

## Hartford Sermon

### Scriptures

**Scripture** Isaiah 43:18-19

**Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.**

**Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it?**

**I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.**

### Introduction

Thank you Dr. Adams.

Good Morning!

It is a pleasure and quite a privilege  
for my wife Anne and me  
to be invited to worship with you today  
in this great church.

I look out and see so many of our friends  
and colleagues as members of your congregation--  
including Regent Nellie Varner  
and Chancellor Blenda Wilson.

Yet, despite the presence of so many friends,  
I must also confess that it is a bit intimidating to  
be a part of Dr. Adam's service  
since he is widely recognized as one of  
the nation's leading orators, teachers, and preachers.

He probably hasn't told you this but  
Dr. Adam's Commencement address at the University in XXX  
when we awarded him an honoray degree  
for his outstanding achievements  
has been broadcast and rebroadcast  
across Michigan on our radio stations.  
More listeners have requested it  
and also asked for taped copies  
than any other address given in our history.

Hence it seems only prudent to leave  
the preaching to Dr. Adams...  
...and to stick to subjects that I know something about  
...education, universities...and our future...

As most of you know, I am an engineer.

While engineers may not be used to preaching.

Engineers and preachers do have some things in common.

- We tend to look ahead, to think a lot about the future,
- We are usually candid, we tend to tell it like it is,
- And we believe in change,

that we can make the world a better place.

What I have to say reflects these qualities.

This morning I want to talk about joining with you  
to address the most critical issue of our times--  
namely, how to insure that our children have the  
educational opportunities so necessary for full  
participation in marvelously diverse,  
knowledge-intensive, world nation that America  
is evolving into as we countdown through the 1990s  
toward the 21st Century--a new millineum!

To build an educational system at all levels  
to serve our children's future  
that develops their talents and their capacity for leadership  
and creates oppportunities for a better life for all of our people.

Further, I want to talk about building a University--  
and, indeed, a society--  
in which the genius of each one of us  
is welcomed, respected and valued as a contribution  
a new kind of community, a multi-cultural society  
in which people of all races and and nationalities

and beliefs can live and work together in harmony.  
Here my vision is not of a big melting pot in which  
we are all forced or expected to become the same...  
boring, bland, uncreative  
Like a stew that has cooked too long on the stove  
so that you can't tell one thing in it from another,  
that has no taste, no color, and gives no life  
because all the life has been cooked out of it.  
You've had that kind of stew.  
It's not worth much to look at or to eat.  
You can't travel very far on it.

No. I don't want to talk about a "melting pot" kind of community.  
Just the opposite.

But rather a community that tolerates and celebrates diversity,  
a glorious mix of people bringing their unique talents,  
traditions, cultures, perspectives, and experiences together  
to enrich our collective life.  
Each adding its distinct flavor, color, texture, spice, and nourishment to the whole.  
A whole community that is greater and even more beautiful than the sum of its parts.

I want to talk, as the Verse says,  
"about doing a new thing"  
about "making a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert".

### **Keys to the Future**

Let me warn you at the outset of my remarks  
that I have a certain bias.

Indeed, through a variety of experiences both in Michigan and  
in Washington, I have become increasingly convinced  
that the dominant issue before our state and our nation  
during the 1990s will be our willingness and capacity to  
development our human resources...that is, education.

Years ago our parents stepped up to their responsibilities  
by sacrificing to give us an opportunity for a better life  
through education.

Now it is our generation's turn.  
Today we are called upon to demonstrate a similar commitment  
to our children...to the next generation...to the future.

But here I know I am preaching to the faithful.  
For no people in America care more about education  
for their children than African Americans

From the beginning, African Americans have put their faith in education.  
They have struggled and sacrificed, generation after generation,  
no matter how hard the way, how steep the odds.  
they have done what they had to do to educate their children,  
to build for them a better future than they could have.

So many of the great African American leaders  
have been teachers--

They all put their faith in education  
They have given their lives for education  
as the sure path to a better future  
for Black people in America.

And not just in America

In just a few days, we in Michigan will have the tremendous honor  
of hosting Mr. Nelson Mandela  
the great South African leader  
whose extraordinary example of courage  
and commitment to freedom  
has inspired the entire world with new hope.

When he left prison, some of his first words  
were to the children:  
"We---your parents, your brothers, your sisters----  
love you, and we want you to lead the country.

