Keynote Address at Southern California Quarterly Meeting of Pacific Yearly Meeting

November 7, 2026

"Resistance, Restoration, and Renewal:
What am I doing to be faithful?"

[After a brief silence, sing the first stanza of "How Can I Keep from Singing?"]

My life flows on in endless song;
Above earth's lamentation,
I hear the real, though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation;
Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear that music ringing;
It sounds an echo in my soul —
How can I keep from singing?

It is an honor to be with you this weekend, and to speak at a Quaker gathering with the theme, "Resistance, Restoration, and Renewal." Your planners knew precisely what they were doing in choosing that theme for an event scheduled immediately following a potentially consequential Election Day in the United States. They knew that the accent for today would fall most heavily on one of those three – Resistance, Restoration, or Renewal – depending on the outcome of our elections around the country. No matter how the election turned out, all three of these themes would be important, but perhaps with a different emphasis, depending on how it turned out.

With that in mind, I want to be candid with you that the speech I am giving today has evolved over the past few weeks, and again after Election Day. Nonetheless, my core message is substantially unchanged.

My name is Tom Hoopes. My son Jacob was arrested last summer at gunpoint by the FBI, in connection with his actions protesting ICE. If you have ever met Jacob, or if you have seen the videos or listened to the podcast, I hope you will agree that he comes across as kind, gentle, and thoughtful. Of course, that may just be my bias as his parent showing up.

This invitation to speak is personal to me, because this cause is personal to me. Jacob Hoopes is in prison, and Donald Trump is not. If that that makes you ask deep questions, hurts your heart, and boggles your mind, that makes two of us.

Having said that, I want to name up front that Jacob is in a far better situation than many others targeted by this Administration. The folks in the Prairieland ICE case in Texas are facing much harsher treatment. The people being abducted by ICE are in terrifying conditions with much less support, and their families are being devastated. And then there are the people who have died in ICE custody or shootings, and their grieving families. These are the people Jacob was trying to stand up for. I give thanks daily that my son is alive.

Before proceeding, I wish to acknowledge the *ad hoc* committee of Elders who have held my hand for the past year, and especially in preparation for this presentation. Their feedback on earlier drafts of this speech has provided invaluable guidance, and helped me stay faithful to my true convictions and commitments. In particular, I would like to lift up: Eileen Flanagan; Cherice Bock; Pamela Haines; Marguerite Chandler; and Joe Snyder. All five of these elders have been crucial supports to my family and me this year, and they are all extraordinary resources for our Religious Society as we confront the opportunities and challenges facing us.

I would like to preface my remarks with some queries:

- *"How can I transform a hurtful and negative experience into something good?"*
- *"How can I show up for those who are being treated inhumanely without engaging in a downward spiral of violence?"*
- *"How can I avoid over-simplifying my understandings of 'violence' so as not to contribute to invisibilizing structural and state violence, and not to blame victims who fight back against it?"*
- *"What am I doing to be brave at this time?"*
- *"What am I doing to be effective at this time?"*
- *"What am I doing to be faithful at this time?"*

[Pause]

"What am I doing to be brave?" "What am doing to be effective?" Those can be thought of as two sides of the same coin. Both are important, and neither is sufficient. I am indebted to Eileen

Flanagan for interrupting me and reminding me that it is crucial that I not talk about one without the other. We Quakers have loads of experience and skill at harnessing courage, but we often over-emphasize our personal and collective courage at the expense of making meaningful change in the world. I don't know about you, but I have been a part of countless Quaker committees and processes in which we have engaged in lots of hand-wringing to produce just the right minute about our objection to something in the world. And then sometimes we think our work is done. NO. We must put that minute into action, and maybe next time redirect some of the energy that goes into crafting minutes into impactful, effective action.

But wait. Is "effectiveness" really what I am after? Something about that claim doesn't sit right with me. If I hold up effectiveness as my primary goal, I will clearly fall short on a regular basis. That can be dispiriting and crazy-making, for myself and others.

I am reminded of one of the most foundational insights of Quakerism, spoken by George Fox, and quoted by Margaret Fell:
"You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst thou say? Art thou a child of Light, and hast walked in the Light? And what thou speakest – is it inwardly from God?"

"What canst Thou say?" Ah, yes, the fundamental Quaker practice of discernment. I have re-framed that 350-year-old morsel of spiritual wisdom and asked myself: "What can you say, Tom? What is your North Star, that keeps you moving roughly in the direction of faithfulness?"

