

# The Living Light

“...and Christ shall give thee light.” *Ephesians 5:14*



Volume 50, Number 2 First Friends Church of Whittier Second Month, 2011

## Heralding The New Creation

### **Cold Weather Shelter Brings Comfort to Whittier Homeless**

Again this winter (Jan. 10-17) we hosted the Homeless, an outreach we have participated in for over 20 years. Through the efforts of many, approximately 30 guests were fed and housed each night for a week. The heavy rains of December had caused some flooding in the Sharpless basement and the day the Homeless arrived there was a plumbing problem. Fortunately with clear weather and help from the Trustees and a plumber we were prepared for the first night. Mary Boltz arranged for groups which ordinarily meet in the basement to meet elsewhere.

Many helped with shopping, hosting, preparing and serving meals, and volunteers stayed upstairs and downstairs with the guests overnight. A total of 48 individuals from our Meeting, HOW House, and helping friends assisted in this effort. Over 250 man/woman/youth hours of time were given this week, mostly on site. Some individuals worked 2, 3, or 4 evenings during the week.

On behalf of the Outreach Committee and our Meeting, I want to THANK YOU ALL for participating in this successful community outreach program. The Homeless guests were most grateful to receive two good meals each day and a warm place to sleep each night.

— Ted Marshburn

“I am a student, bicycle rider, and co-host of the ‘Composting Quakerism’ podcast.” This is how C. Wess Daniels, the pastor of Camas WA Friends Church, describes himself. In fact, Wess is an up-and-coming young adult Friend who is making a name for himself as a commentator on Quaker tradition and theology via his blog (see <http://gatheringinlight.com>).

Wess will deliver the Quaker Heritage Day address at Berkeley Friends Church on Saturday, February 12. His lecture is titled: “Heralding the New Creation: Mission as Participation in the Quaker Tradition,” to be given in two morning and one afternoon sessions. Simple breakfast and buffet lunches will be provided by Berkeley Friends.

Wess has a very broad background in the Quaker world. He came west from the evangelical Friends community of north eastern Ohio with a degree from Malone University. He has studied at Woodbrooke Quaker Center in England, and is currently working on a PhD at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena.

In alternate years the Quaker Heritage Day event is held jointly with the annual meeting of the Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends (WARSF). A number of Whittier Friends will again make the 400-mile trip north to attend this important gathering, which serves to connect First Friends Church with its parent body, Friends United Meeting, and FWCC, AFSC, and FCNL as well.

The suggested donation for Quaker Heritage Day is \$20 with lunch or \$15 without. Friends who are interested in arranging for transportation and/or accommodations in Berkeley should contact the FFC office no later than a week before the event.



# Friendly Fare

by Lea Wright

## Dear Friends,

**New Friends:** Beginning with last March, continuing every month through this month, we have enjoyed hearing about new babies for one year straight. The good news continues this month. **Monica Dean** became a great grandmother for the second time. **Victoria Mae** was born on December 27 to **Denise & Frank Martinez**. **Denise** is Monica's granddaughter and the daughter of **LaVonne & Dean Ehlinger**. Denise & Frank also have a 4 year old son, **Frankie**. Monica was recently moved to a new assisted living facility in Riverside and is doing well. **Caleb Carver Perry**, son of **Jaime & Kyle Perry**, was born on January 3. Caleb is the grandson of **Mark & Carol Perry** and the first great-grandson of **Hubert Perry**. **Stephanie Votaw Murillo & Dave Murillo** welcomed their first child **Nathaniel Alfredo Joseph Murillo** on January 17. His extended family includes: **Grandmother Audine Votaw, Grandfather Daryl Votaw, Great Grandmother Audine Coffin, Great Grandparents Don & Shirley Votaw**; great aunts and great uncles, including **Carrin & George Bouchard**, and lots of cousins.

