



Volume 59 Number #8

Whittier First Friends Church

September 2020

Spending Time with the Spirit

Affirmation Sunday—when the Spirit speaks and the Meeting responds!

This year's Affirmation Sunday is an opportunity for interaction and participation. Our September 13 meeting for worship will be a celebration allowing Friends to speak, and we will break a "Quaker rule"—you can come prepared!

Ministry & Counsel invites you to spend time "seasoning" these queries in prayer and participate as you are led:

- What do you appreciate most about the Meeting?
- What memory is most dear?
- What brought you to the Meeting?
- What is it about the Meeting that fills your Spirit?
- What keeps you coming back?
- What experience do you most treasure (past, present or future anticipation)?
- Where did you see or feel God/Spirit in our community recently?
- What is most important?

You can present your answer(s) by reading a statement, drawing a picture, writing a poem, citing a psalm, singing a song... you can be as creative or as simple as you want to be. On September 13, you'll have the opportunity to share it yourself, or if you are too shy, send it to Loletta at pastorffc@verizon.net or mail it to the parsonage at 8232 California Ave, Whittier 90602 before September 9.

Affirming how God is present to us through the Meeting is a joyous way to celebrate community!



A Rainbow of Peace

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it.—Proverbs 22:6

What do rocks, prisms, stained glass, and a U.S. Representative have in common? They were all part of Peace Camp 2020—*Colors of Peace*. When the pandemic came to town this spring, making in-person gatherings unsafe, it looked as though Peace Camp might not be possible this year. In June, however, with a little faith and much hard work, committee members shifted into high gear to adapt the plans to an interactive online format while still honoring our long-standing mission to offer elementary age students a week-long program of music, stories, crafts, and activities with the goal of teaching young people how to understand their own feelings, resolve conflicts peacefully, create peaceful solutions for problems locally and globally, become responsible stewards of the earth, and share the message of peace.

Continued on page 7

Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends, It's been a different sort of summer for everyone. For those of you who use Facebook you may have been feeling the same nostalgic feelings that I have felt every time Facebook offers up a previous memory, and they ask if I want to share my picture of my memory. We don't know when we'll be able to go again to places like Disneyland, but our family did manage to capture a pandemic-appropriate group picture recently when we gathered for a quiet "Family Fun Dinner" on a Sunday afternoon. Pictured are **Milt & Donna Wright, Elinore Petoletti, Dan, Lea & Philip Wright and Cassie, Landon and Avalon Caringella** with *The Living Light* continuing our tradition: "The Living Light Travels." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

Friends Celebrate: Congratulations to **Candice & Bill**



Ryder who celebrated their 20th anniversary recently. We wish a very special 103rd birthday to **Preston Mitchell**.

Friends Visit: Sisters **Tina Post, Lyn Gruber & Jo Nita Beede** enjoyed time together as sisters/Friends simply spending time and doing fun things together.

Friends Travel: **Dave & Iris Harris** were in Carmel for a long week at the beginning of July. This happened to be during an "open" window, as most of the restaurants and

public places were closed a few days before they left. Although they appreciated having the parking, restaurants, and beach to themselves, it was a bit spooky. No foreign tourists were there for the first time since they started going regularly, about 12 years ago. They had plans to attend the Carmel Bach Festival and the Concours d'Elegance in Pebble Beach, but both were cancelled. Instead, they enjoyed an incredible feast with



their friends in Carmel Valley. The most amazing part was the Fourth of July festivities: there were none! Zero! The beach was closed for the weekend without incident. Meanwhile, friends in LA were

sending videos of noisy fireworks and parties. The **Woirhayes** spent a week at Green Valley Lake being a pandemic pod. With many summer events cancelled, ABCDE & GM Woirhayes, were grateful to finally enjoy the wonderful opportunity to get up to the lake for a short bit, to be among the trees and fresh air just prior to all the kids going back to school (online). **Elyse** has started 8th grade back at Rancho Starbuck Intermediate, **Anathea** will attend Redlands University focusing on history and fine arts, and **Cedric** will attend Rio Hondo College to study environmental biology and physics. **Deanna**, still doing photography, earned some online honorable mentions on a Women in Photography Facebook page. **Brendon**, in the meantime, has been enjoying harvesting honey from the family's apiary. **Gwen** has continued hosting the Writing Group on Zoom.

Friends Remember: **Sue Walker**, a long-time friend of the Meeting, passed away this summer. She was active with our music programs as well as a frequent Monthly Meeting chef. We were also sad to hear about the passing of former member and friend **Craig Dean**.

