

# 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 3

Whittier First Friends Church

Third Month, 2023

## Messages of Love

February is traditionally associated with love due to Valentine's Day. National Random Acts of Kindness Day is also in February, "a day to spread love and positivity and to show the world that even small acts of kindness can make a big difference" The messages brought by our guest speakers at Meeting for Worship in February aligned perfectly with this theme.

On Feb. 12, John Muhanji, FUM's Africa Ministries Director, brought the message on Zoom all the way from Kenya. He focused on three directives: following Christ, making disciples, and loving one another.

He began with the Biblical mission that demands "those who claim Christ's name should be like Him by taking up their cross, denying themselves, and following Him in the paths of humility, love, integrity, generosity, and servanthood."

From Matthew 28, he urged us to respond "to the call of Jesus: 'Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.'"

Most importantly, he reminded Friends to love one another and "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." He said that "a divided church has



no message for the divided world. Our failure to live in reconciled unity is a significant obstacle to authenticity and effectiveness in our mission."

This powerful message, however, was unfortunately and ironically interrupted by a power outage in Uptown Whittier. The Zoom link prevailed, though, and those joining online were able to stay connected until the end of the program. Friends in the Meeting House simply had a little extra time to center and experience open worship.

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## Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

**Dear Friends,** I don't know about you, but spring is my favorite season of the year. Every year, early in February, we wait to see if the groundhog will see his shadow and whether we will have 6 more weeks of winter. (At this point, I guess I should say, "Spoiler Alert.") This year, a person who I thought was a friend, took the mystique out of it for me by telling me that there are always 6 weeks between February 2 and the first day of spring on March 21. Sigh... I hope you're not as disappointed as I was.

**Friends Celebrate:** Happy news for **Marilyn Fant**, her son, **Joshua Fant** and his fiancée, **Karina Marquez**, who welcomed a new member to the family. **Starlynn Layla Fant** was born in February. The new family lives in Bell and both parents will eventually return to their nursing positions at Huntington Park Community Hospital. Nana Marilyn is star struck! Here she is with the new baby.



**School and Work:** **Landon Caringella** got two academic awards for his first semester in 7th grade. He earned the Principal's Award for having straight A's, and he earned the Movers and Shakers award for having improved his GPA from last semester to this semester. Mom

**Cassie Caringella** and brother **Hudson Caringella** sur-



prised Landon by coming to the award ceremony at school to cheer him on. At a recent Cyber Defense Competition, **Elyse Woirhaye**, once again, earned a Varsity Letter as a Cyber-



Patriot competitor on Troy High School's Cyber Defense cyber security team. Through a series of online competition rounds, teams are given a set of virtual operating systems

and are tasked with finding and fixing cybersecurity vulnerabilities while maintaining critical services.

**Friends Travel:** **Elizabeth Camp** was

seen relaxing at the end of a blessed vacation and productive planning retreat on the Big Island & Maui.



Aloha! Here she is with *The Living Light* continuing our tradition: "The Living Light Travels." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

**Friends Correspond:** It's always nice to hear updates from Friends. **Tom & Wanda Caldwell** have greatly appreciated receiving *The Living Light* for at least 60 years. (They are in their 62nd year of marriage.) They will be moving to Arizona later this year with their son, **Cameron**, beginning a new adventure at ages 82 and 83. They regretfully request that we remove their names from our mailing list. They

## Loletta's Lines

Simply put, a Sabbatical is a rest from work, based on a Biblical, agricultural practice. In Leviticus 25, God's people were commanded to take a year-long break from working the fields



every seven years. This was to allow time for both the land and the people to rest and be replenished. Today it is common for academics and clergy to be released from teaching, administrative, and care duties for a paid time of rest and study.

I am very grateful the 2014 call agreement between the Meeting and myself included a sabbatical leave of three months after a period of five years. In 2020, the pandemic scuttled any sabbatical plans. So this spring, in our eighth year together, I will take a sabbatical from April 18 to June 16.