**Friends Visit:** A lot of people had special visitors over the Christmas and New Years holidays and we were able to greet many of them after Meeting. Visiting their **Grandma Ruth Beede** were **Jon, Carrie**, and baby **Jack Gruber** from Anaheim and **Jeff Gruber** home from school at UNC, Chapel Hill where he is a senior. **Don & Shirley Votaw** were happy to have their daughter **Lynda Votaw Ulyott**, their grandson **Aaron**, and granddaughter **Melissa** with them at church Christmas Eve. **Stacy Bouchard** arrived home to spend the holidays with her family. A Christmas card was received in the church office from **Susie Cush**. She says she doesn't travel much more than the 15 miles up the 101 to work or an occasional trip the 15 miles down to Port Orford on the weekends, but she promised to walk down to her pasture with the Living Light and take a picture. **Becky Memmelaar's** daughter **Jill Bryant** and her husband, **Shay**, along with sons **Bailey, Gavin**, and **Finn** came to visit in January. They live in the High Point, North Carolina area. It was a first plane trip for the boys and a first trip to CA for everybody except Jill. All of Becky's children and grandchildren have now made the trek.

**Friends Celebrate:** Matthew Bouchard turned 21 in January. There was a big family celebration with all his cousins. Cedric Woirhaye celebrated his 11th birthday. Audine Coffin turned 89 on Christmas Day. Her son Jerry Coffin and daughter Carrin Bouchard visited her with balloons and cake, singing birthday cheers. All the staff at Royal Crest joined the celebration.

**School and Work News:** **Jon-Paul Cook** completed his first semester at Whittier College with impressive grades. **Lara Wemmerus** was student of the month in November

at Dulles elementary school. **Wes Van Dorn** and his school band performed at Disneyland at the Carnation Plaza. **Lloyd Kaneko** was awarded Million Dollar Book Reviews' 2010 "People's Choice Award."

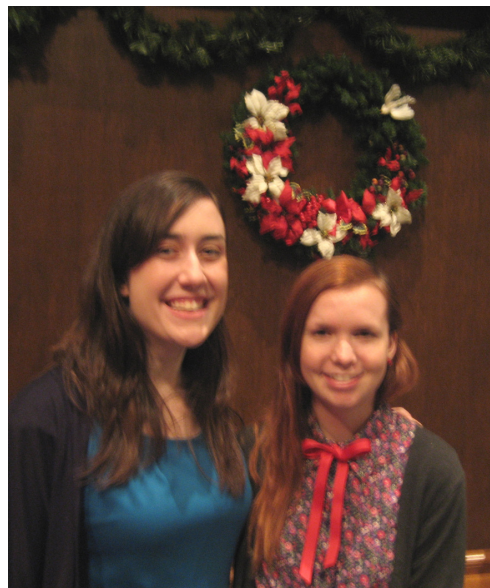
**Friends Travel:** **Holly Overin's** husband **Glen Eisner**, returned in January from China where he was helping to create sets for a film. **Kirk Wright & Allison Lew** were in Costa Rica the last three weeks of January. Kirk volunteered to assist in a two week instructional program of English for Spanish speakers. Allison participated in Spanish language classes. The final week was spent traveling in Costa Rica. The **Woirhaye (ABCDE)** and **Ryder** clans ventured up to Green Valley Lake in the San Bernardino mountains. The children created a wall of snowballs and of course, a snow person and bounded down nearby hills on their sleds; but the highlight was watching and playing as the snow was actually falling. **Bob & Sabron Newton** drove to Morro Bay after Christmas and, entirely between rainstorms, did the hiking and birdwatching they had planned, also sighting some monarchs and otters. They visited the natural history museum and took a naturalist-guided walk through the saltwater marsh of the Morro Estuary. **Dan & Lea Wright, Cassie, Steven & Landon Caringella, Elinore Petoletti, Milton Wright and Tom Caringella** went to Sky Valley desert for a day and visited Elinore's



brother **Jim Dodd** who is currently residing in the family cabin. Here they are with *The Living Light* continuing our tradition: "*The Living Light Travels.*" (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