But you cannot carry out that responsibility  
if you have not got the weapons.....  
the weapons of education.”

No, I have not come here to preach about education to you.

Nor have I come with warnings about the great  
challenges facing education in America today.

You know these all too well.

You know how many of our children  
are being cheated of their birthright,  
how many are deprived of the opportunity  
for the education so necessary for their future.

And tragically, this is happening at a time when education  
is more critical to our future than ever before.

Because our world is changing.  
Changing faster than we can keep up.

We are living through one of the most profound transformations in world history.  
Just think of it.

Our population is fast becoming the most diverse  
Very soon we will be the most multicultural nation on earth.

We are becoming internationalized.  
What happens in anywhere in the world affects our daily lives  
whether it is apartheid in South Africa or the price of bread in Russia.

Our economy is undergoing a radical shift  
in which educated people and their ideas  
are becoming the foundation for prosperity.

Instead of coming to grips with these changes,  
seizing them as opportunities  
for creating a better life for our people,  
we seem to have been in a long dream state,  
or maybe nightmare is a better word,  
in which the motto has been  
“Eat dessert first, life is uncertain”.

As a nation we have been spending our children’s future  
to pay for greedy consumption and quick fixes.  
Instead of investing in our schools  
We have squandered money on junk bonds and  
leveraged buyouts, on payouts and write-offs to people  
who already have enough.....or more than enough.

It is time for America to wake up.

The key thing we need to do to prepare for the changes  
that are the reality of America in the 21st century,  
is to educate our children.

To make the investments now, the sacrifices, that we need to make.

If we do not develop the talents of all of our people,  
we do not have any chance of coping  
with the radical changes in the world around us  
or maintaining our quality of our life let alone improving it.  
for future generations.

The dilemma facing our nation was brought home to me  
in very frightening and convincing terms at a recent  
conference with the top leaders of Japan.

We asked them, “What do you think are America’s  
greatest strengths and weaknesses?”

They gave us an interesting reply.  
They said America’s greatest strength is our system of higher education.  
Then they said our greatest weakness was public education  
at the primary and secondary level.

Quite a contrast! Quite a challenge!

### **Higher Education in America**

These Japanese leaders were right  
about America’s colleges and universities.

They are the strongest in the world  
strong in terms of the quality of the education they provide,  
in the numbers of students they educate,  
in the ideas they generate that are creating new jobs  
and prosperity every day,  
in the variety and flexibility of our system  
that meets the needs of our diverse population..

The state of Michigan has one of the finest systems of higher  
education in the nation, including several of its great universities:  
Wayne State University, Michigan State University  
and our own University of Michigan.

And of course this is because of the commitments and sacrifices of  
eight generations of Michigan citizens.

And perhaps the most impressive thing about Michigan education  
is the desire of our people to build outstanding universities with  
a public character--designed to serve the public interest--  
designed to provide, as one of our early Michigan president's put it,  
"an uncommon education for the common man."

The fact that we are supported and sustained by the public,  
carries with it a deep obligation to the people of this State.

For as the Bible says in Luke, Chapter 12,  
"For unto whomsoever much is given,  
of him shall be much required;  
And to whom men have committed much,  
of him they will ask all the more."

I believe this deeply.

I also believe it applies not just to individuals but to institutions,  
to our universities--to the University of Michigan.

At the University of Michigan we accept this challenge, this public trust.

We know we are privileged to serve the people of Michigan.  
and not just to serve some of the people,  
but to serve all of the people.

With Michigan's other public universities  
we are working more intensely than ever before  
to serve the people of our State.

We are providing more financial aid for students.  
Today we meet the demonstrated financial need of all Michigan residents  
despite our decreasing levels of State and federal support.

Our universities are working with business and industry  
to promote economic development, jobs and new business.

In particular, we are working with minority business to provide  
the expertise they need to compete successfully.

We are working with healthcare systems  
and human services through networks and collaborative efforts  
to improve the quality of life for Michigan citizens.

We are working together with government and the private sector  
to protect the environment.

An Example: K-12 Education  
Perhaps most importantly of all we are working with Michigan schools  
from pre-school, through K-12 to community colleges and beyond  
to improve education for our children.

For what we have come to recognize is that education is a continuum.  
It is all one system--one seamless web....

A poet said, "No man is an island"  
well, universities aren't islands either.

