

## A Minute Acknowledging Our Failures and Committing Ourselves to Truth

The recent public disclosure of physical and sexual abuses many years ago in a family within the meeting has led to a deepening awareness that our present community truly includes its past members as well as those who will come after us. Looking to the past, we want to acknowledge that Meeting failed to act to halt this abuse and to address the suffering among those affected. A culture of silence over the ensuing decades, in which those who knew about these events chose not to discuss them, caused further suffering in our community. For our failure to act and our silence, we are deeply regretful and apologize first to the survivors and then to others who have been hurt. We have ended that silence.

We also recognize that apology alone is not enough. In response to this painful situation, we have educated ourselves about the requirements for reporting suspected child abuse in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, we have reviewed our own practices and policies intended to keep us safe, and we have listened carefully to members of our community who have suffered abuse in their lives and have much to teach us. Looking to the future, we recognize our responsibility to do what we can to prevent abuse in our community and to be truthful in all our dealings with each other. We hope to find ways to support Friends in times of deep anguish, including survivors of abuse, some of whom may become perpetrators themselves. We recognize that our commitment to pacifism requires that we learn to deal productively with anger and other painful emotions. We seek guidance in the Light as way opens.