**Special prayers for these Friends during difficult times:** **Diane Wemmerus** traveled to Chicago to spend time with her mother **Audrey Bloom** before she died in late December. **Allison Coop** mourns the loss of her grandmother **Elizabeth Ann Crownover**. **Tish Purkiss's** mother **Doris Vickers** passed away on Jan 12. **Sarah Garland's** paternal grandmother **Eleanor Garland** passed away on January 15. **Marilyn Fant** has been spending time with her father **Larry Roop** who had a fall recently. **Beth Munday, Mary Raymond's** daughter, was recently hospitalized to have pins put in her hip. **Marie Kaneko** was re-hospitalized briefly for complications from a recent surgery. **Audine Coffin** spent some time in the hospital in December. **Carol & Mark Perry**, as Carol waits for a liver transplant. **Peggy Paull** is recovering from pneumonia.

**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, or deliver to me at church on Sunday. See you next month!



Christy and Tammy

## **“I Am Whittier Friends School” - Part 1**

Tammy Van Dorn and Christy Tavernelli became friends in kindergarten at Whittier Friends School. Now they are very successful second-year college students on opposite coasts of this country, but their friendship endures. On December 19, both were home on Christmas break and found an opportunity to reunite at the site of their youthful memories.

Christy read the beloved Christmas story from Luke 2: 1-20 at First Friends Meeting for Worship, and Tammy gave the offertory prayer. The maturity and sincerity of these young Friends were evident.

Tammy graduated from Patriot High School in Riverside CA and went on to “Mt. Sac” (Mt. San Antonio College) in Walnut CA, where she was elected to the Dean’s Honor Roll in her first year. Christy graduated from Ramona Convent School in Fullerton and was accepted to Haverford College near Philadelphia. She received a “Wooden Spoon” award in her first year.

Both Christy and Tammy continue to be active in Friends affairs. Christy went as a delegate to a Young Friends conference in Richmond IN last year, and Tammy finds time to participate in fellowship activities at First Friends Church.

Tammy and Christy revived happy memories during the social hour after Meeting on December 19. They agreed that WFS got them off to a fine start academically, while nurturing them in the character traits that are invaluable for success in life.

This is the first of a projected series of biographical sketches, entitled “I Am Whittier Friends School,” highlighting the career achievements of former WFS students.

## **“From Hostility To Hospitality” Is Ellie Bewley’s Worship Theme**

Ellie Bewley based her January 2 Meeting for Worship message on a source that has inspired her for many years. Henri Nouwen’s book *Reaching Out* defines three attitude changes that people may cultivate that can lead to a state of inner peace: “loneliness to solitude,” “hostility to hospitality,” and “illusion to prayer.” Ellie elaborated on these topics with illustrations from her own experience, concentrating on the second theme as essential to renewal of the spirit.

Many people are profoundly lonely in that they feel an inner emptiness, which they try futilely to fill with material things. The first step to a peaceful state of mind is disencumberment, replacing loneliness with solitude; that is, a state of self-recognition.

The transition from hostility to hospitality involves a deliberate shift from our instinctive defensiveness to a new receptivity. Learning to know others on their own terms is an essential step that can be difficult and even scary, especially if another’s views are quite different from our own. Cultivation of this expanded awareness requires courage and self-examination. As an example of how one’s attitudes can be radically changed, Ellie described a meeting of the Earlham College Board of Trustees, of which Ellie was a member, called by the college president several years ago. The urgent question was what should be the official view of homosexuality put forth by the president and the college. The first to speak were decidedly conservative and negative in their attitudes. After a period of silent reflection, others, some of considerable stature in Quaker and academic circles, began to share. Some told of the inner conflicts which arose when one of their children announced that they were of gay or lesbian orientation. They spoke of how love forced them into a greater awareness which transcended their ingrained attitudes.

Finally, the transition from illusion to prayer results from willingness to be more receptive. Abandoning the security of old attitudes requires a new source of support which faith can provide.

