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Volume 62, Number 1

Whittier First Friends Church

First Month, 2023

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# FCNL Annual Meeting

Friends Committee on National Legislation held its first hybrid annual meeting in November, with First Friends hosting the first-ever online opportunity for Friends to take part while gathering in community. Friends took part in a range of meeting activities from the comfort of Fellowship Hall.

151 people attended the meeting in person in Washington DC, and another 384 people attended online. Participants in FCNL's Quaker Public Policy Institute went on 160 lobby visits, representing 43 states. As active attendees, First Friends attended lobbying meetings with staff from Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla's office, and with Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA38) herself, accompanied by her staff. The ask this year was for support of the Environmental Justice for All Act (H.R. 2021/S. 872) and response to the climate crisis in our most impacted communities.

During Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, the FCNL General Committee approved legislative priorities for the 118th Congress (2023-2024) and looked forward to the coming year's work to develop FCNL's next strategic plan. We reflected on and celebrated our community's advocacy and our staff's leadership and challenged ourselves to

live into our aspirations of a society with equity and justice for all.

As Clarence Edwards spurred us to action in support of Spirit-led reflections in his opening plenary, Francisco Burgos grounded us in prayer. Francisco's Sunday message reminded us of the teaching to witness, love, and walk humbly with Spirit from Micah 6:8. Our reflection and worship were deep.

Tom Kunesh, Jose Santos Woss, and Lauren Brownlee reflected on their experiences as Friends and how they envisioned Quakers being brave and constant as we consider how to learn from our past to build a more just and peaceful future. General Secretary Bridget Moix spoke about her journey with FCNL and encouraged us to consider our own journey and vision for the future of this work together. In a time of worship sharing, FCNL's program assistants reflected on queries related to why they lobby.

We recognized two members of Congress for their leadership: Sen. Tim Kaine (VA) for his bipartisan efforts to reassert Congressional war powers, which is critical to reining in the use of force abroad, preventing the escalation and expansion of conflicts, and forging a path to end

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## Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

**Dear Friends,** Happy New Year, everyone. I hope you all had a merry Christmas and enjoyed some special family time.



### **Friends**

**Celebrate:** After 40 Christmas holiday open houses, **Bob & Lou Secord** have hosted their last. Thank you so much for your hard work to present us such a magical evening. Thank you for the memories!!

### **Landon, Avalon and Hudson**

**Caringella** counted 29 trees throughout the house. Here they are in front of one of their favorite trees.



**Friends About Town:** Residents of Whittier were out in full force for the return of the Christmas parade. **Dan Wright**, driving his 1914 Model T and **Milton Wright**, behind the wheel of his 1938 Chevy truck, drove members of the Whittier Museum in the parade. **Deanna Woirhaye** and **Bill Ryder** could be seen taking lots of pictures with help from **Candice Ryder**. **Cassie, Landon, Avalon** and **Hudson Caringella**, and **Lea Wright** enjoyed the sights of



the parade with **Bishop Aeroux** and **Alicia Atkinson** from her front porch.

**Friends Move:** **Brad & Jan Harmer** have sold their house, and they will be moving to Boston near where Jan grew up.

**School and Work:** During the December City Council meeting, **Mike Sprague** was recognized for his many years of reporting for the Whittier Daily News. He received a proclamation for his retirement and years of service reporting. Mike retired after a distinguished career of 45 years as a journalist. His wife, **Barbara Healy-Sprague**, and other family and friends were with him at the presentation.

**Friends Travel:** **Mahlon & Gwen Woirhaye** were in London with granddaughter **Anathea**, preventing her homelessness as she had finished her studies at Oxford and was waiting for her friend to finish in Ireland so they could travel together on the Continent. They saw several plays including *Orlando*, *Mary Poppins*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Book of Mormon*, *The Mousetrap* (now over 70 years running), and tried a variety of restaurants and visited museums. **Elinore Petoletti** went on a Monterey and Carmel Holiday by Rail Trip. Highlights of the trip included the Monterey 17-mile Drive, Steinbeck Center and Home, and a ride on the Coast Starlight train.