If our schools don't have what they need to educate students to their full potential,  
then that affects all of us.

For too long we have left the problems of the schools to others.  
Now we all pay the price for the wasted talent, the lost potential,  
the suffering and hopelessness of children we fail to educate.  
fail to inspire with hope for a better future.

Just one price we all pay is that we are building prisons instead of schools.  
We are paying \$25k per year to keep a young person in jail  
instead of paying half of that per year to keep him or her in college.  
What kind of sense does this make?  
Our universities can no longer be aloof from the problems of the schools.  
We must join with government, churches, citizens, business,  
with every person in a systematic and comprehensive effort  
to see that our children get the best education we know how to give them.  
We have to create a mighty force to fight for our children  
for their right to a brighter future  
We have to provide the same opportunity to every child  
regardless of where they live, who their parents are,  
how much money they have.  
Michigan's three research universities recently  
joined forces with the schools and the State  
to form a consortium to improve education at all levels.  
All of Michigan's colleges and universities  
are working with schools and state government the State.  
to build a satellite network to connect us with every classroom and teacher  
in the State so we can share knowledge and experience.  
We are involved in teacher education and continuing education  
for teachers and administrators.

### **The University of Michigan**

The University of Michigan feels a particular responsibility to  
this city and its schools.  
After all, you are the city of our birth--  
we were founded in Detroit in 1817.  
Further, just as our Detroit and the University of Michigan  
have been closely linked in the past,  
we believe it essential that we become more  
closely linked together in the years ahead.  
This is particularly important in the areas of K-12 education.  
In particular, we seek to cooperate and collaborate with the schools  
in Detroit to share our resources and knowledge.  
You notice I didn't say we wanted to come in and reform the schools,  
to tell people what to do.  
I didn't say we have the answers.  
We don't.  
What we do have are resources of people and ideas  
that we can share.  
We have the determination to work together with the Detroit community  
to enrich the education of Detroit children.  
Let me just mention a few of the programs we have underway.  
As part of the King Chavez Park program  
we have brought to our campus nearly 2000 students from Detroit Schools  
to introduce them to campus life and the opportunities  
offered by higher education.  
We are a sponsor of the Wade Mcree Incentive Scholarship Program  
that guarantees a college education to students who are motivated to  
academic achievement.  
(Incidentally, this program is named for one of the most  
revered members of our faculty--and your community)  
Nearly 1800 students in Detroit Schools have participated in DAPSEP  
a program providing additional preparation in science and math  
beginning in the 7th grade and continuing through high school  
Members of our faculty are working with Detroit teachers  
on a number of projects using computers in fields ranging  
from creative writing to biology and science, to international politics.  
Our School of Social Work, at the initiative of its Dean, Harold Johnson,  
is working to develop a comprehensive approach to education  
that meets the needs of the whole child recognizing

that a child who is hungry or homeless, or sick cannot learn.  
Our Black alumni are serving as mentors to Detroit high school students.  
In the fall, we will begin to re-open the Rackham building in downtown Detroit  
with an Admissions Office to work full time with Detroit schools and students  
and with other programs of outreach and education.  
The list of our activities in Detroit is long and growing longer.  
...or the over 60 individual projects the University now has running  
with various Detroit schools  
But in coming months and years we need to do a better job  
of planning and coordinating what we do  
so that it has greater strategic impact.  
We seek to work with your schools to provide them  
with the tools they need to assure each of their  
students the education so necessary for the  
21st Century.

### **A Glance Backwards**

Yet, while such partnerships are critical,  
it is also the case that the fundamental responsibility  
of a university is the education of the students  
enrolling on our campuses.  
That is our primary mission.  
Yet let me also acknowledge that here  
our record is mixed...  
both for higher education in general...  
and for the University of Michigan in particular.  
Of course by any ranking,  
we at Michigan provide one of the best  
educations available anywhere in the world--  
But we have not succeeded in making  
this marvelous education available to all.  
Our Scripture lesson today says  
"Remember ye not the former things,  
neither consider the things of old."  
But I think we must look back to our past at least briefly ,  
to acknowledge our past errors, real failures,  
in order to learn from them as we move ahead.  
Sadly, at almost all of America's colleges and universities  
and at the University of Michigan,  
we must come to terms with our historical failure  
to live up to our own ideals,  
and to the democratic principles of our nation.  
It has to be said forthrightly and honestly that  
we have failed to provide equal educational opportunity  
to African Americans through much of our history  
There is no way to gloss over this.  
It is a fact--a blot on our otherwise proud record  
of contribution to American life.  
While the University has admitted Black students from its earliest days.  
while many of the Black leaders of Michigan and the nation  
have earned degrees at Michigan  
while we have never had an official policy of discrimination...  
It is also true that you don't need  
to have an official policy to discriminate.  
What you have to have is an official policy and a plan  
if you want to overcome discrimination.  
because its effects are so deeply rooted in our society.  
And the fact is that for too long our universities  
did not have a policy or plan  
for enrolling more Black students,  
and hiring more Black faculty.  
There was unofficial but real racism and discrimination.

