

## **Meditation Vigil to Bear Witness to the Slave Trade**

**April 19, 2008**

**Statue of Reconciliation**

**E. Main and 15<sup>th</sup> St**

**9 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**(8 a.m. walk along the slave trail to the statue)**

*"Acknowledge the past, embrace the present, shape a future of reconciliation and justice."*

These words, composed by City of Richmond school students, are found on the Statue of Reconciliation commemorating the slave trade and Richmond's role in it.

On April 19, 2008, members of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship will conduct a meditation vigil at the Statue of Reconciliation in downtown Richmond, Virginia, at the site of the slave auction houses. The purpose of the meditation is to bear witness to the suffering of many people perpetrated by the slave trade. Richmond was a key link in the chain involving the sale and export of African Americans throughout the south. The scars from that period of history are still visible throughout modern American society.

The vigil will begin with an optional walk along the Slave Trail, which starts in the James River Park at Ancarrow's Landing. The 1.3 mile walk begins at 8 a.m. The silent meditation will begin at 9 a.m. at the Statue of Reconciliation, on the corner of E. Main and 15<sup>th</sup> St. The vigil will continue until 4 p.m. Rev. Taigen Dan Leighton, Zen Buddhist priest from Chicago and a frequent visitor to Richmond, will give a short talk. The schedule will also include chanting the Buddha's teaching on loving-kindness. The vigil will conclude with an opportunity for participants to speak about their experience during the vigil.

All are welcome to join for all or part of the event. For those participating for the entire vigil, please bring a brown bag lunch, sun screen, wide-brim hat, sunglasses, water, towel or blanket, and meditation cushion (if you have one).

For more information, contact:

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About the Statue of Reconciliation:

<http://www.iofc.org/en/abt/newsroom/3272.html>

Virginia's First Freedom: Freedom of Religion  
<http://www.firstfreedom.org/aboutus/history.html>

**Directions to Ancarrow's Landing (from the James River Park website):**

**Richmond Boat Ramp (Ancarrow's Landing)** □ To reach Ancarrow's landing, take I-95 to the Maury Street exit. Head east on Maury and follow road around municipal sewage plant. Follow signs to parking area on left.



**E. Main St and 15<sup>th</sup> St**

