

## **Statement in support of religious freedom for Muslims in America**

During the summer of 2010, there were numerous attacks against Muslim places of worship in the United States, as well as vocal and sometimes violent opposition to proposed building sites for mosques and community centers. In response, Meeting was moved to unite on a public statement supporting religious freedom for Muslims.

Asheville Friends Meeting is a part of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). We believe in simplicity, honesty, equality, peace, and respect for all life. Friends originally came to the United States in search of religious freedom.

We are distressed at what is happening in our country in regards to the Islamic Community Center in New York, to the arson of a mosque in Tennessee, and to the planned burning of Korans in Florida. We believe that we cannot have the freedom of religion to be Quakers unless our fellow American Muslims are free to exercise their religious beliefs also.

We believe that the Light “that is of God” is in everyone. We are distressed to see our fellow citizens, and their places of worship and their Holy Book, treated with such disrespect. We would like Muslims in America to know that we stand with them, and we reach out the hand of friendship to them. Asheville Friends Meeting would be interested in further dialogue, or socialization, with Muslims in our area.

We feel the discrimination that is currently going on has its roots in racism, and that knowledge, love, and understanding can overcome these limitations. Members of the Asheville Friends Meeting community unite with all of the other people and groups that have come out in support of the religious freedom of Muslims in America.

Asheville Friends Meeting  
Katherine Kowal, Clerk

*minute approved 9th month 2010*