Ellie is a life-long member of Whittier Friends Meeting and an Earlham College graduate. She recently retired from a long career as Dean of Athletics at Rio Hondo College. Henri Nouwen (1932-1996) was a Catholic priest in the Netherlands and the author of numerous books on spirituality.

— Bob Newton



## The Red Ball Drops On 2010

At 6 p.m. on December 31, games and jigsaw puzzles appeared on tables in Fellowship Hall. Counters were stocked with delicious snacks and beverages. First Friends prepared to launch their unique kind of New Year's Eve celebration.



Puzzle-builders plunged into their projects. Accomplishment-oriented Gary Wemmerus and Candice Ryder chose a tractable 300-piece beach scene in 19th-century Holland, with good prospects of completion by Quaker Midnight (9:00 p.m.). Bill Wright, David Wright and Russ Litchfield tackled a more ambitious enterprise, the 1,000-piece "Santa Fe Warbonnet" puzzle supplied by train-enthusiast Russ.

Favorite New Year's Eve games occupied several players. Judith Austin and Sabron Newton started Rummykub, with Carol and Julie Urner joining in later. Mackenna and Lola Comar competed at Monopoly, while John, Linda and Elise Marshburn played at a Monopoly board decorated with Sun Maid raisins (a cousin works at the Fresno raisin plant). A group of Uno players carried on an indecisive but enjoyable game. Mindy Van Dorn, Philip Wright, Donna Wright, Karen Bungay and Lilly Bungay seemed oblivious to the time and the score.

Games never before seen in Fellowship Hall made their appearance. Bill Ryder and Lara Wemmerus played a shuffleboard-like game called "Sliders." Katerina Ryder and Anatheia Woirhaye tried to out-befriend each other in "Friendship Island," where the winner gets the most friendship points for kind acts.

As 9:00 p.m. approached, workers of the 300-piece beach scene announced completion. However, the 1,000-piece workers, who could only assemble the bright red locomotive "Warbonnet," concluded with an unfinished background.

At 8:55 p.m., meticulous Time-Keeper Dan Wright passed out whistles and song sheets. All eyes were fixed intently on the red papier maché globe on the ceiling. When Dan's satellite-synchronized chronometer read precisely 9:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, Dan lowered the pulley and the red ball dropped out of the Old Year and into the New (as we reckon). Friends blew whistles and sang "Auld Lang Syne," and the young folks danced under Philip Wright's colorful 2011 sign. We toasted the New Year with sparkling pomegranate juice.

Yes, we Quakers are a peculiar people. Thanks, Dan, Lea, and Philip for getting us started right on another year.

— Bob Newton

## Quakerism: Experiencing Christ

A Quakerism class is being offered to members and attenders for 6 to 8 weeks beginning on February 20, 2011. In this class we will discuss some of the basic history and commonly held beliefs of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). We will look also at our Meeting, its structure and its distinctive place among Friends. Quaker Worship, membership, and living one's life according to the leadings of the Spirit will be some of the topics explored. If you are a member of this meeting, please come and share your experience as we discuss what it means to be a member of Whittier First Friends. If you are interested in an overview of Quakerism, have questions, or want to become more committed to membership in this meeting we encourage you to make time on Sunday mornings and join us in the conference room at 9:30 a.m.

— Lynda Ladwig



## If It Is February It Must Be ESR Visiting Time

It has become expected to have a visit from the Earlham School of Religion folks in February, to share with us what is happening in cold Richmond, Indiana and introduce to us a student or two from the current classes there. We are pleased to once again welcome Jennie Isbell, the director of outreach at ESR who has previously accompanied Dean Jay Marshall (on sabbatical at present), and two current students: Abbey Pratt-Harrington, a recent Wilmington College graduate and a member of Athens Monthly Meeting, and Jason Jolley, a member of Greenville SC Monthly Meeting.

