

JOINING the RESISTANCE!

Though it is more than a little exciting to be in the company of so many wonderful women wearing pink pussy hats, and people waving Earth Flags and creative signs demonstrating for the environment, and all kinds of scientists, it is also terribly sad and discouraging that we need to march to keep truth and science and sanity in this nation that was for so long at the forefront of scientific and medical discoveries, innovation, healthcare, justice, environmentalism, and equality. Between the wall-building campaign, the bans on Muslims, taunts to North Korea, efforts to roll back Women's Rights and Healthcare, and the effort to shut down the EPA and return our nation to the corporate wild west while giving huge tax breaks to the wealthy, this is getting serious. I mean, when Trump first jumped into the race, who would have thought his candidacy was anything but a joke? So here he is, the President of the US and leader of the free world, though with his new efforts to get rid of the first amendment to gag the press and restrict the rights of people to assemble or disagree with him or practice their choice of religion, that free part is also at risk.

In Our UU Principles, *We covenant to affirm and promote :*

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Each of our Principles is being attacked by the Trump Regime. And though this is our UU statement of Principles, these principles come from the core beliefs of our many Living Tradition Sources and would be readily affirmed by members of many Religious and Philosophical Traditions.

The Humanistic values behind our Principles come from the core teachings of Jesus and Buddha, Abraham and Mohammed, and other great religious prophets and exemplars and philosophers throughout history. These values and principles were distilled from the best of human thought over thousands of years. I suppose it is not surprising that the latest attack to these principles comes from one so little versed in history that he cannot keep straight the works or even the eras of his predecessors. It is still not entirely clear whether his apparent ignorance of facts, his lies and obfuscation are due to general ignorance or to a more malevolent attempt to deny and distort, disrupt and control as a way of expanding and consolidating power over our nation. Whatever Trump's intent is, the course his administration is taking will be disastrous for our country and the world. To not join the Resistance against his tyranny has become unthinkable.

The Resistance to Trump and his policies is a loosely organized coalition of groups that care for and about people, about Women's Rights, about Minority Rights, about immigrants, for Environmental Protections and Climate Change Awareness, for reasonable Taxation to support the needs of people and limit the techno-military-industrial complex. It includes groups fighting for better more affordable health care and insurance that includes everyone including those with pre-existing conditions and those with addictions and mental illnesses. Many members of the Resistance are admittedly educated professional elites who hold one or more degrees, but few are among the wealthy class currently in power. The Resistance includes Teachers and Social Workers, Doctors and Nurses, University Professors and Ministers, Environmentalists and all kinds of scientists and engineers. Many members of the Resistance come from the liberal and progressive middle classes of society. Look around, for the Resistance is us, and in this era I would not want to be anywhere else!

Trump is neither Hitler nor Stalin, nor even Napoleon or Nero, but he has taken advantage through lies and deceit of the general dissatisfaction and limited opportunities of the white blue-collar and lower classes. His boasting promises, alternate facts, and outright lies continue to distort reality for millions of people. Millions of people continue to support Trump and House Republicans in actions and efforts entirely contrary to their own economic, healthcare, and retirement interests. Even in the face of real facts supported by science and statistical data showing the lie to so much of what he says, millions of people continue to blindly

and obstinately believe that climate change is a hoax, that Obama is a Muslim who wanted to take away their guns, that Hillary is evil and couldn't understand the needs of regular people, and that taking away the Affordable Care Act and the Environmental Protection Agency will be good things! Even when told of his multiple bankruptcies and failed business deals, and in light of his failures, inattention to and outright ignorance of his responsibilities as President, people continue to support him. It is like living some nightmarish parody of domestic and international politics, only it is all too real! Aaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!!!!

OK, thanks for letting me get that out! Now, back to the Resistance!

We are the resistance, and in many ways we are the last line of defense in protecting the best and most honorable of the American way of life. We have often served as the loyal opposition when political leaders have strayed from the best interests of our nation and the world, but in these times it is hard to remain loyal even to the offices of President, Vice-President, Cabinet Secretaries, and leaders of the House and Senate when those offices are being used so blatantly to take care of corporations and line the pockets of the already wealthy. The celebration for the house passing Trump-care was way over the top, way beyond any decorum, way beyond any rationality as more than 24 million people will be losing healthcare if the Senate concurs. Trump's need to win at any cost may cost millions their healthcare and health and result in tens perhaps hundreds of thousands or more premature deaths.