Over the years, so many of us have toiled in the vineyards, seeing scant evidence of the impact of our hard work for what has sometimes felt like a long time. And yet we did not give up. I recall working with some other George School teachers to sponsor the first curbside vigil in our area in January 2024, to call attention to the impending abuses of civil rights, human rights, and good governance of the incoming Trump 2.0 administration. There were 9 of us out there on that cold, winter afternoon. It felt like spitting into the wind, quite literally. Over time the vigil grew, as other members of Newtown Meeting joined us. And then the local chapter of Indivisible re-scheduled its weekly protest to coincide with ours, and suddenly our numbers ballooned.

Sometimes – such as on the No Kings events – our numbers were in the hundreds, and it felt like we were part of a movement. Indeed, we WERE part of a movement.

During this summer and fall I found myself tempted to feel disconnected from my own Source, given national politics, Jacob's situation, and my own sudden separation from Philadelphia and 30+ years immersed in the community life of schools. But thanks to the 900 Days of Life website, weekly visits in prison with Jacob, our Portland friendships, my new job as a school bus driver, the support of Multnomah Meeting, and the long-distance love of Newtown Meeting, I have been able to keep my head above water and keep swimming.

On Election Day morning, when none of us knew that this so-called "blue tsunami" was coming, I awoke to a message from Pamela Haines, which contained words of wisdom, guidance, and support. I felt seen, and held. I wanted to cry. And then Election Day happened. We all have our own personal stories to tell about that day. Speaking only for myself, I needed another 24 hours simply to give myself permission to accept the outcome of the election. I realized that I had felt so beaten down by events of the past two years – with Jacob's situation at the center of that, of course – that my body could scarcely accept that we had collectively stepped back from the brink of the abyss. And when my body did finally accept it, I began to weep. (Exhale) And yet, Jacob is still in prison, ICE is still funded and weaponized, the Iran war is still going on, the assault on transgender people continues, and countless families are without food, shelter, and health care. If ever there was a moment to lean into our Quaker faith and practice, NOW seems like a good choice to me.

Anthony Benezet, a Quaker abolitionist from the 1700's, and a founder of the William Penn Charter School, wrote: "Quaker education should be conducted with attention to time and to eternity." I would like to suggest that the same might be said about Quaker engagement with the world generally. Our work should address the concrete realities of our world's issues while being mindful of Eternity's sunrise, to borrow a phrase from William Blake. If people are having to choose between medicine and rent, or are being denied gender-affirming health care; or if human choices lead to wildfires increasingly destroying countless acres of forests and homes, or regions

once fit for human habitation are fit no longer, we need to address those situations head-on with real-world solutions. And while we're doing that, let's keep Eternity in mind.

This both/and approach to Time and Eternity brings to mind a metaphor shared with me by Joe Snyder, an organizer of ICE protest activities in Portland and an Elder of Multnomah Meeting. People are living along a river and they frequently are engaged with rescuing people who come floating down from the rapids upstream. Finally someone says: "Why don't we go upstream and find out why people keep falling in, and fix that?" So, we engage in the downstream ministries of feeding the hungry, providing legal services to immigrants, housing homeless teenagers, etc.; while at the same time doing the upstream ministries of community education, organizing, political advocacy, etc. Both are important, neither is sufficient.

In Meeting for Worship at Multnomah Meeting recently, I heard vocal ministry about a man who was held in ICE custody for some time. Happily, unlike so many others, he was eventually released. The speaker told the story that when the man was being shipped out in the back of an unmarked vehicle with blackened windows, from Portland to the holding facility in Tacoma, he was able to peer out of a little hole that had been scratched in the blackened window. Through that hole he saw a small group of people holding vigil outside of the ICE facility. One of the protesters held a sign that read: "You are not alone." The man shared that this sign was incredibly meaningful and important to him; it helped sustain him while he was being held unjustly in custody. And now, thank goodness, he is out of custody and with his family.

I have participated in that vigil, when my schedule has permitted it. The vigil has been going on faithfully for over a year, regardless of the weather, temperature, or world events. Oftentimes there are fewer than 20 people standing there. It is tempting for those bearing witness to wonder if their presence has any value at all. But they have kept doing it, week in and week out.

The story of this man drawing life-sustaining support from that vigil powerfully communicates to me that YES, our presence on that sidewalk matters. I extend that logic to all of the good work that is being done everywhere in the world. YOU ARE NOT ALONE, whatever you are doing, wherever you are. Your work to help create a better world matters. YOU matter. Our work

matters. We are not alone. We are the weavers, and we are the web. We must keep weaving, with the knowledge and the faith that the web will support all of us.