They will be joining us on February 6 at 9:30 to present a class and to bring the message in meeting for worship. Plane reservations allowing, they will host the coffee hour to talk with you individually about ESR, its classes and its Distance Learning program, or perhaps what they see and hear from Friends across the country. Join us and stay up to date on what is happening in the world of Friends. Please call Sue Settlage if you would like to host one of these guests in your home Friday and Saturday.

— Sue Settlage



FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION  
A QUAKER LOBBY IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

## **FCNL Annual Meeting Report: 200 Quakers, 33 States, and ... a Bow Tie?**

Meeting for Worship on Sunday concluded FCNL's 67th Annual Meeting, held November 11-14. This meeting gathered our governing body, the General Committee, in Washington, DC to set our lobbying priorities for the 112th Congress, celebrate Joe Volk's 20 years of service as Executive Secretary (and his fashionable bow ties), and appoint the next Executive Secretary, Diane Randall. Members of the General Committee from First Friends were Tim Root and Sue Settlage. Rob Settlage also attended.

**Climbing the Ladder of Engagement:** The Field Committee challenged every Quaker meeting and church to increase their engagement (contacting and lobbying) with their elected officials in Washington. A stepladder at the center of the meeting hall illustrated the many ways people can lobby: send letters, emails, faxes; write a letter to the editor; attend a public event with your member of Congress; meet by phone or in person with congressional staff; have a face-to-face meeting with your senators or representative; invite a member of Congress to speak to your group. Friends gathered by Yearly Meeting to plan how they might organize lobby visits in the next year.

**Setting Legislative Priorities for the 112th Congress:** Following consultation with 270 Quaker meetings and churches around the country, the Policy Committee led the discernment process toward a final set of priorities for FCNL in the next two years. Through worship sharing, workshops, and meetings for worship with attention to business, Friends came to unity on the focus of FCNL's work in the upcoming Congress.

**Celebrating Our Two Decades of Lobbying with Joe:** "The General Committee deeply appreciates the 20 years of visionary leadership by Joe Volk," reads the first line of the minute approved at Annual Meeting. In his plenary address, Joe thanked Friends for the opportunity he had to help build this organization but cautioned that we cannot be satisfied with where FCNL is today. "In a country of 300 million people, we cannot be satisfied with 60,000 community-based lobbyists and 10,000 donors." FCNL could double these numbers in the next three years.

**Appointing the Next Executive Secretary:** FCNL's General Committee appointed Diane Randall to become its fourth Executive Secretary since its beginning in 1943. She follows E. Raymond Wilson, Edward F. Snyder, and Joe Volk. Diane's first day in the office will be March 1, 2011. An active member of Hartford Monthly Meeting (CT), Diane will bring to FCNL the experience, skills, and talents necessary to lead the work of our community into the 21st century.

**Snyder Award Presented to Sen. Maria Cantwell (WA):** FCNL awarded the Edward F. Snyder Award for National Legislative Leadership to Sen. Maria Cantwell (WA) for her efforts to build peace and to restore a right relationship with the earth.

**Interns Talk about Their Journey to FCNL:** Deanna Boyd, Rachel Cash, Hannah Cole-Chu, Jess Halperin, Nick Mann, Sandy Robson, Alex Stark. See the Intern Blogs on the FCNL website.

**Now Can We Cut Military Spending? Conversations with New Audiences:** For the first time in decades, members of Congress are seriously considering cuts to the military budget. FCNL's Stephen Donahoe engaged Ruth Flower, Legislative Director; Laura Peterson from "Taxpayers for Common Sense"; Tom Ewell, Field Committee Clerk; and FCNL constituents in a conversation about the "Our Nation's Checkbook" campaign. Organizers are working across the country to build support for budget committee hearings on how the federal budget could shift money from the Pentagon to diplomacy, green jobs, and human needs.

*—Timothy Root, WARSF representative to the FCNL General Committee*

## **Whittier Friends School Parents Rummage For Benefit And Fun**

Rummage sales are lots of fun. It's fascinating to look through collections of curios and "what's-its," and sometimes an outstanding bargain may be found in an appliance, book, or garment.

