

THE LIVING LIGHT

For the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.
Ephesians 5:9

Volume 62 Number 2

Whittier First Friends Church

Second Month, 2023

January 5, 2023 - Twelfth Night Organ and Carol Sing



Twelfth Night, January 5, marks the twelfth and final night of the Christmas season and the coming of Epiphany in many Christian traditions. The day commemorates the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus. During the Middle Ages, Christmas was a time of continuous feasting and merriment, which climaxed on Twelfth Night.

While not commonly celebrated in the U.S. today, food and drink are central to the celebrations of this holiday in other parts of the world. Punch, called wassail, is consumed. Special pastries, such as tortell and king cake, are baked on Twelfth Night to be eaten the following day for the Feast of the Epiphany

celebrations. Other popular Twelfth Night customs include singing Christmas carols, chalking the door, having one's house blessed, merrymaking, and attending church services.

While Quaker tradition does not recognize one day as more special than the other, Friends did gather on the evening of January 5, both in person and online, to sing beloved traditional Christmas carols and enjoy musical offerings on the organ played by Russ.

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A CHRISTIAN PEOPLE CALLED TO LISTEN, GATHERED TO SEEK PEACE, AND SENT FORTH TO SERVE,

Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends, It's a new year and a new month, and we are moving right along. Maybe it's time to possibly re-evaluate or reinstate New Year's resolutions, if that is your thing. It was a rough January for me with so many timed deadlines to meet. How have I never before realized that with my multiple jobs in finance (First Friends Church, Whittier Friends School, D & L Stained, and home) it means I have so much to accomplish in January? There are year-end reports, W-2s, thank-you notes, and the list goes on. Speaking of thank-you, just know I appreciate you all, and I hope to hear from you this year with news to include in *the Friendly Fare*. There is never enough news.

Friends Celebrate: Happy birthday to **Barbara Koch** (formerly, a long time ago, **Tebbets**.) She turned 100 on Jan 6th.

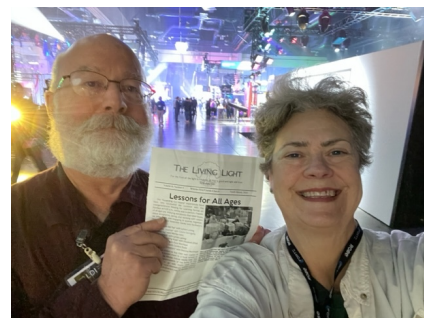
Friends About Town: **Marcia Vaden** reports on family news. **Chris Berardino** and his long-time partner, **Alyssa Felix**, married on October 22, 2022 in a simple courthouse ceremony in Fullerton. Also, **Melissa** & her husband, **Ryan Shartle**, spent a week in the Los Angeles area early in November. She happily shared some of her favorite places and friends with Ryan, on his first California trip. **Gwen** & **Mahlon Woirhaye** hosted a family dinner for them. **Mike** & **Lynda Ladwig** attended grandson **Jon Michael**'s piano recital in mid-December. Lynda said, "Not bragging or anything, but he played very well."

Friends Visit: **Mike** & **Lynda Ladwig** had a wonderful visit from granddaughter **Krystal** and her boyfriend Chris. They drove out from Pennsylvania in 3 days to spend the holidays, but planned to take a leisurely drive home. **Lynda** also says she was glad to have **Jon Paul Cook** with them for Christmas. He is renting part of her brother's house. She continues, "Jon Paul is doing well and looks great."

School and Work: **Kat Ryder** finished her undergraduate studies in Animal Science at Cal

Poly Pomona in December and will participate in commencement this coming Spring. She celebrated by buying herself a new car and taking a trip to the East Coast. **Landon Caringella** has been cast in Benton Middle School's upcoming spring musical performance of "Newsies Jr."

Friends Travel: **Michael** & **Elisabeth Elliot** attended "Live Design International" in Las Vegas. It is one of the largest



theatre technology trade shows in the world. Here they are with the Living Light continuing our tradition: "*The Living Light Travels*." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and

needed.) **Laura Torres** spent 7 days in London in early December visiting daughter **Emlyn** who lives there and is working for Cambridge International. Laura's friend, Wendy Connolly from Ireland, joined her on the trip to attend Emlyn's Covid-delayed



graduation from the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) with a Masters Degree in International Diplomacy and Policy.