**Friends Sharing News:** Help to keep the Friendly Fare going. Email me a quick note and tell me your news. Send to Lea at [lealouw@gmail.com](mailto:lealouw@gmail.com), or deliver to me at church on Sunday. See you next month!

This Month in Meeting for Worship	
<b>January 1</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>New Things</i> ~ Genesis 2:7-9, 15-17, 21-25 (selected), Ecclesiastes 3:1-13, Revelation 21:1, 5
<b>January 8</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Freedom Here</i> ~ Matthew 3:13-17, Galatians 4: 1-7, John 1:1-5
<b>January 15</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Equality and Equity</i> ~ John 1:29-42, I Corinthians 1:26- 31
<b>January 22</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Rules for Engaging</i> ~ Mark 1:29- 31, I Timothy 4:1-10
<b>January 29</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Claimed</i> ~ Luke 3:21-22, Ephesians 3:1-6

## Loletta's Lines

As we begin a new year, we still have all the memories of the old one. Which ones will you take with you and which ones will you discard? Some cultures have traditions of sweeping out or cleaning the house at the end of a year. This symbolizes letting go and not taking into the future things that should be left behind. We all hope to repeat the good moments and leave behind the rest! But sometimes the things we want to leave behind are things we intended to leave behind in other years! Especially a few (or more) pounds or a bad habit. We may put them in a positive light and frame them as a New Year resolution- the most popular are eating a healthier diet and exercising more! Some cultures give gifts of money in the hope of bringing you prosperity in the New Year- and certainly leaving behind any debt!



At Monthly Meeting for December 2022  
Monthly Meeting for January is January 8th at 1:15 pm.

At Monthly Meeting for December on Sunday, December 4, Trustees gave an update on the renovation of the meeting house restrooms to make them ADA compliant. The City of Whittier has approved plans, and construction is due to start within two months. We are also looking at improvements to accessible drinking water. Funding for this project is made possible by our building endowment and a generous gift from Gordon Crocker. We approved the 2023 budget despite remaining unknown factors, such as staffing and tenants. Monthly Meeting lunch prices will be increased by \$1.00 to allow for increasing food costs. We approved the slate of committees and clerks for 2023 as brought by the Nominating Committee. Intergenerational Meeting for Learning will continue through the spring.

It is my wish that you leave behind all the things that have separated you from God, yourself, and others even for a moment. Whether it was the illusion God was missing, a disagreement with a family member or friend, or the time you were angry with yourself. Please also leave behind any feeling that you are not enough or the thought the world cannot change for the better. I hope you take with you memories of joy that made you want to dance and sing, experiences of the Holy that embolden you to shine your Light, and moments of love and compassion that carry you forward into becoming more and more the beautiful Beloved Child that you are. For God so loved the world, including you and me. So, God came and stayed- last year and 2023, too. Happy New Year Friends!

**We welcome and encourage your comments as well as your contributions and photos for inclusion in The Living Light.**

**Kindly send your email to Candice Ryder at [cryder55@hotmail.com](mailto:cryder55@hotmail.com).**



## News from Whittier Friends School

All was not calm, but all was definitely bright, this holiday season at Whittier Friends School! With great joy and 100% attendance by our student body, Whittier Friends School hosted their first in-person Holiday Performance since December 2019. Ten preschoolers sang and danced to "Santa Shark," a holiday version of the infamous preschooler favorite, "Baby Shark." Nine primary elementary students performed a pantomime to the classic "Twas the Night Before Christmas" complete with



*Whittier Friends School students sing "Jingle Bell Rock" with their families and friends at their first Christmas performance since December 2019.*

prancing reindeer, "I, in my cap," and the red-suited jolly old elf himself.