We were often blind to the pain of campus life  
for all of those who were in some way different  
from the dominant culture of the time.  
Let me add a personal footnote here.  
The difficulty of coming to a new environment and being different  
is something I have experienced first hand.  
I come from a small farming town in Missouri  
I got to Yale by an accident of fate  
and believe me it was a quite a shock  
to find myself among the cream of the Eastern elite  
who were so different from anyone I had known.  
before in my life.  
I'm not saying that I experienced anything like  
the prejudice and discrimination experienced  
by a Black person in that situation.  
But I experienced enough to feel the pain and confusion.  
And I have never forgotten it.  
Though in the end, I think perhaps my old fashioned  
small town Midwest values may have changed some of them  
more than they changed me.  
You know you can take the boy out of the country,  
but you can't take the country out of the boy.  
By the late sixties and early seventies, our colleges and universities,  
inspired by the great movement for justice and equal rights,  
and spurred on by our own students who called us to our duty,  
began to confront discrimination and try to eliminate it.  
They established programs for recruiting minority students and faculty.  
But just as we were making headway, increasing our minority population,  
we faltered, lost sight of our goal..  
By the early eighties, we were sliding backwards,  
We were preoccupied with the impact of a major recession,  
by federal and state policies that were taking away  
financial aid for needy students.....  
We lost sight of our priorities.  
The result was that instead of recruiting more Blacks and other minorities,  
we were recruiting fewer and we weren't able  
to hold on to the people we did have  
because the culture did not welcome and support them.  
However, as the Scripture teaches,  
there is no point in dwelling too long on past failures.  
You can't move forward very far or very fast  
if you are always gazing back at the past.  
But we can use the lessons of the past  
to understand better,  
to strengthen our resolve,  
to help chart a new and different path,  
to change and reform our universities.  
And to make the change permanent this time.

### **The Michigan Mandate**

That is what we are trying to do at the University of Michigan.  
We are trying to "do a new thing" as the verse from Isaiah suggests to us.  
We are trying to change, to bring African Americans  
fully into the life and leadership of our University.  
People sometimes ask me why the University  
has made this commitment to change,  
why I have made this change a cornerstone of my Presidency.  
The reasons are simple.  
First and foremost, it is morally right.  
Second, we see this commitment as the cornerstone of our  
capacity to serve a changing nation and a changing world.  
America today is rapidly evolving into one of the most diverse,

multicultural societies on earth...

The America of the 21st Century will be a nation without a dominant ethnic majority--and to serve this changing nation, institutions such as the University of Michigan must also change.

And third, for the University to achieve excellence in its fundamental missions of teaching and scholarship, it is clear we must reflect the growing diversity of America and the world itself among our people and our activities.

We see at last that we cannot be the best in anything, unless we are the best in building a community that draws its strength from the rich intellectual variety of its people people come from from different backgrounds, races, beliefs, ages, economic backgrounds, and nationalities.

To this end, over the past three years we have been developing and committing ourselves to a new agenda we call the Michigan Mandate.

Some of you may have heard of it. many of you are a part of it.

The fundamental idea of the Mandate is that the University of Michigan must become a leader known for the racial and ethnic diversity of its faculty, students and staff.

A leader in creating a multicultural community that will be a model for higher education and a model for the society at large.

We don't believe we can serve this state and this nation, unless our campus reflects the strengths, perspectives, talents and experiences of people of color in everything that we do.

But we know the Mandate is not by itself a magic cure--- that is not going to change our Univeristy overnight.

