that according to the rules for interpretation of English phonetics in Ukrainian language according to § 133 of the Ukrainian orthography, the equivalent of the word "quaker" in the original language is "квейкер". Also, with reference to dictionaries, the commission notes that the ancient borrowing of the word "квакер" and words derived from it are rooted in Ukrainian language: квакерка, квакерський, квакерство etc.

We take into account the concerns expressed that, on the one hand, the word "квакери" may be misperceived as calqued from Russian language, and, on the other hand, the word "квейкери" may be mistaken for the name of players of the computer game Quake, which promotes violence contrary to our Peace Testimony. We urge: do not afraid of such false associations and explain to people the true meaning of these words.

We will use the words "квакери" and "квейкери" interchangeably. We will use more actively the words "квейкер", "квейкери", "квейкерка", "квейкерський", "квейкерство", "квейкеризм", hoping for a gradual rooting in Ukrainian language and inclusion in dictionaries of these words, that sound alike original pronunciation of the words Quaker, Quakers, Quakerism, etc. in English. We hope and we will work for as faster as possible enrooting of the word "квейкери" in Ukrainian language.

Leaving without change our prior decision to form a religious community, we will continue to use the word "квакери" in our name, motto and official correspondence. We will consider in a year the question of whether the word "квейкери" closer to English phonetic spelling has taken root enough in Ukrainian language to change our official name and motto.

Signed



Yurii Sheliashenko, Clerk