Four upper elementary students

performed a memorized

skit that

meshed Star Wars with the Wise Men's journey to visit the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. Throughout the evening, there were opportunities to join together in song with the audience, plus a few instances where the children sang by memory, including "Deck the Halls" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." The evening ended with families enjoying dessert and a visit from Santa, played by 7th grade Whittier Friends School alum Landon Caringella. Other fun holiday festivities during December at Whittier Friends School included Spirit Week, where children got to dress thematically, such as Mismatched Monday with mixed up footwear, and Comfy Friday with festive pajamas. In a typical school year, the time between Thanksgiving Break and Winter Break is a special kind of chaos, and it

## Russ' Reflections

### ***Twelfth Night Organ and Carol Sing***



Come celebrate the Twelfth Day of Christmas with some organ arrangements of carols, and sing some of your favorite carols as we move into Epiphany (January 6th) and a New Year. Russ Litchfield will play the organ and will lead the singing in the Meeting House on Thursday, January 5, 2022, at 7 pm. You may also attend via Zoom (Zoom meeting number 202 0188 788). Invite a friend, and spend an hour or so with music and merry-making.

Music will include: organ settings of "Joy to the World", "Silent Night", and "In dulci jubilo (which we might recognize as "Good Christian Men Rejoice"), along with "Noels" by Daquin and Guilman; and twelve carols, including "O Holy Night", "We Three Kings", "What Child is This?", "Go, Tell It On the Mountain", and "The Twelve Days of Christmas."



*Whittier Friends School Parent Arthur Meza Jr. shares his accordion skills with his daughter's class while the students, dressed in pajamas, enjoy their holiday party on Friday, December 15.*

was heartwarming to see a return to that chaos this year!

We have had several successful fundraisers in recent months, and we owe that in part to our First Friends Church community. See's Candy brought us \$606, and our Winter "

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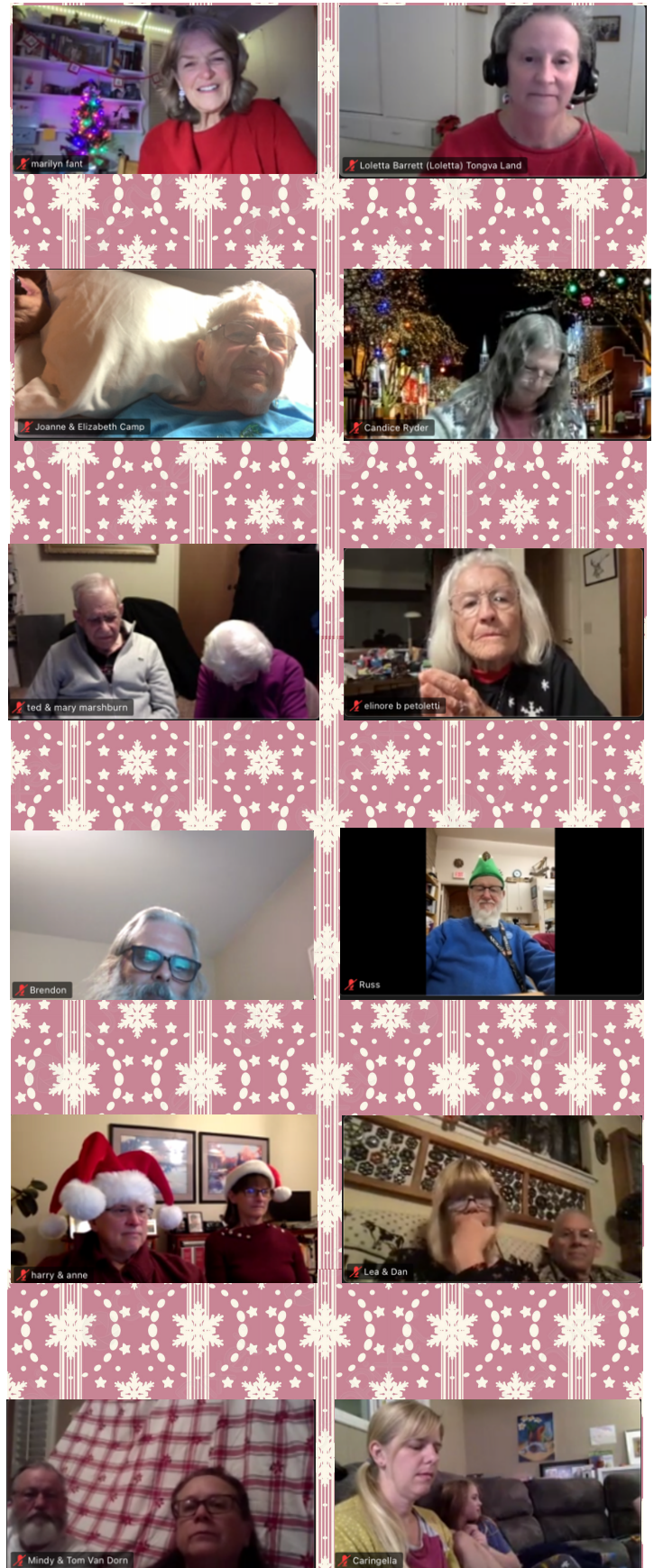
# Celebration with a Concern for Christmas