Friends Correspond: I want to thank all the Friends who have sent greetings to the church office this summer including **Ami Troeddson, Kathy Marin, Sue Edinger Marshall, Sharon Huffaker, Marshall Hockett, and Martha Fopiano**. So much news, and I hope to share it in future issues of the Friendly Fare.

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 Sundays at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom

Please call the church office (we're picking up messages daily) and we will make sure you receive the Zoom meeting number.

September 6	Berkeley Friends Church Hosts
September 13	Affirmation Sunday
September 20	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Lot's Journey: It's Complicated</i> Genesis 12: 1-5a, 19:30, 31
September 27	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>If Only That Old Coat Could Talk</i> Genesis 37:3, 18-36
October 4	World Quaker Day



At July Monthly Meeting on July 12, we approved that the Christian Education Committee be combined with the Outreach Committee. Reopening plans for Whittier

Friends School were discussed. As we do not have a physical offering plate at this time, Friends are reminded to stay current on their Faith Promises by mailing their checks to the church office as personal finance situations allow in this challenging time. To assist in contact tracing, we now have a sign-in-sign-out board in the foyer for all visitors to the meeting house. The Technology Group is working to improve our computer network infrastructure to enable Beth Shalom to stream their services on Facebook and create opportunities for distant Friends to continue participating in Meeting for Worship when we reopen.

At August Monthly Meeting on August 9, we approved Cory Benjamin as a new member. Methods of distributing minutes and agendas to Friends were discussed. The Technology Group reported that Beth Shalom is now streaming their services. Extensive electrical work has been completed with more on the way, including the repositioning of the wi-fi router.

September Monthly Meeting is September 13 on Zoom. All families in the Meeting are encouraged to have a representative present.

We welcome and encourage your comments as well as your contributions and photos for inclusion in *The Living Light*. Kindly send your email to Elisabeth Elliot at communiquaker@gmail.com.

The Facing Bench

I appreciate the changing of the seasons and wonder about it. I don't mean the astronomical science. I (sort of) get that—the earth tilts and has an elliptical orbit around the sun, right? I mean the changing seasons of our lives, but not chronological age. It seems we go through seasons of light and darkness, plenty and drought, expansion and contraction in everything we do. I was reflecting on my seasons of understanding too. It seems I have gone through several seasons of learning, growing, and acting on my understanding of prejudice, racism and structural injustice. I am still far from done.

Another analogy occurred to me in the midst of pandemic: closet cleaning. It seems I clean out literal and metaphorical closets in one season only to return to them later to clean them out again. On one occasion, I find things that I cannot part with, that bring “memories” too hard to face or too hard to let go of. I close the door only to return at another time to find the same items, wondering why I kept them. I find they reflect aspects of who I was that are simply not valid anymore. The “items” never changed but I have been transformed in how I see and interact in the world.

Paul wrote in “the love chapter,” I Corinthians 13, “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put aside childish things.” We know he was not referring to toys and yearbooks but thoughts and attitudes of the heart that display spiritual immaturity. Our spiritual journey is a constant mode of “closet cleaning,” and it can be a difficult challenge of growth and learning. But it can also include joyful realizations, release, and relief. And as we shed ourselves of our “possessions,” we make room in our closet for more of God's abundant love.



YOUTH FELLOWSHIP



The youth and young adults of First Friends took a break during the busy month of June and the early part of July to spend time with our families and enjoy the many activities scheduled during that time. We are currently meeting at 2:00 p.m. every other Sunday.

Sometimes we gather to just check in with each other and share what and how we have been doing during this time of social distancing and maybe play a game or two. Sometimes we talk about what type of fundraising activity we can do to help support the Dig Deep—Navajo Water Project. We have also had the opportunity to talk a bit about our Quaker history and the people who sacrificed and demonstrated living out their calling and the Quaker testimonies.

Recently, we have been taking advantage of our current technology by taking field trips. Our most recent trip was to New York where we visited “The Water Tank Project.” Did you know that water tanks are iconic fixtures of the city’s landscape and have been for more than a century?

The Water Tank Project transforms the New York City skyline with artwork by acclaimed artists. The art is wrapped around rooftop water tanks throughout the city, celebrating the talents of established and emerging artists, and calling attention to the global water crisis. The Water Tank Project is part art exhibition and part awareness campaign. We found this exhibit across the New York City skyline to be an interesting way to make a powerful statement by using art as social intervention, to inspire awe and joy, to educate, and to alter attitudes and habits with the hope of creating meaningful and long-lasting change.