The Meeting is releasing me to rest, study, and travel. The Pastoral Care and Support Committee has been preparing a plan for pastoral care and ministry while I am away. They also anticipate my opportunities for study and reflection to engage, stretch, and empower Friends and the Meeting for the future.

At Monthly Meeting in November, I asked, "Where would you all go if you had three months for a sabbatical?" I heard many fun and interesting ideas. Three themes resonated: rest, an opportunity to engage spiritually with other Quakers, and a fun adventure. I researched sabbatical best practices, listened to the Spirit, and identified three goals.

## This Month in Meeting for Worship

<b>March 5</b>	David Kingrey brings the message <i>Affirming Your Good Life</i> Psalm 139:14-18; John 14:15-21
<b>March 12</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message, <i>Sex, Gender and God</i> ; Genesis 3:8-12, 16-21, Romans 8:31, 38-39, Mark 13:14- 17, 21-22
<b>March 19</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>On The Way</i> , Mark 8: 27-37, 9:30-33, 10:32-35
<b>March 26</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>A Week of Queries</i> , selected verses as reported by the Gospel of Mark

They are:

- Increase balance in my life
- Pursue personal interests
- Step out of my comfort zone--that is, not do what I normally do.

The full details are still coming together. What I DO know is I will be investing my time locally, nationally, and internationally with family, friends, and Friends. I am going to rest, study, reflect, and have fun. And I know I will return to the Meeting rejuvenated and eager to see you all!

This sabbatical time is an exciting opportunity to listen and follow the Spirit's leading, and will prepare us for the next phase of our ministry together. Thank you, beloved Friends.



## Russ' Reflections

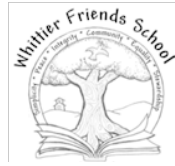
**Music for Holy Week  
Music Sunday - April 2,  
2023**

The musicians of First Friends will present a Music Sunday, April 2nd, based on the Passion Gospel according to Matthew. We will read the account of Jesus's journey to the cross and will intersperse musical meditations at key points of the story. I feel it is significant for our community to hear the scripture, telling of the events between Palm Sunday and Easter, in order to fully experience Jesus' experience and the joy of his resurrection.

Some of the music will be sung by our singers, and a couple of hymns will allow all to participate. Presenting Passion Gospels has a centuries long precedent, with its height in the music of J.S. Bach and his famous *Matthew* and *John* passions. Bach was an innovator as he included devotional musical commentary at various points to encourage meditation by the congregation. We will follow a similar pattern, though our music will be much simpler and will fit the musical resources we have.

## **Organ and Hymns of Holy Week - April 6, 2023, 7 pm**

On Maundy Thursday, April 6th, I will present a selection of organ pieces and some hymns to sing for Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter. This will be much like our Twelfth Night evening of Christmas music. Organ pieces by J.S. Bach, Johannes Brahms, Helmut Walcha, Paul Fey, and others will be included. Hymns will include: *All Glory; Laud and Honor; Ubi caritas; Go to Dark Gethsemane; In the Cross of Christ I Glory; Ah, Holy Jesus;* and *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. Please come to the Meeting House and bring F(f)riends to lend your voice to the singing on April 6.



## **News from Whittier Friends School**

Hear ye, hear ye! Tuesday, March 21 at 6:00 pm, you are cordially invited to visit Whittier Friends School's Open House and Science/History Fair! On display, visitors will find castle models from throughout the world and throughout the ages, and research projects about space. They'll get a chance to see what our multi-age elementary and preschool classrooms look like. They'll even get to visit our class pets, Remi the rat and Creeper the snake.



Whittier Friends School students visit the actors of "Stuart Little" after the performance at La Habra Depot Theatre.