Friends Correspond: It's always nice to hear from **Ami Troeddsen**. She loves reading *the Living Light*, and she sends her love. **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!

This Month in Meeting for Worship

February 5	Lynda Ladwig brings the message <i>Armor of God</i> Eph 6:10-17
February 12	John Muhanji brings the message <i>Make Disciples and Love One Another</i> Eph 4:1-6, 1 Peter 1:22 paraphrased
February 19	Bobby Tice brings the message <i>Doing Justice More Justly</i> Deut 16:20, Micah 6:8
February 26	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>What is Secret</i> Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18, Mark 16:9-15

Loletta's Lines

As I write this we are waiting on another four "Atmospheric Rivers."

An Atmospheric River is a narrow corridor of filament of concentrated moisture - also known as a Tropical Plume. Combined

with Cyclones - we have perfect storms. Of course, I had to look this all up.



Cyclones are large scale, wind and pressure systems characterized by low pressure at their center and circular wind motion. Tropical cyclones are the most severe cyclones. For me, the adjective "tropical" is supposed to imply vacation; with beautiful views of the ocean from restful beaches, not massive, dangerous, magnificent, swirling clouds and winds!

Cyclones are all one family but have different names. Cyclones that originate over the Pacific and Indian Oceans are called typhoons. The ones that originate over the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico are hurricanes. The ones that originate over land are their little cousins-tornados.

It is a human tendency to name things; to categorize and try to understand things. But in reality, at its deepest level, it is an attempt to gain control. It is as if we believe that if we are aware and notice, name and analyze, categorize and predict, we can control. After the storms have passed, there will be more naming, analyzing and calculating. It caused X amount of damage, Y persons were lost, Z homes destroyed, and will require \$\$\$ and TIME to repair. But realistically, all we can say is we have a wet mess. It is a human tendency to try to control. But is God the one in control? Some believe God just set it all up and left it running. Some see God intimately involved and dabbling in every moment. Others understand God intervenes only

At Monthly Meeting for



January, we celebrated an increase in faith promises made by Friends for 2023, as well as a rise in

unplanned giving. We are so grateful for Friends' generosity! Christian Education and Outreach reported that the Winter Mission Project raised \$400 in cash towards grocery gift cards in addition to donations of winter gloves, scarves, socks, and canned goods. Pastoral Care and Support is continuing planning in order to present a budget for Loletta's sabbatical. There has been a thoughtful discussion about how our ministries will continue during her absence. We thanked Darrell Warren for his service as Clerk of Personnel and welcomed the new clerk, Carrin Bouchard. We minuted our appreciation for Deanna Woirhaye's service as Presiding Clerk and welcomed new Presiding Clerk Elisabeth Elliot.

Monthly Meeting for February is February 12 at rise of meeting. Lunch will be served.

Russ' Reflections

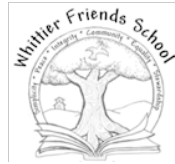
Choir Thanks and Aspirations

I want to express my deep gratitude to Diane Wemmerus, Marilyn Fant, Jo Nita Beede, and Aaron Espinosa for their splendid efforts in providing music for our Meetings for Worship. We have provided an anthem and support for hymn-singing since September, along with two Music Sundays. Both of my musician friends who participated in our "O Antiphons Sunday" were quite moved by the experience. We continue to strive to provide music that is substantial and worthy of our worship together.

Unfortunately, all of our section leaders from last choir season have left their positions. One was not comfortable singing one-on-a-part. The other two made no response to any communication from me. Lou Rosen was with us in September and October until another of his jobs conflicted with our Sunday schedule, and I am grateful for his time with us. I believe one reason for the section leader shortage is that the resources we have available to pay them are insufficient to attract qualified singers, even though we are meeting only on Sundays now. The job listings I see pay double what we can offer, and our salary has not changed since before 2006 when I began leading the choir, (though the time required and amount of music to prepare is less.)

While Diane, Marilyn, and Aaron, (and Jo Nita for special events) are providing great music and will continue doing so, we would like to increase our numbers and the scope of material we can present. A goal for the upcoming year would be three or four singers in each voice part: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. Fewer than three is challenging for confidence and blend, even if we can attract new section leaders.