Instead it is a strategic plan, it sets a direction and a points to a destination,

As the Scripture says it is meant "to make a path in the wilderness "

The Mandate evolved over these three years through literally hundreds of meetings with people inside the University and outside.

Many people here helped it to evolve. they taught me, helped me to understand, they have stood by my side when things got tough, and when I make a mistake, they let me know it.

You can't have better friends and colleagues than that.

And I thank all of them for their help and loyalty.

### **Signs of Progress**

Today I can report to you that the Michigan Mandate is starting to work.

From top to bottom, University decisions are now made with our goals of diversity as a priority.

In fact, across the nation other colleges and universities are using it as a guide for their own planning.

There are many signs of progress...

1. During the first two years of the Michigan Mandate we have added 76 new faculty of color to the University, including 40 African American faculty, a 50% increase Already this year, we have already hired 13 new Black faculty. and we have some 11 offers still outstanding.

In addition, fewer are leaving us, and I hope this is because we are a more supportive place for them.



2. During this short period we have increased minority enrollments by 25% to the point when students of color now comprise 17% of our student body-- include over 2,200 African American students. In Business is 14% of the total, Medicine 12 percent, Dentistry 12%. Black graduate students have increased by 32.1 %. At the present time, Michigan is second only to Howard University in the number of Black PH.D.'s it produces.
3. Our early projections for this fall are particular encouraging, with a 35% increase in African American representation in our freshman class and a 58% increase in African American transfer students.
4. And our graduation rates among students of color are among the best in the nation.

There are many other signs of progress, ranging from action taken during the first month of my administration to complete the University's divestment of stock holdings in companies with interests in South Africa,

To major growth in financial aid for students of color

To major outreach programs to schools systems in cities such as Detroit

To the extraordinary celebration of diversity which occurs on our campus each year to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We have now put in place the people, policies and programs that will increase our representation of students of color at a rate that will make our University community fully representative of the national population during the 1990s.

By now you are probably asking yourself the question, "If they are making so much progress, why are we still reading about racial incidents on so many of Michigan's universities, including at the University of Michigan?"

The reason is that increasing the numbers of African American faculty, students and staff is only the first step in the Michigan Mandate.

If we only needed numbers it would take great effort and resources but with determination we will get there in reasonable time.

But numbers are the easy part.

We all know that you can have a lot of different people living in the same locale, working side by side, shopping in the same stores, going to the same classes. But that doesn't necessarily mean you have a community. You may have gathered the ingredients, but you can be a long way from a meal.

Just increasing the numbers and mix of people doesn't mean that you have mutual respect, that you can share some fundamental values in common that you can work towards common goals. that you can use the differences among those people as a source of strength and creativity, that in fact you can rejoice in difference. seek it out, draw sustenance from it.

To have this, you have to have a new kind of community.

At the University of Michigan we are determined to seek the changes needed to build this kind of community.

That is the hard part of the task ahead of us...

This is the new path we must blaze "in the wilderness".

### **Issues of Community**

What we are seeing now on our campuses, I think, are the birthpangs of this new type of community.

Our universities are confronting one of  
the most painful and persistent problems in American history.  
Because now, even as America's population is becoming more diverse,  
it is also becoming more separated.

Tragically, students coming to our campus today have grown up  
in communities that are separated by race and ethnic group,  
by nationality and belief,  
by occupational level and economic background.

Our society and its institutions give people little chance to meet  
let alone live and go to school with students who are different.  
The evidence is that these separations in our society  
are growing not lessening.

Our communities and institutions have failed to create  
a sense of community or to provide the models  
for creative interaction that we need to build a new kind of society,  
based on equality, mutual dependence, trust and respect.

And our leaders do not lead us to such visions  
of a multicultural society.

We have no Nelson Mandela with us to point the way .  
The truth is that in America today  
it is on our university and college campuses  
that many students come together for the first time  
and are expected to live and work together for the first time.

It is not surprising that they don't always get along,  
that it is sometimes painful.

It also isn't surprising that this shows up in the newspapers  
or on TV.

This is the price higher education pays because it is  
one of the few institutions in the country  
that is stepping up to the problem of racism and diversity in America.

Yet, I believe that such a mission is our destiny...our mandate.  
Hence, even the tensions on our campus should be viewed  
as a sign of progress.

For our campuses have become the crucibles  
in which the multicultural, multiracial, world cultures  
of 21st Century America are being brewed!