So, why did Jacob get arrested by the FBI? And why is he now serving time in a federal prison? Fair questions. To make a long story short, Jacob showed up. After the first No Kings March, he marched with the crowd to the ICE facility, and he encountered people screaming, "They are tear-gassing us!" Rather than run away, Jacob went TOWARD danger. In his own words: "I felt like there was some responsibility to push back and to make it so that the ICE agents who were antagonizing folks and inflicting violence on folks weren't able to do so unopposed." After being tear-gassed and shot with pepper balls, he over-reacted, by his own admission, and threw some rocks.

The tactics of ICE are reprehensible. They should be stopped, immediately. ICE increased detentions this summer and fall, and they don't appear to be slowing down. The impeachment articles introduced by a Republican member of Congress in September stated it plainly: this administration is operating "vicious, quota-driven, unaccountable paramilitary forces killing people." What has been going on in this country, with our leaders hurting so many people and stealing so many basic rights while they enrich themselves, is beneath contempt. And yet, here we are. We have been here before, but this is a new low.

In the summer of 1986, I was interning on Capitol Hill, in the office of a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. I looked out of the window of the House Office Building, and buses were streaming into Washington, DC, to lobby Congress to amend the Constitution to allow the President to serve a third term, because Ronald Reagan was such a WONDERFUL president. I heard myself scream out loud: "What are they thinking?!?!" The Congressman – a liberal Democrat – walked over to me and put his arm around my shoulder. He said, "Tom, people don't think. They FEEL. And then they come up with thoughts to explain and justify their feelings."

I remind myself of this profound insight from 40 years ago on a regular basis. I, too, am a person. I, too, am tempted to lead with my feelings, and then come up with thoughts to justify

my feelings. It's human to do that. And therefore it is prudent for me to engage in my own devotional practice, to stay humble, stay grounded, and remember to balance time and eternity.

So, why are so many people responding so empathetically and energetically to Jacob's experience? And why did **I** get invited to speak with you here today?

Jacob has responded to his situation with grace, dignity, courage, and creativity. In prison, he is befriending people across all boundaries of race and religion and class, writing voluminously, maintaining a disciplined schedule, and designing and helping to construct various fascinating projects within and around the prison greenhouses. He is noticing that so many in prison do not have the support that he has, and he has asked that more of us get to know actual people incarcerated.

In addition, thanks to Jacob, lots and lots of people who are currently not in prison – that includes all of us, folks! – are engaging in spirit-led actions of their own choosing to make the world a better place. At our website, www.900DaysofLight.com, people are adopting one of his days of imprisonment, and doing concrete acts of service, activism, and community-building, and then writing to him to tell him about it. People are volunteering at soup kitchens, making homemade food for people experiencing houselessness, picking up litter on the roadsides, going to City Council meetings to advocate for public transit, providing care to people experiencing illness, going to the personal pilgrimage sites and then telling others about it, and so many more creative actions. One person from Pennsylvania wrote, "Thank you for inspiring me to go bigger this time. It was really nice to be able to support my neighbors facing food insecurity in your family's honor."

People all over the world are using this as a push to finally DO that thing they've been thinking about doing, with connection to Jacob and our family. So far we have folks sharing their experiences from Denmark, Mexico, Canada, Australia, England, Sweden, and the USA.

The initial idea for the 900 Days of Light website came to me in a dream, shortly after the judge decided how much time Jacob would serve, in light of his acceptance of the terms of the plea

deal and his year-long compliance with every possible technicality of his FBI-monitored life with an ankle monitor. I realized in the dream: “30 months is 900 days. I can count to 900! I WILL count to 900, and I will invite others to join me.”

900 Days of Light was born out of an unwillingness to let my family be destroyed by darkness. Quite the opposite. I shared my preliminary vision with my family and a few close friends, and invited feedback. Most were very affirming and positive, with few specifics. My sister-in-law, however – who is the author of numerous award-winning books on anti-racist pedagogy – asked me: “Do you want honest feedback?” I replied, “Yes, please!” She then responded with several pointed pieces of constructive criticism of my original concept. Ouch! Thank you. And she offered some generative suggestions. These were extraordinarily helpful in my re-positioning the site as a nexus of community-building, awareness-raising, and a seedbed of activism to honor precisely why Jacob found himself in front of the ICE building in the first place: he wanted to protect people more vulnerable than himself, and build a better world.