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News from Whittier Friends School

Whittier Friends School students came back from Winter Break to an IMAX field trip on Wednesday, January 4. Seventeen of our children, along with families and friends, attended our trip for a total of 48 people in our group! Though it was rainy and cold, the California Science Center offered a warm indoor place to see exhibits about space travel and Earth's ecosystems. After lunch, our group watched "Asteroid Hunters: 3D" narrated by Star Wars actress Daisy Ridley. Children got to see "practically life-size" 3D visuals of planets in our solar system, with some exciting computer animations to show how scientists compute predictions about the paths that asteroids are taking as they travel near Earth. After the IMAX, families visited the space shuttle Endeavor so that our students could understand the scale and magnitude of crafts used for space travel. This all fits nicely with this trimester's science theme of Space.



It is such a fun tradition to meet up for a family field trip on the first day back from Winter Break. This is something we have been doing for a dozen years at least (except for the year 2021). After being away from their friends for over two weeks, no one wants to sit in a

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'Russ' Reflections' Continued from page 4

I would like to extend an invitation to Friends to join the Choir. We meet Sundays at 9 am to rehearse until 10:30, then sing for Meeting at 11 am. We try to work on pieces 5 to 6 weeks before we offer them in worship. Please contact Russ Litchfield if you have interest in singing with us: musicffc@verizon.net. Thank you for considering it.

Minute of Appreciation

Whittier First Friends Church, a Quaker Meeting, minutes its deep appreciation to Deanna Woirhaye for her loving service as Presiding Clerk of Monthly Meeting from January 2019 through December 2022, and especially during the Covid pandemic. We have benefited greatly from her spiritual grounding, determination, commitment, and the lively energy and humor she continues to bring to our Meeting.

"I look not to myself, but to that within me, that has to my admiration proved to be my present help, and enabled me to do what I believe of myself I could not have done."

--Elizabeth Fry

INTERGENERATIONAL MEETING FOR LEARNING CLASSES CONTINUE - COME ONE, COME ALL!!!

Our popular Intergenerational Class will proceed with enthusiasm and inspiration into winter and spring. Friends of all ages are welcome to gather in Fellowship Hall or by Zoom online to participate in our class every Sunday morning from 9:30-10:15 am. Discussions have been enlightening and valuable to all members in attendance. Loletta has book suggestions, guidance, and queries for facilitators, so if you would like to volunteer, just contact Loletta Barrett at pastorffc@verizon.net.

Read our weekly e-News to find a preview of the book that is planned for each Sunday.

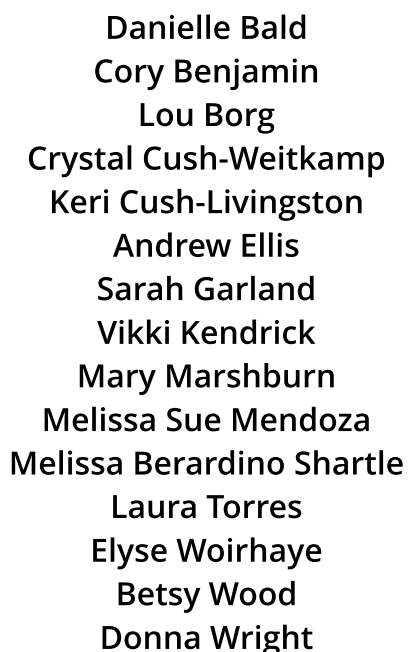
Specific queries are listed for your reflection in preparation for class, as well as the Zoom ID number for those wishing to join online. Please join us, and discover the wit and wisdom embodied in children's books!

'Twelfth Night' Continued from page 1

The program commenced, fittingly, with the singing of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" followed by an organ arrangement of "Joy to the World" by Emma Lou Diemar. Other organ pieces included "Noel for the Flutes" by Louis-Claude Daquin, "Shepherd's Lullaby" by Gilbert Martin, "Noel de Roi Rene" by Alexandre Guilmant, "Silent Night, Holy Night" by Dale Wood, and a Chorale Improvisation on "In dulci Jubilo" by Siegfried Karg-Elert. Between each instrumental offering, Friends sang Christmas hymns to tell the story of the birth of Jesus.