On December 11, Friends continued the newly established tradition of gathering online in lieu of our longtime tradition of Christmas Dinner in Fellowship Hall. Twenty participants with festive backgrounds and attire joined for an hour of fun, fellowship, and follies MC'd by incoming Clerk of the Meeting, Elisabeth Elliot.

Whittier Friends School students opened the program with an adorable rendition of "Deck the Halls." This was followed by "Storytime with Auntie Elisabeth." during which listeners were entertained by the tale of Sven the Reindeer in search of his true identity, complete with an appearance by Sven from Elisabeth's personal collection. Next, was Part I of "Christmas at the Secords" produced and directed by Deanna Woirhaye featuring interviews of attendees of Bob and Lou Secord's 40th annual Christmas party, as well as scenes of Lou's nativities and beautifully decorated trees.

Of course, no FFC Christmas party would be complete without Harry Eggleton's riddles and jokes. This year's edition came with a twist. The "punny" riddles were part of a tic-tac-toe like game called "Ho-ho-ho." Participants chose a team, either "X" or "O", and got to guess at the answers to the riddles. The winner each time was the cleverest or closest as judged by Harry and got to claim a square on behalf of the team. The object of the game was to fill all the squares without getting three in a row.

Next came Secord Christmas Part II with more interviews and yuletide scenes. Russ Litchfield closed the program with an inspirational and jazzy piano solo of selections from "A Charlie Brown Christmas." The gathering ended all too soon with a closing prayer by Pastor Loletta Barrett. All agree it was a fun way to celebrate with Friends. And who knows, maybe we will be able to gather in person for turkey and all the fixin's next year.





Olivia Bald  
Matthew Bouchard  
Jared Bradley  
Barbara Cote  
Barbara Healy-Sprague  
Meredith Marshburn  
John McClean  
Sarah Singleton  
Darryl Warren  
Cedric Woirhaye  
Alli Wright

If we've missed your birthday, we apologize (and happy birthday)! We work hard to keep our birthday calendar up-to-date, so please let us know if we're forgetting anyone. Thank you!

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forever war, and Sen. Lisa Murkowski (AK), for her work to honor the nation-to-nation relationship the federal government has with tribal nations and leadership in responding to the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People.

With a determined eye toward the world we seek, the General Committee reached unity on new legislative priorities to guide FCNL's advocacy in the 118th Congress (2023-2024) and began a process of listening to divine guidance around policies related to reproductive health care, including abortion and reproductive rights.

Spirit-led advocacy continues through our involvement with FCNL, and we look forward to both discerning and sharing our involvement in government. —*Elisabeth Elliot*

## A Message from Outgoing Clerk, Deanna Woirhaye

Like the words of the Grateful Dead, I, too, revel over, "the long strange trip it's been," being the recent Presiding Clerk of Whittier First Friends Church. I am deeply honored to have been assisting alongside this community during this very challenging time in human history. I am grateful for having found needed care and support in all the Zoom groups that I participated in during these times such as our book study group looking at Maya Angelou, Howard Thurman, and now Thich Nhat Hahn; our Understanding Through Sharing Zoom group covering topics like racism, climate change, LGBTQIA + issues, Indigenous peoples' plights; and our Sunday Morning Meeting for learning classes as well as Meeting for Worship. I have learned so much and I feel like I have grown spiritually despite the hardships we all faced. All this is thanks to my church community who met the challenges of the pandemic with open arms and a loving electronic embrace at a time when we were unable to do so in person. I want to thank all the community members for your patience and kindness throughout my time as clerk. It is very much appreciated. Here's to a new year with new beginnings. Thank you, friends.