I realized that 900 days might feel like a long time – today is Day 108, by the way – but maybe I could re-imagine it, and make the time feel full of Love and Light and Optimism. I could invite our community into our family’s experience, and encourage others to view their support for Jacob as an invitation to do something – ANYTHING – aligned with their own vision of a better world.

Every morning I engage in a devotional practice. It involves a big glass of fresh water, a strong cup of coffee, and a walk outside with the dogs to see the stars, and the moon if it happens to be out then. I then repeat my own 22-step mantra – some might call it a “prayer” – that I have developed over the course of my adult life. It draws from Quaker, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and Indigenous wisdom. After a series of accepting, releasing, cleansing, and opening meditations, it concludes with gratitude for all of it, and then: “Wow.”

In some respects, the 900 days of light project is a manifestation of this devotional practice. I am taking an evil that affects me personally and deeply, and instead of just turning inward to nurse my wounds, focus on anger, and broadcast outrage, I am trying to create an opportunity to

connect, to share love, to invite others to take a next step and act, in perhaps a more powerful way in the world around them than they had found a way to do. My love for my family, and my grounding in my community, have put me in the place to serve as the faithful channel for this particular ministry.

Many people in the extended Quaker community and beyond have responded powerfully to Jacob's situation. The story of his arrest was the most-read article in 2025 in *Friends Journal*. The *Thee Quaker* podcast did a special episode about him. The *Portland Mercury* wrote a full-length feature article about him at the time of his arrest, and then another one at the time of his incarceration. Many people in the Quakersphere are following the 900 Days of Light. And YOU invited me here to speak! What's going on?

Jacob's arrest and imprisonment is a Quaker Rorschach test. It's an ink blot that is open to interpretation. How people interpret what has happened tells us a lot. I have heard many interpretations, and I am sure there are more that have not reached my ears or eyes.

I can think of a number of possible explanations for this powerful engagement:

- Firstly, many people identify with Jacob, and with our family. They see themselves in him, and in us. He is very relatable, and we have been very public about our response.
- Secondly, Jacob is one of us. We are willing to show up for other Friends. It does not hurt that he is quite likeable, but perhaps that's just my bias as his father speaking..
- Thirdly, many people are shocked that a person such as Jacob could be in this position. It puts them in touch with their own vulnerability. His visibility is our visibility. He is our proxy in our resistance to the growing tide of fascism.

As one of your clerks wrote to me in the letter of invitation to speak today:

> *Jacob's story goes right to the core of the challenge of being a practitioner of nonviolence while advocating and showing up for those who are being oppressed and treated inhumanely by militarized federal officers and police carrying out hateful and inhumane policies. I think Jacob offers important learned wisdom and experience that we can all learn from.*

At the same time, I am aware that there are some Friends who are still angry at Jacob. They might choose the word "disappointed." Even though Jacob admits he made a less-than-perfect choice, and has taken responsibility for that publicly, they still blame him for doing something wrong, or – dare I say it – "unQuakerly".

Side note: I used to tell my students that when someone in Quaker spaces calls something "unQuakerly," that should be a red flag that what they MIGHT really just be saying is: "I don't like it." And they are leveraging sophisticated language to justify their personal feelings, just like those Reagan supporters I mentioned.

My sense is that these Friends see Jacob as having done harm to the "Quaker brand," by resorting to violence. The logic goes that Jacob has brought disrepute to the Religious Society of Friends by throwing rocks at an ICE facility and its guards. If any of you here identify with that perspective, I can hear that. I do not share that opinion, for reasons that I will endeavor to explain. I wish I could say more about the particulars of Jacob's case, but – as you are aware – he is in federal prison, and I do not want anything I say to be weaponized against him.

I have some questions for us, as Quakers:

- To what extent have we American Quakers participated in a selective narrative of our history, in a way that has concealed a more nuanced picture of our role in U.S. and world history? That is, how have we turned a blind eye toward some of our own complicity in the mess we find ourselves in?
- How has this contributed to a problematic self-understanding, and a rigidity about our creative options for responding to the violence that is woven into the very fabric of our society?
- How might we harness our Testimony of Integrity more faithfully, to help move our nation and our world in the direction of greater justice, greater equity, and greater sustainability?