Afterwards, Friends gathered in the Meeting House foyer to fellowship and enjoy hot cider provided by Russ. All expressed gratitude and a feeling of joy at being able to gather, worship, and extend Christmas in this special way. He says, *"I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises."* Hebrews 2:12



'Loletta's Lines' Continued from page 3

And if we feel the need to name and categorize it all, including God, that's okay, too. It doesn't change anything, and it doesn't change God. But, maybe it will motivate us to take action to be a positive, compassionate presence where there is need. That's the kind of control humans have and can do. That's what God would do.

-Cassie Caringella

What is unprogrammed worship? While it can be different things to different people, it is a time-honored Quaker tradition. Also known as “open worship” or “expectant waiting”, it is an opportunity for Friends to experience the presence of the Spirit of God in community. In fact, It has been described as the Quaker version of Holy Communion. Author J. Brent Bill writes in his book *Holy Silence*, “...we believe that when our hearts, minds, and souls are still, and we wait expectantly in holy silence, that the presence of Christ comes among us.” In such a meeting, Friends gather in stillness and spiritual receptivity for a period of time free from outer distractions such as schedules, activities, and to-do lists, as well as thoughts that distract us inwardly. Bill describes one of his own experiences: “In the silence, where outer and inner noise ceased, we became what Quakers call a *gathered meeting* - gathered together and with Jesus.”

While each person must find his or her own way of entering and abiding in this deep stillness, (sometimes known as “centering down”) it is helpful to calm one’s mind and heart

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'Unprogrammed Worship' Continued from page 6

in preparation. During the gathering, some thoughts will arise that are distractions (i.e. the grocery list), while other thoughts, feelings, or images may seem to originate from a deeper source. A Friend that perceives he or she has received a message inspired by a spiritual connection may feel the leading to share this briefly, (also known as “spoken ministry.”) This should not be planned in advance, nor should a prompting to speak be suppressed. Care should be given to examine one’s motivation to speak. Is it a spiritually inspired message for the enlightenment of those assembled rather than a message for oneself or from one’s own “hidden agenda?” Those gathered are encouraged to listen with receptivity and find the Truth in the words. Space between speakers is allowed for reflection. Sometimes a query and/or a reading is offered as a focus.

First Friends offers unprogrammed worship each week on Sunday mornings in the chapel from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. In January, a few Friends also gathered on Wednesday, the 18th for a mid-week hourlong hybrid unprogrammed meeting. The following scripture and query were offered: “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” (Isaiah 45:18-19) The query was: “What things are worth keeping, what needs to be discarded to make way for new things, what new things is Spirit calling you toward?” The next mid-week hybrid session is scheduled for Wed., Feb. 15, at 7 p.m. in person and online. Please join us for this uniquely Quaker experience. Watch the *Whittier Friends Weekly* newsletter by email for the Zoom ID number or join us in person in the chapel.

Advocacy Workshop with Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

On Saturday, January 21, Friends hosted an Advocacy Workshop with Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). The twenty participants learned about the range of advocacy skills used to promote peace and justice in the policymaking process. Friends were introduced to FCNL’s relation-based style of lobbying and given examples of how valuable it is when creating lasting change on the federal level. This success comes from a commitment to building relationships with Congress grounded in mutual respect and listening.

Mwan Kamwendo, Advocacy Team Coordinator, inspired everyone in the room to join the network of more than 1,500 Quakers across the country who organize and use their power to instigate change. She taught skills of storytelling and other best practices used to lobby Congressional members. In 2023, the Advocacy Teams will be focusing energy on the budget appropriations process to advocate for more money to be spent on peacebuilding instead of making war. Throughout the year, FCNL will be providing informational support and encouragement to participants.

Everyone in attendance practiced the key ingredients to presenting topics to legislators and wrote at least one letter to a member of Congress. At the end of the workshop, many in the room joined in launching the First Friends’ Advocacy Team and made a commitment to advocate for peacebuilding in 2023.

Everyone is welcome to join this effort at any time! Watch the *Whittier Friends Weekly* e-news for details on how to get involved.

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

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Ami Troedsson
Carol Urner
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