

Weekly Notes

December 18, 2015

In this time, when many people are using religion and labels to divide us, it is important to state as clearly as possible that we believe that there is something that can bring us together and lets us stand with one another. Religion does not have to drive us apart; in fact we believe that it can and should unite us across languages, cultures and faiths.

One of the central and most wonderful paradoxes of Quakerism is that while we are rooted in Christianity, we also believe there is a universal spirit within everyone. This belief in the Inner Light is central to our theology, going back to the beginning of Quakerism, which in turn, is traced back to the beginning of time. The opening chapter of the Gospel of John, which was central to the writings of such early Quakers as George Fox, William Penn and Robert Barclay, states “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....The true light that enlightens *every person* was coming into the world.” For Quakers, names are not important. What is important is the reality of the indwelling spirit. So whether you call it God, Yahwe, Jehovah, Christ, Allah, Shiva, the Creator or any other name that is used on your religious tradition or that speaks to you, it is our testimony that it is the same light, that each person has a unique relationship to the spirit, and that no one can or should interfere with that relationship. These are the glad tidings of great joy which are and will be to all people.

Have a great vacation and a happy new year.

Sincerely,
John