We Quakers have been making shade-of-meaning judgment calls about our relationship with violence for over 300 years. It is salutary to see that we are beginning to engage more actively with redressing our historic treatment of Indigenous peoples and African peoples. The rematriation of the 232 acres of the former John Woolman School in Nevada County, California, to the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe is a solid example of this. Green Street Friends Meeting, in Philadelphia, has committed $500,000 over 10 years toward a local reparations and racial justice initiative. These are powerful, courageous, meaningful actions. And hopefully they are just the beginning.

Looking back, many Quakers are unaware of the fact that more than 50% of eligible Quaker men enlisted in the military during World War II. Why didn't I learn that as a young Quaker? As a student at a Friends school and a young Friend myself, I was not taught that history. We Quakers have narrated our own story to keep that information obscured. I am grateful to those who are unearthing these histories, and re-telling them.

We are proud of our conscientious objectors and our ancestors who did alternative service, as we should be. But I think it is also important for us to tell stories from our history that showcase how people responded under extreme pressure, even when it doesn't make us look morally pure. Especially when it doesn't make us look morally pure. I don't know about you, but it helps me to have messy role models, who cry, bleed, and make hard choices.

A more nuanced history can help us to understand the difficult choices people made in the past, as guidance and illumination for the hard choices we need to make today. We can honor the different paths Friends took, and we can appreciate that our Meetings endeavored to support Friends returning from a war. But let's go further and ask: In what ways did we try to interrupt the war or solve the conflict, other than just nonparticipation? What might we have done sooner?

George Lakey compares Norway and Germany in the 1930's in his book *Viking Economics: How the Scandinavians Got It Right-and How We Can, Too*. In Germany, some leftists were engaging in literal stick fights with Nazis. History suggests that was neither strategic nor effective. Moreover, it alienated the mainstream of German society, many of whom backed away from

engagement in politics altogether, which contributed to the rise of Hitler. By contrast, in Norway – which was also faced with a rising tide of Nazism – they built a unified movement with a vision of national healthcare and a society for everyone, along with a commitment to nonviolence. Friend George skillfully dispels the myths that allow people on the left and the right to claim that the Nordic system is impossible to replicate elsewhere. Yes, we can.

We Quakers have an opportunity right now to harness our collective and individual powers of imagination. What would it look like if Quakers around the USA did something bold, courageous, strategic, and nonviolent together – across all branches of the Society of Friends? Say, for example, next year on World Quaker Day, in 25 different cities we block the driveways of ICE buildings, and risk arrest through nonviolent civil disobedience? Sign me up!

I have empathy for people who throw rocks at the empire and its foot soldiers. Don't you? But let's not feed that monster. The research shows it's not effective. And yes, it also contradicts our Quaker commitment to nonviolence.

This is where I must distinguish between my hat as "Jacob's father" and my hat as "Quaker peace educator." As Jacob's father, I am filled with pride, fear, rage, indignation, as well as lots of gratitude, in an inchoate mixture that tends to cloud my vision. Forgive me, please. It's my son we're talking about here.

But as a Quaker peace educator and activist, I want to make the case for faithful, courageous, strategic, collective nonviolence. Around the country we can see that Trump is throwing the book at people who are doing things like what Jacob did, and less than he did. That feeds the false narrative that these left-wingers are out of control and dangerous and must be repressed. Trump and his cronies don't know what to do with people of faith who are standing on the solid ground of nonviolence. We have the upper hand.

I have learned a great deal about how much I did not know about the so-called "justice" system. I have since learned that many other Quakers also lack familiarity with the criminal justice system. In a plea deal, there is no trial by jury, as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. 95% of all

criminal cases in the USA now end with a plea deal. This means that 95% of USA criminal defendants are not granted a Constitutionally-guaranteed right. If you did not know that, you can take comfort – or discomfort, if you prefer – in knowing that you are not alone.

You may also have been tempted to believe that the so-called "justice" system consistently delivers justice, because your family – like mine – had never had a direct, personal encounter with the system. I will remind you that Jacob Hoopes is in prison, and Donald Trump is not. Neither is Hegseth, Noem, Miller, Mullin, Vance, Musk, and a whole lot more. As Bob Dylan presciently stated in 1983 in the album *Infidels*, "Steal a little and they throw you in jail; Steal a lot and they make you king."

Nobody has served prison time for the killings at the hands of ICE, and for the deaths of people in immigration detention since the start of Trump's second term, more than double the number of deaths recorded from the previous four years combined. As egregious as the current mortality rate is, it does not include the millions of people who have been terrorized by this inhumane campaign.