The benefit parking lot sale held by Whittier Friends School parents on Saturday, Jan. 8, was a great success in terms of diversity, interest and good bargains to be had. Vending spaces in the First Friends Church parking lot were rented for \$10. Most of the thirteen contributors were parents or supporters of the school.



Organizer Bill Ryder, father of WFS students Katerina and Ashley, looked the part of a flea-market entrepreneur in a sporty leopard-fur jacket. He was doing such a brisk business at 10:00 a.m. that the *Living Light* reporter had

to hustle to get an interview.

Jan Tucker, mother of 4th-grader James, oversaw a collection contributed by WFS parents and First Friends members. As she was being interviewed, she unloaded an exercise bicycle machine and a video cassette recorder. Anthea Woirhaye, a WFS 4th grader, sold a number of plastic superheroes from her collection. Meanwhile, James' father, Glenn, presided over his own resale collection of household and garden tools. Shena Karr, older sister of WFS 5th-grader John, displayed an interesting assortment of curios collected by their mom Teeann. Among them were several copper bracelets she collected in annual visits to the Kennecott copper mine in Utah. Cassie and Steve Caringella brought a collection of video movies. Dina Peña, mother of WFS preschooler Elias, brought an assortment of toys and garments. One contributor, a friend of Bill Ryder, and ardent WFS supporter, is a professional swap-meet vendor. She brought an amazing collection of wrist watches, souvenir spoons, keys in search of locks, and antique photos and postcards.

A great time was had by all, and undoubtedly a goodly benefit was realized by Whittier Friends School.

— *Bob Newton*



## **Friends Consider The World**

The Friends World Committee for Consultation sustains communication among Friends in its four sections across the world - Africa, Europe & Middle East, the Americas, and Asia & West Pacific. Delegates from all sections will gather in Kenya, Africa, in April 2012 for the Sixth World Conference of Friends.

In preparation, Friends in all parts of the world will be considering the theme "Being Salt and Light: Friends Living the Kingdom of God in a Broken World". Study materials will be available in 2011 for participation by all Friends. These will be shared at Whittier First Friends.

During 2011, all Friends are invited to participate in "Friends Responses to Global Change." This worldwide consultation among Friends will include consideration of environmental, climate, economic, and social change issues. FWCC is providing materials for local 'cluster' groups. Whittier will have opportunity to meet for sharing how our lives have been touched by global change.

Whittier Meeting is connected through The Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends (WARSF) and at the February Annual Meeting will designate representatives to attend the Section of Americas Annual Meeting in Philadelphia and delegates to the World Conference in Kenya.

— *Bill Wright*



## **Travel to India and China With AFFN**

Brendon Woirhaye recently traveled to India and China and we are privileged to hear him speak and show pictures at our next All Friends Fellowship Night on February 9th. Brendon traveled there last September on business and will reflect on these two very different modern nations

We will meet at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall for a potluck dinner followed by the presentation. Bread and beverages will be provided. Please bring a main dish, salad, or dessert and \$1 per person or \$3 per person if you do not bring food. All are welcome. Please come.

— *Ted Marshburn*



*l to r: Anatea, Deanna, Katerina, Ashley, Amara, and Becky*

## **Youth Pitch In As First Friends Serves The Homeless**

Thirty homeless people in Uptown Whittier were glad that they had a nutritious meal and warm nighttime shelter during the week of January 10-16. This was the second time this winter season that Sharpless Fireside Room was the site of the Interfaith Council's Cold Weather Shelter.

