

P&SJ Minute 11.15.21, approved by monthly meeting for business 11.21.21

The original goal of our hanging of the BLM banners was to be a public ally with the Black Lives Matter movement. We have met obstacles including stealing of the banners, hateful messages left both on voice-mail and paper, and the destruction of personal property. We are now trying to address that confrontation while still continuing our original witness.

We are trying to look at the individual who is stealing the banners and damaging property with compassion. It is really difficult. But the heart of the peace testimony is that because there is that of God in everyone we are to go directly to the person we have conflict with and seek resolution - not by coercion or by punishment but by dialogue with the goal of a change of heart and mind. The dialogue we would love to have with this person is not likely to meet that goal. However, the community awareness/discussion could be very important.

We will send Friends to meet with the Westport police chief so that he is aware of the hatred that is being expressed in the community. But we will also reach out to the community and ask how they - how all of us - want to be in relationship with each other. The generosity shown across the street with the food pantry is true and alive. We believe that heart transformation can happen by sharing our story and engaging the community in interrupting oppression and naming that hate does not belong here.

Westport Friends Meeting