You don't get change without pain.  
What we are experiencing is the first faltering steps forward.

We are seeing the effects of increasing the numbers of students of color,  
and the early stages of creating a new kind of community  
that is built on diversity.

Our job is to educate our students,  
these world citizens of the 21st Century,  
inspire them, and, if necessary, require them  
to respect each other and learn to live together.

As some of you know, last year we enacted a policy  
that prohibits discriminatory harassment.

The first version was struck down in the Courts  
but I immediately put a new policy in place.

However, I am more concerned about educating students  
to prevent discrimination and racism than I am to punish it.

Next year we will begin an extensive educational effort  
throughout the campus.

A new course on the social origins and meaning of discrimination  
and prejudice will be taught for the first time  
in our largest undergraduate college and other schools and colleges  
either have such programs or soon will have.

If the way ahead seems discouraging at times,  
We should remember that we are not the only society  
grappling with these problems of human failure.

Historians tell us that group conflict, discrimination, prejudice and oppression

have been with us since the beginning of human society.  
It is a tragic part of human character to reject others.  
in order to define oneself.  
And we have only to look around us  
to see that it exists today in all parts of the world.  
Mr. Mandela's visit reminds of of the disgrace of apartheid in South Africa.  
Elsewhere there is deep rooted division between Muslims and Hindus,  
Jews and Arabs, Christians and Moslems in Lebanon,  
Chinese and Malays, Eritreans and Ethiopians, Basques and Spaniards.  
Catholics and Protestants.  
Nearly every country and region is struggling  
with the same problem we face on campus, in our State and nation.  
Human beings haven't learned how  
to live together harmoniously.  
But in today's world, we can't afford  
to tolerate racism and prejudice and discrimination  
any longer.  
We cannot live divided from one another.  
We cannot live at war with each other.  
Our world has become one world.  
What affects one, affects all.  
Low wages in Africa, mean lower wages in America.  
The price of bread in Russia helps determine  
how much bread there is on the table in Illinois.  
If people in Detroit don't have good jobs,  
students at Michigan won't have enough financial aid to get through school.  
Our people must learn  
to accept our common humanity,  
our common fate.  
Just because a problem is old,  
or widespread or complex ,or difficult  
doesn't mean we have an excuse to ignore it or avoid it.  
It may mean the job is harder to do.  
But, I, for one, do not believe the task is impossible.  
Maybe it is the engineer in me that makes me hopeful....  
that makes me determined to try.  
I know we can all draw inspiration from Nelson Mandela  
in coming days and weeks  
and from other great leaders and teachers  
such as Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
who have shown that it is possible to change the world  
armed only with the power of faith and understanding.  
We have to begin somewhere, we have to take a stand.

### **High Goals**

At the University of Michigan, we are trying to do just that.  
As the Scripture says, much has been given to us  
therefore much is expected of us.  
We believe we have a Mandate to build  
a new model of a learning community  
that thrives on the glorious and unique differences  
of our human heritage  
which uses its common sense of values and  
objectives to bind itself together.  
We have set for ourselves and our University the highest goals.  
I don't know if we can make "a river in the desert".  
I know that we will try.  
Of course, I also know that we will sometimes fail.  
We will take the wrong turn, stumble, lose our way at times,  
be confused, not have all the answers.  
But there is an old saying among engineers.  
If you never fail you just haven't set your goals high enough.

So a few missteps or detours won't bother me  
so long as we hold to our basic ideals and direction.  
What will not change or falter is my personal determination to lead  
the University in a direction that serves all the people of our society.  
Of course I know that our University can't accomplish  
its Mandate alone.  
We are determined to do our part.  
But we also need your help  
...your support...and your understanding.  
And we ask you to join with us and others throughout this state,  
in a commitment to provide the best possible education  
for every child, for every citizen  
to create the new models of multicultural communities  
so necessary for the new century which lies ahead.  
In years to come,  
I hope our children can look back with pride and gratitude  
and say that in this time and this place  
the people of Michigan and Detroit took a stand;  
they came together and worked together  
to build a new model of community  
for the good of the children.....  
I hope that they can say that we that we made a difference.  
That together we became a mighty force for change.  
Let us, as the Lesson says  
"Do a new thing; now it shall spring forth"  
Nothing we do in our lives is more important than this.  
Thank you very much.