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Gift Boutique did \$114. Our Brickhouse Pizza night was \$120, and Bean Soup Mix brought us \$756. A trip to the recycling center brought us \$80! Thank you so much for your support, as every little bit helps us in our efforts to provide a safe, nurturing, one-of-a-kind educational environment.

And as always, you can follow Whittier Friends School's adventures on Facebook at [facebook.com/whittierfriendsschool/](https://facebook.com/whittierfriendsschool/) and on Instagram at [instagram.com/whittierfriendsschool/](https://instagram.com/whittierfriendsschool/)

—*Cassie Caringella*



# Friends Committee on National Legislation

## Lobbying with Quakers

### How to Lobby

Congressional offices are meeting with constituents virtually more frequently than ever, making it easy for you to interact with your lawmakers.

Virtual lobby meetings can be incredibly effective. They are also simple and easy to do by phone or online no matter where you are.

### Get Started

- Email and call the scheduler in your local congressional office to request a lobby visit by telephone or video conference. You can find the scheduler for your members of Congress using the Staff Lookup tool in Friends Committee on National Legislation's Action Center at [fcnl.org](http://fcnl.org).
- Establish how much time the staffer has to meet with you.

### Make Your Voice Heard: A Road Map for Your Lobby Visit

- Introduce yourself. Explain who you are and your relevant faith, community, and professional affiliations.
- Lobbying visits are about building a relationship. Be polite and respectful of the staffer's time
- Thank the office for the position the legislator has taken on the issue which you support. This can be something simple--don't overthink it.
- Present the Ask. This is the specific

action you hope your representative will consider.

- Share a personal story about why this issue matters to you. You don't need to be an expert - your members of Congress work for you and care about your opinions. Telling your story is an important way to connect with the values and priorities your members of Congress care about, and it can help change their minds. Ask follow-up questions to learn more about the member's position on the issue.
- Ask questions. Do they support the Ask? What other information do they need? What strategies do they support to address this question? Do they hear from other constituents on this issue? Listen to and write down their answers.
- Repeat your Ask and thank the staffer again.

### Follow-Up

- Email the staffer you met with within three days to thank them again for their time and reaffirm the lobby Ask. Make sure they know how best to contact you.
- As appropriate, report your visit to FCNL and let them know what was discussed and how the conversation went.

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Candice Ryder and Mel Sturr, Editors  
Loletta Barrett, Pastor  
Russell Litchfield, Dir of Music Ministries and  
Organist  
Lorenzo Mora, Custodian  
Telephone 562-698-9805  
FAX 562-698-1127  
[www.firstfriendswhittier.org](http://www.firstfriendswhittier.org)  
Whittier Friends School Staff  
Candice Ryder, School Committee Clerk  
562-945-1654



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## **THANKS FOR GENEROUS HEARTS**

Thank you to everyone who made contributions to our Winter Mission Project! Our Christmas Tree of Peace was richly decorated with accessory items to be distributed to our homeless friends in the neighborhood. St. Matthias Soup Kitchen has the opportunity to make that happen. All the canned items have been delivered to the Interfaith Food Center. Welcome monetary gifts were transformed into grocery gift cards by Whittier Friends School and delivered for use in the new year. Friends made donations with thoughtfulness and generosity.

Thank you, one and all!

Marilyn Fant, Clerk of CEO



Please remember in  
prayer those Friends  
unable to worship  
with us regularly.

**Barbara Cote**  
**Kathy Hood**  
**Rose Nedrow**  
**Kathy Robison**  
**Ami Troedsson**  
**Carol Urner**  
**Gerry Wolfe**