The Wilson Center

for Spiritual Exploration
& Multifaith Dialogue

To our beloved community,

It is a privilege, I know, to be writing these words of lament to you only now. There are so many in our community and around the world who are already suffering and have had their eyes open to suffering far longer than many of us. And yet we are here in this moment, all bearing witness to unspeakable and unconscionable violence on the part of ICE and other factions of our federal government. The Wilson Center, as a place which honors the beautiful diversity of human experience and belief, condemns the actions of state violence against immigrant communities – past, present, and future.

This letter has two purposes. The first is to let everyone reading it know that you are not alone in this world. I asked the Wilson Center Board Members to share words they return to in times of turmoil – times when they need a hand to reach out and grasp theirs. Below are those extended hands, meant for each of us to grab hold of and comfort all of us at this time.

"We will certainly test you with a touch of fear and famine and loss of property, life, and crops. Give good news to those who patiently endure—who say, when struck by a disaster, 'Surely to Allah we belong and to Him we will ˹all˺ return.' They are the ones who will receive Allah's blessings and mercy. And it is they who are ˹rightly˺ guided. (Qur'an 2:155, 156, 157). - *submitted by Sophia Wise*

"Justice, justice shall you pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:11). - *Submitted by Melissa Ladenheim*

"The arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice." (Martin Luther King Jr.) - *Submitted by Joanie Ellis*

"A better world is not only possible, on a quiet day I can hear her breathing. She is on her way." (Arundhati Roy) - *Submitted by Kate Kemper*

"In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame: deliver me in your righteousness. Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me. Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me. Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, for you are my tower of strength. Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me, O Lord, O God of truth." (Psalm 31: 1-5) - *Submitted by Peggy Day*

"The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." (Psalm 122: 7-8) - *Submitted by Rev. Michele St Cyr*

"We ourselves need to see, and then to enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not only represent a problem to be solved, but are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved." ((Pope Francis) - *Submitted by Mary Astumian*

The second purpose is to provide local resources for all of us to engage in the work of making good trouble during these times. Perhaps it is your calling to engage in protest or activism. Perhaps it is your calling to stay safe, housed, and fed. Perhaps it is your calling to donate funds to organizations doing essential work. Find your calling and live into it. Together is how the work gets done.

Maine Immigrant Resources:

- Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition
- Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
- Maine Equal Justice

Resources for Protesting and Preparing

Housing, Food, and Health Resources:

- Maine State Housing Authority
- Food Pantry Location Map
- Maine Stream Finance
- Mabel Wadsworth Center

Mental Health Resources:

- National Alliance on Mental Illness - Maine (NAMI)
- 211 Maine
- Partners for Peace

Ways to Support Minnesotans: https://www.standwithminnesota.com/

How to Contact your Local Representatives: https://5calls.org/

This list of resources is only a beginning. If you have any other resources you'd like to add, please email wilsoncenterorono@gmail.com. Be on the lookout for additional events and trainings related to ICE activity to be held at the Wilson Center over the coming days and weeks. If you or your organization would like to host an event or training, contact the email above. Together we form the fabric of resistance and care that brings light and life to our community.

Lastly, if you need anything over the coming days or weeks, please do not hesitate to reach out. Call or text 512-924-1695. The Wilson Center is here for you.

In love and solidarity,

Victoria Volker (she/her)
Executive Director