Is there no justice? In fact, justice on Earth only exists if we build it. We, the people, must collectively construct justice in the same way we have collectively constructed injustice. We built it. We can unbuild it, too, and build something new and different.

Responding to malice with violence is understandable. But if people have more training in nonviolent tactics, it expands the number of tools in their toolbox, and we are more likely to choose nonviolence. Violence is much more likely to backfire, and as Jacob said in the *Thee Quaker* podcast, it's not effective at building the world we want to live in.

For all of our faults, we Quakers have done a lot of good work, and we are still doing good work. I want to honor and celebrate the experience of the Light which lights everyone who comes into the world, and is capable of leading us out of darkness into right relationship with each other and the planet, in love, justice, mercy, and humility.

But I think we could do a better job of telling our whole truth, and courageously telling more of the stories of our own history, so that we don't put ourselves on some kind of virtue pedestal. When a person like Jacob steps up, maybe we should not subject him to a "Quaker purity test" – a test which we, ourselves, would likely fail. Instead, let's honor him and celebrate his courage, while acknowledging his missteps, as he did. I believe that the *Thee Quaker* podcast does an excellent job of striking that balance.

Rather than believing that we live in a reality that is binary with respect to goodness and badness, I would like to suggest that we actually operate on a spectrum. There are those of us who may think we're "pure" with regard to violence because we haven't actively hit someone ourselves. Okay, I hear that. But if we're allowing violence to occur through our country's imperialism – which we rely on for our food and oil and pensions – I wonder if we are actually doing less to stand up against injustice than some of those people who take up arms. Our actions are violent when we do nothing to interrupt our violent empire. I wonder if more of us need to put our bodies on the line, not just scold people who act violently without offering an alternative. I have been guilty of that, and I aim to do better.

At our best, I hope we are able to avoid that hypocrisy. But with our strong value judgments, our selective memory, and our relatively comfortable position in American society, we are at risk for falling into that trap. My hope in these remarks has been to illuminate that trap, and to help us explore ways to steer clear of it.

Jacob is finding creative ways within the prison system to "let his life speak" and "mind the Light" in an otherwise negative situation. He's amplifying his inner journey with his invitation to others to let their own lives speak. He asks that they share their journey with him to help everyone involved survive and perhaps thrive in this challenging prison environment. As he said at the end of his first letter to supporters, "Tell me stories about your life… Let's reject inaction and solitude and work towards a beautiful world together."

Jacob is demonstrating to me the power of staying in the present, doing what he can, and taking one step at a time. I am learning through Jacob's situation about the injustice of our nation's

current justice system. I am also learning a lot more about prisons than I ever wanted to know – and the costs to all of us of mass incarceration.

I give thanks on a daily basis that my son Jacob is alive and surrounded by new friends. Like some of the early Quakers who spent time in prison, Jacob is making friends across identity boundaries of all sorts. His social circle will be wider than mine when he gets out, thanks to this enforced residency. In the meantime, my best energy remains focused on supporting our extended community in building a better world, one day at a time. If we are disciplined, and lucky, perhaps by the time of his release, we will be a few steps closer to a less violent world. And if that happens, that will be a win-win-win, for Jacob, for us Quakers, and for the whole world.

Rather than defending Jacob's actions, one of my goals in this talk has been to emphasize the state violence he was trying to draw attention to and that, ironically, he HAS drawn attention to, more than he would have if he had stayed completely nonviolent that day!

When he was released after 4 days in jail last July – having just moments before been told for the first time what he was accused of – Jacob's first words to me were: "This is all about intimidation. If we aren't intimidated, we win." Thank you, Jacob, for your wisdom and your bravery. You saw around that corner before I did.

One of the things I am doing to be faithful right now is accompanying Jacob in his incarceration, and exploring new ways to live more justly during this chapter of history. I can already tell it is not going to be easy. But then again, "ease" has never been one of the Quaker testimonies, right?

I am beyond grateful for the kindness and support that has been shown to my family this year. Much of the time I feel solid and centered. And on some days, I feel wobbly and scared. Both conditions are my truth. I keep up my meditation practice, to help remind myself that the time is NOW, and that on a day in the not-too-distant future, Jacob will walk free, and the time will still be NOW.

Please join me.

[Songlead a rousing version of "This Little Light of Mine."]

This Little Light of Mine,
I'm Gonna Let it Shine…
Let it Shine, Let it Shine, Let it Shine!

Put it under a Bushel? NO!
I'm Gonna Let it Shine…

In Southern California,
I'm Gonna Let it Shine…

Thank you.