This year's Cold Weather Shelter project was coordinated by Carrin Bouchard and Ted Marshburn. It is quite a complex operation, that requires the participation of many. A detailed sign-up sheet calling for volunteers was made available after Meeting for Worship for several weeks prior to the assignment. It was filled before January 10. Jack Huffaker, Bill Wright, Jim Sass, Jerry Coffin, Mel Sturr, and Darrell Warren stayed overnight at the shelter and set up breakfasts. Barbara Adams, Anne McIntosh, Carrin Bouchard, Deanna Woirhaye, and Bob and Sabron Newton cooked evening meals. One evening meal was co-ordinated by David Fant, substituting for his mother Marilyn, and was cooked by members of First Friends Worship Choir. Alene Burke, Barbara Coté, Becky Overmyer-Velazquez, and Bill and Candice Ryder assisted in cooking and serving

First Friends young folks contributed substantially to the project by serving dinner and doing kitchen tasks. On Wednesday evening, Jan. 12, Rennie and Emma McIntosh helped their mom Anne serve Major-League-sized meatballs, garlic toast, and a tossed green salad. On the following Saturday

evening Amara Overmyer, Anatea Woirhaye, Katerina Ryder and Ashley Ryder assisted their respective parents Becky, Deanna and Candice and Bill to lay out a hearty spaghetti supper. They formed a green salad line, with Ashley tossing, Katerina serving plates, Amara dispensing Italian and Anatea pouring Ranch and Thousand Island.



As the meal got underway, guests were surprised and delighted by a special event. The four youngsters sang the grace with three songs that they had learned at First Friends Peace Camp: "Peace Is The Earth Smiling," "It's a Small World," and "Make New Friends." The last song was sung as a two-part round. This contribution of the young folks was nourishment for the spirit.

One evening meal was catered by Boy Scout Troop #546, which meets in the Sharpless Fireside Room. In lieu of their usual meeting they engineered a bounteous dinner of fried chicken and mashed potatoes that was well-received by the shelter guests.

Guests at the First Friends shelter were warmly appreciative of the contribution of our young folks to the Shelter program.

— Bob Newton



*Rennie, Anne, and Emma*

## Young Adult Fellowship Starts the New Year Right

On Friday, January 7th, those who attended the Young Adult Gathering enjoyed another evening of food and fellowship at the home of Bob and Lou Secord. Directed by Lynda Ladwig, the YAF group is an opportunity for young adults of various ages to get to know one another as well as engage in meaningful Biblical discussion. Other attendees, including myself, were Jamie Benjamin, Cassie Caringella, Allison Coop, Sarah Garland, Tammy van Dorn, and Philip Wright. Each person was encouraged to bring a dish for the potluck-style dinner that was held in the Secord's beautifully festive dining room.

After dinner, Lynda began the Bible study with an ongoing video series hosted by Pastor Rob Bell. The series, aimed at a nondenominational audience, takes stories from the Bible to try and answer the question of what it means to be a Christian. For instance, this Friday's video used Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees' self-righteousness and insincerity in the matter of tithes and offerings to discuss the differences between a person who follows God out of sincere devotion and someone who simply goes through the motions. One interesting point brought up during the study is that sometimes we cannot tell the difference. After all, the money that a person donates to charity out of compassion is just as useful as what is derived from selfish motives, so why is it important to be sincere in our giving? In other words, how can we tell when we are following the letter of the law but not the spirit of it? Another issue we discussed is what it means to tithe. Is tithing about giving money just to a church or does it also include the charitable work that we can do in the world? If everything in the world belongs to God, does it follow that all giving is a tithe of some kind? Even though we could not provide conclusive answers to these questions, we did agree that the people in the world who demonstrate their love of humanity through action reflect the love of God much more effectively than those who only preach.

The Young Adult Gathering is a place for members of First Friends and anyone else who is interested is welcome. In fact, my first encounter with church members and Quakerism in general came from a YAF gathering I had attended last year at the suggestion of Allison Coop. Because I admired the sincerity and thoughtfulness of the people I talked to at that gathering, I decided to participate further by joining the First Friends Choir. Therefore, I encourage other young adults interested in a good Bible study (and an excellent dinner) to join us for our next meeting.

— Brandi Tolleson



## Becky's Byline

In the wake of the shootings in Tucson much has been mentioned in the media about the tenor of our political dialogue. We have heard from numerous leaders that there is a need for a change of tone. Hallelujah! It is about time! It is sad commentary indeed that we need tragedies to force us to speak civilly in our society.