This is no longer the compassionate and just America I love, that I would fight for, the nation that carries the proud traditions of more than 240 years of struggling through some very dark times to expand freedoms and work to protect the rights of all. No, this is some wholly owned corporate expression of what is good for the top 1%, the rich and the famous, not ordinary people of the lower 99%. The America I know and love has been hijacked.

Two of the strongest models I know for Resistance Movements come from World War II. One is the Resistance or the French Resistance which opposed the Nazis throughout the war and accomplished a great deal in terms of information gathering, saving British and American airmen, staging raids and attacks, preparing for D-Day and generally helping the Allied cause.

The other Resistance movement is the Confessing Church in Germany which also opposed the Nazis and their efforts to co-opt German Protestantism. The Current Resistance Coalition is not yet very well organized, but will hopefully help to prevent our society from the worst effects of the Trump-Ryan Agenda and also help to mitigate some of the damage in regard to human rights abuses targeting women and minorities and the poor, as well as attacks on scientists and the climate. If ever we have sought to live by the UU Principles, we are clearly called to join the Resistance Now.

So far, those claiming to be part of the Resistance have been involved in marches, demonstrations, e-mail and letter-writing campaigns, making phone calls and visits to legislators, calling for and participating in town hall meetings scheduled by legislators and generally working to build the foundation of a movement to bring change! So far the Resistance seems to be adopting the model of Non-Violent Direct Action from MLK and the Civil Rights Movement. This model is a better fit with our UU Principles than the Resistance Movements from World War II and will help to insure that innocent persons are not further victimized. I may not be a complete pacifist, but I am near enough to prevent me from endorsing any program that will add to the already rampant violence in our society, especially under the prevailing wild west interpretation of the second amendment.

The Resistance is a political and social movement seeking to restore sanity to our society by working for inclusion, acceptance, women's rights including reproductive and work rights, justice for minorities and immigrants, inclusive and fair healthcare, and a better balance of wealth and power between workers and owners. If the Resistance is successful over the next 2-4 years, there may be massive upheavals in our society during that time frame and beyond. As some have suggested, the decisions of Trump and House Republicans may have awakened a sleeping bear who may well prove unstoppable!

More than any social justice action in which any of us have previously engaged, this effort to stop the hijacking of America may prove the most important. This hijacking may be the dying gasp of a deeply divided society far more dependent on differences of class and race and wealth than many of us have been willing to admit. The solution will not be merely to return our society to its status quo

position of recent years, but to push further to achieve full equality for all citizens with no exceptions, single payer healthcare for all, excellent free education for all through at least the second year of college or vocational school, adequate guaranteed work and a living wage for all workers and a social safety net for those unable to work. It will take a while to work out a fair and progressive taxation system to pay for all of this, but cutting back on the bloated military budget will be a good start, along with setting reasonable taxation levels for corporations and the wealthy. There are plenty of models around the world from which we may learn! Progress toward these ends will undoubtedly be labeled socialism or communism or both, but this kind of progress is exactly what Jesus would have called his followers to practice. Don't get me started on the Alternative Christianity of Neo-Conservatives and Tea-Partiers!

We need the Resistance because Trump-ism is worse than even the status-quo, but it is time we went beyond the status-quo to shape the kind of just and loving world in which we all want to live. We need the Resistance because too many people are getting hurt and will be hurt under Trump & Ryan-ism. We need the Resistance because the ever-increasing chasm between rich and poor, with the rich and corporations free to buy the legislators and judges of their choice, is tearing our nation apart. We need the Resistance because Racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism remain rampant, all of which are being further exploited by the current regime. We need the Resistance because we cannot fix this on our own, but we need to work together to build a society that reflects the highest human values as voiced for millennia by prophets and philosophers and religious exemplars. We need the Resistance because the world in which we were so comfortable is gone and it is time to march!

We need a sign or banner out front telling the world that we are joining the Resistance; that we are awakening to the great human need that lies outside our doors. We need to stand up, join our hands and hearts and minds together, and go out to make a real difference! This is what our UU Principles call us to do and the time is now! Let us go out to build a better world!

Shalom, Salaam, Blessed Be, Namaste, and Amen!