

September 13, 2011

Dear Editor:

Lights began to shine around Back Bay Cove at 7:30 p.m. on September 11, 2011. From my vantage point near Payson Park, some shone brightly, some only as a small beam merging with the glow from a huge Harvest moon mirrored on Back Bay.

The idea for A Time for Light originated with Grace Braley, long-time peace activist and member of Peace Action Maine. She and other members and friends of Peace Action Maine envisioned diverse groups of individuals and organizations coming together as a way of moving beyond the fears, and hatreds generated after September 11, 2001. Braley says a goal was to “. . . gather the many, many in this region who want no war and want a different approach to our societal issues.”

An air of excitement filled the air as we walked towards Back Bay. People wanted and needed to feel that they are not alone in their knowledge that *war is not the answer*. At 7:30 p.m., when the lights came on, over 700 people encircled Back Bay. Some people prayed, some sang, some read litanies, the Fukushima marchers beat their drums, while some stood in silence.

Reza Jalali, local author and Muslim scholar¹, echoed this sentiment earlier in the day as he spoke on the theme, “Many Prayers, One World” at the Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist Church. He said, “Maine can be the model for how we can live together in harmony and peace.”

And so we lived our values as we gathered in the cooling breezes on the evening of September 11, 2011 letting “our little lights shine” leading us out of a world of fear and hatred. We are all one people. Let us extend our hands of loving kindness to one another.