As Quakers we talk much about our Peace Testimony. Sometimes I think that perhaps we believe peace begins with a cessation of war, or peace will occur when one party or another is elected. As I studied last week in preparation for our message from Numbers 13-14, I stumbled upon the idea that the first step to draw others into conflict is to demonize or dehumanize an opponent.<sup>1</sup> In demeaning or dehumanizing an opponent or even an opposing idea we feel better about ourselves. We can then prepare for combat whether it is verbal or physical with less caution and less embarrassment.

For me, peace begins when we see other individuals as people who have that of God within. This isn't merely inclusive of those who agree with us, but those with whom we disagree and those whose lifestyles are differing. Toning down rhetoric is merely a by-product of recognizing that those with whom we disagree are not freaks of nature and are not the enemy, but a gift. Peace begins when we recognize that God is at work around and within, all around us. These are not empty words that we parrot, but words felt deeply and are demonstrated by the way we conduct every aspect of our lives.

The challenge for us is to live into the premise of not demeaning or dehumanizing others in daily life. It sounds pretty simple, and maybe it will be for some. Try it when you listen to the news; try it with a news station you would not ordinarily watch. Try it when you are perturbed with your spouse, partner, friend. Try it at work or in a frustrating situation. Consciously make the effort to be ambassadors of peace in every aspect of daily life and watch the changes take place all around you.

<sup>1</sup>Birch, Bruce C.; Brueggemann, Walter; Fretheim, Terence E; Petersen, David L.; *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999





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Becky Mommelaar .....Pastor  
Bob Newton.....Editor  
Mary Raymond ..... Advising Editor  
Lynda Ladwig.....  
.....Christian Education Coordinator  
Russell Litchfield.....  
..... Dir of Music Ministries & Organist  
Mary Boltz..... Office Administrator  
Lorenzo Mora .....Custodian

Telephone 562-698-9805

FAX 562-698-1127

[www.firstfriendswhittier.org](http://www.firstfriendswhittier.org)

Whittier Friends School Staff

Millie Vasquez.....Administrative Asst  
562-945-1654



**There will not be a Senior Sneaks outing in February.**

— Don and Shirley Votaw

### **Quaker Quest Is Coming — Plan to Be Here**

Quaker Quest is a program to invite **discussion of various topics from a Quaker perspective**. In the U.S., Quaker Quest is a project of Friends General Conference. It also provides an opportunity for Friends to share their faith with each other in a structured way. The focus of these sessions is not on Quaker history and structures but is about our **direct experience** of God and “the faith”. The program strongly affirms that Friends have a **spiritual path for today that is simple, radical and contemporary** and all seekers are invited. First Friends Church will embark on a journey of exploration with members of our community on three topics:

**Quakers and Religious Experience** — March 14, 2011 and April 4, 2011

**Quakers and Equality** — March 21, 2011 and April 11, 2011

**Quakers and Social Action** — March 28, 2011 and April 18, 2011

All sessions are on Monday evenings. They will begin at 7 p.m. in Fellowship Hall and will end at 9 p.m. in the Meetinghouse. Please come early to greet others and have conversation and a little refreshment before the sessions begin. At each session, three Friends will give brief presentations on the evening’s topic. There will be small group discussions and a time to ask questions. The session will conclude with a short Meeting for Worship and informal conversation.

It is our hope to invite many people in our community to attend one or more sessions. Please **tell your friends and neighbors** and plan to attend them yourselves. If you have questions or would like to help with the sessions, please contact Russ Litchfield via email: [musicffc@verizon.net](mailto:musicffc@verizon.net) or through the Church Office.



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

Peggy Anderson  
Audine Coffin  
Monica Dean  
Ruth Esther Durham  
Gil Gillis  
Trudy Kurth  
Esther Morris  
Virginia Moorhead  
Alice Rosenberger  
Russ Summerhayes  
Ami Troedsson  
Helen Vanover  
Mary Wanner