



PLYMOUTH MEETING FRIENDS SCHOOL

March 18, 2021

Dear PMFS Families,

Over the last two days, I found myself engaged in a personal debate about writing to the PMFS community about the shooting of eight people in Atlanta. Six of the eight murder victims were people of Asian descent. I felt compelled to hold their souls in the Light and to reiterate our school's commitment to equity and anti-racism. I also found myself waiting to hear the latest news updates and learn the whole story. "Who were these people? What kind of lives did they live? What did they do? What was the motivation behind that violence?"

Ultimately, I needed to ask myself, "What does that matter?" If we do indeed hold true to seeing that of God in everyone, then we can be confident that each life brings Light into the world. Each voice has value; each life has worth. We hope our children inherit a world where there is no hierarchy of value and worth, and where no one group deserves to be ostracized, threatened and murdered. Too often, we face the challenge of trying to make sense of acts of hate and violence focused on people who share a particular race, culture affinity or religion. It is nearly impossible to explain such senseless violence. I advise all families to closely monitor the continuous "loop" of news on television and radio, as well as on social media. These images and events are disturbing for both adults and young children; and most are beyond a child's capacity to process the realities of the information that they see or hear in the news.

The Plymouth Meeting Friends School community joins the local and national communities who mourn the acts of violence waged against people of Asian descent. Though we remain grounded in the Quaker Testimonies, including the notion of Equality, we must acknowledge that not all people are considered equal or even "enough". Others are subjected to stigma and blame without justification. In this community that sees that of God in everyone, we have a commitment to using the strength of our voices for social justice, equity and the peaceful resolution of conflict. In the words of Amirah Parker (PMFS class of 2014), we must "speak up for those who don't have a voice. Create a safe space for people who might not otherwise have one."

Please join me in lifting up the families of those who mourn the loss of their loved ones. We will hold them in the Light and send them our wishes for peace, consolation and comfort.

In peace,
Brenda

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