The annual Open House is also the official kick-off for early enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year. There is a discount on tuition if paperwork and fees are received by Friday April 28. We urge you to contact us if you are interested in knowing more about our Quaker school. Members of First Friends Church receive a special tuition rate! Email Director Cassie Caringella for more information. ([cassie.wfs@gmail.com](mailto:cassie.wfs@gmail.com))

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## Unprogrammed Worship Opportunities

"In calm and cool and silence, once again  
I find my old accustomed place among  
My brethren, where, perchance, no human tongue  
Shall utter words; where never hymn is sung,...  
There, syllabled by silence, let me hear  
The still small voice which reached the prophet's  
ear;  
Read in my heart a still diviner law...  
Walking as one to pleasant service led;  
Doing God's will as if it were my own,  
Yet trusting not in mine, but in His strength alone!"

These are some lines from John Greenleaf Whittier's poem, *First Day Thoughts*, referring to the Quaker tradition of unprogrammed worship sometimes known as waiting worship. While we are grateful for the time allowed during Sunday's worship program for listening to the Spirit, some Friends may desire to participate in a longer session. For those who feel so led, unprogrammed worship is available at First Friends every Sunday morning in person from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the chapel off the foyer.

Recently, FFC has also scheduled mid-week hybrid opportunities for waiting worship. A theme is offered through a quote, a scripture, and a query. In February, the theme was peace, with the following query:

*How are you called to find, be, make, and work with God for peace?*

The next scheduled hybrid unprogrammed worship is Wed., March 15, at 6:45 p.m., in the chapel and online. Watch the weekly enews for the theme and Zoom link. We hope to have you join us.

### 'Whittier Friends School' Continued from page 4

Last month, WFS elementary students got to visit La Habra Depot Theatre to see a live performance of the book *Stuart Little*. The 50-minute performance was full of hilarious antics that kept our students in stitches, and they were excited to meet the actors after the show was over. This was our students' first time getting to see a live show since 2019! Watching child-accessible shows like this is a great way to practice being a good audience member, and we were glad to finally re-introduce that type of field trip.

As always, you can follow our many adventures on Facebook and Instagram at:

[facebook.com/whittierfriendsschool/](https://facebook.com/whittierfriendsschool/)  
[instagram.com/whittierfriendsschool/](https://instagram.com/whittierfriendsschool/)

-Cassie Caringella

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### 'Friendly Fare' Continued from page 2

say, "Thanks again for your many years of service. God bless everyone at First Friends." They will miss our informative news and church activities. Who knows? They say they may send us their new address as soon as their new home has finished construction. **Dennis & Linda Upton** sent in praises and support for *The Living Light*. They said "Please do not stop sending it." It was also nice to receive support and to hear from **Sara & Gerald Adams** as well.

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



<b>Sara Adams</b>	<b>Rose Nedrow</b>
<b>Claudia Bushaw</b>	<b>Debi Nelson</b>
<b>Amy Christensen</b>	<b>Sabron Newton</b>
<b>Adrian Day</b>	<b>Lee Riley</b>
<b>Annabelle Day</b>	<b>Charlene Root</b>
<b>Michah Eggleton</b>	<b>Sue Settlage</b>
<b>Silas Eggleton</b>	<b>Paul Smith</b>
<b>James Garland</b>	<b>Trevor Snyder</b>
<b>Clinton Harris</b>	<b>Dennis Upton</b>
<b>Eric Haynes</b>	<b>Jay Wemmerus</b>
<b>Deborah Hays</b>	<b>Gary Wemmerus</b>
<b>Patti Jackson</b>	<b>Judy Whitlock</b>
<b>Rex Jones</b>	<b>Gerry Wolfe</b>
<b>Allison Lew</b>	<b>Emily Wood</b>
<b>Susan Marshall</b>	<b>Dan Wright</b>
<b>Jonathan Moody</b>	

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!

### *'Messages of Love' Continued from page 1*

On February 19th, Bobby Trice, FCNL's Quaker Engagement Program Manager, brought the message, *Doing Justice More Justly*. In it he reminded Friends of the importance of practicing authentic integrity when working for social justice and equity. He says, "I am more convinced than ever that building Beloved Community where our differences are affirmed rather than eradicated is both an essential piece of the world FCNL seeks to bring about and a pathway to it.

He reminded us to "love tenderly so we may live in the kingdom of God," and critically reflect on our approach to advocacy. He urged us to catch and change our own social conditioning in order to illuminate biased assumptions and deep patterns of racial power dynamics that can actually hurt those we are trying to help. He says, "If, while advocating, we enact the very dynamics of harm and oppression we are trying to change in policy, we are out of alignment with integrity AND limit our ability to build relationships and leverage power to change systems."

First Friends Church is grateful for the technology that allows us to connect with Quakers across the globe and hear these messages.

## Whittier Advocacy Team Focus on Peace Building



An exciting and unfolding development out of our November FCNL West hospitality hub is an Advocacy Team. Our team has formed with Friends from our meeting and friends of Friends in our community. We are learning, planning, and working to advocate with our Senators and Representatives in Washington, DC and with the media concerning funds for peace building.

In the past, FCNL has been strong in standing against war, but now we are collaborating to work for peace. We are advocating so that our money be put into funding programs that mediate and prevent violence, and respond to crises with humanitarian aid rather than instruments of violence and war. There are many ways to do this, and our team is open to anyone who wants to participate. If you have any questions or want to join, contact the church office and we'll connect you!



# Spiritual Gifts

## Shared Care of the Meeting during Pastoral Sabbatical

As the Pastoral Care Committee considers the fulfillment of pastoral responsibilities during Loletta's upcoming sabbatical (April 16 through July 15), they are asking Friends to season how they might share their gifts and resources to support our FFC beloved community. Please prayerfully consider whether you feel a leading to answer yes to one (or more) of the following queries:

- *Do you have transportation, and are you willing to make one or more in-person calls?*
- *Are you comfortable with email and willing to send and respond to emails to Friends asking how they are doing and/or if we can help?*
- *Are you willing to telephone Friends to ask how they are doing and if/how we can help?*
- *Are you willing and available to address envelopes and send notes/cards to Friends?*
- *Are you willing and able to help coordinate pastoral care and maintain contact with volunteers?*
- *Are you willing and able to help coordinate other Meeting considerations and activities including contact with guest message-bringers?*
- *Are you open to being contacted regarding tasks as they arise and/or offer suggestions of other ways to be active during Loletta's sabbatical?*

If you answered yes to one (or more) of these, contact the church office to volunteer.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### AFFN Returns!

At February Monthly Meeting, Friends approved the return of All Friends Fellowship Night in April. Watch for dates, times, and program details in next month's Living Light.

**Friends Committee on National Legislation Spring Lobby Weekend**, is March 25 - 28. This four day conference will bring together hundreds of students, recent grads, Quakers, and young adults to learn about their power as advocates and to lobby Congress. Contact the church office if you are interested in attending. For more information go to [fcnl.org/events/spring-lobby-weekend-0](https://fcnl.org/events/spring-lobby-weekend-0).

**Friends United Meeting Triennial** is July 2-8, in Nakuru, Kenya. If you are interested in attending, contact Marilyn Fant or any member of the Christian Education and Outreach committee for possible funding assistance. For information on how to register go to:

[friendsunitedmeeting.org/connect/triennial-2023#](https://friendsunitedmeeting.org/connect/triennial-2023#)

**Support SHELTER'S RIGHT HAND** and the Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter by participating in the annual 5K Walk event on Saturday, APRIL 22, 2023! All money raised goes directly to the Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter, our local domestic violence shelter. Go to [sheltersrighthand.org](https://sheltersrighthand.org) to register or give a donation today!

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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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[firstfriendswhittier@verizon.net](mailto:firstfriendswhittier@verizon.net)



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**