—Lynda Ladwig



News from Whittier Friends School

Whittier Friends School’s new school year began on September 1, with the new year looking much different than usual school years because of the ongoing COVID-19 Safe-At-Home adjustments. Our preschool was able to reopen in the middle of July according to a very detailed reopening plan we wrote based on criteria set by Los Angeles County Health Department, Community Care Licensing, Center for Disease Control, and California State Department of Education and more. With special attention to social distancing (including universal mask-wearing), health screening (to prevent entry of people who are sick), and environmental cleaning, our school community has been able to once again provide the service of childcare to our local families of Whittier. It is a joy to once again hear the laughing, playful voices of preschoolers, though their faces may be covered by masks and there are fewer of them due to regulations. We do currently have openings in our preschool, so spread the word!

Our elementary class, meanwhile, is currently under mandate to open remotely based on the health status in Los Angeles County. We are supporting our families in the educational needs of their children, including offering tutoring options for small groups. Special events in the fall, such as Whittier Friends School Sunday in October and our Christmas Program in December, will occur virtually.

Throughout it all, we look forward to making things as normal as possible. We love reconnecting with our families after the summer break, and look forward to teaching our students our history and science topics for this year, which are American History and Biology. And we look forward to addressing the individualized needs of each student in our traditional, specialized curriculum.

We continue to offer our monthly scrip fundraising, so please continue to purchase your gift cards from the school so we can receive a percentage. Please also consider purchasing Amazon.com or Petco scrip for our classroom expenses. Email Lea at lea.wfs@gmail.com for more information about scrip purchasing. We also need disinfectant wipes and spray, which are challenging to find in local stores.

We appreciate our First Friends Church community’s support so much. Thank you for your prayers, your financial gifts, and your referrals to local families needing our unique educational format.

—Cassie Caringella

Where We Went On Our Summer Vacation

We went around the world in twenty-five days! Thanks to the convenience of Zoom and our Friends United Meeting field staff, we visited Belize (twice!), Kenya and Palestine with no passports required. In Meeting for Worship, they helped us reinterpret Old Testament stories with their own context and experience. It was a great way to connect and conduct our FUM Summer Mission Project on behalf of the Global Fund, which supports the many projects around the world.

Our first visit was with our f(F)riend Oscar Mmbali, a



Kenyan Quaker serving in Belize City as pastor of the Friends church there, building relationships with youth and families, and encouraging community peace and

justice outreach. Katrina and Shawn McConaughy joined us from the Africa Ministries office in Kenya. They are residents of Oregon, and are thrilled to serve as Programme Officers facilitating global and cross-cultural relationships. They told us about Kenyan Quakers who are making a difference in ministry with refugees and victims of trauma and violence.

Australian Adrian Moody serves as Head of Ramallah Friends School in Palestine. He brought us a verbal and pictorial tour of the school's history and current context. We heard about academic accomplishments (they have a 98% pass rate in the International Baccalaureate program vs 78% world-wide), as well as their year reviewing and recommitting to the Quaker testimonies in the predominantly Muslim community as they celebrated the school's 150th anniversary.



Our fourth visitor was Robert Wufala, Principal of the Friends Theological College in Kenya. He told us how the school continues to expand even while adapting to COVID-19 challenges. We also met his wife Nancy who teaches practical health, nutrition, CPR, and first aid to the students—a great addition to a seminary education.



We were happy to have Friends from Berkeley join us as we concluded our world tour with Nikki Holland, director of ministries at the Friends Center in Belize. She told us how the center is empowering youth and the community to meet the challenges through education, worship, and community activism.

If you missed any of our summer trips, we have posted their messages on our website, and welcome you to join us as we continue inviting Friends throughout the year to help us worship and deepen our connection to Quaker ministry wherever it is happening.

—Barbara Healy-Sprague



Lavelle Basham
Mary Boltz
Joanne Camp
Landon Caringella
Anne Eggleton
Martha Fopiano
Lyn Gruber
Randy Hays
Sharon Huffaker

Bonnie Lowenstam-Grace
Preston Mitchell
Susanne Mitchell
Lea Thirkettle
Julie Urner
Mindy Van Dorn
Chris Votaw
Gwen Woirhaye
Mahlon Woirhaye

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!



Russ' Reflections *Droplets and Aerosols*

I know that Friends are missing Meeting for Worship in person these days, and some are missing the choir and being able to sing together. Our reality is that we must continue to keep our distance from each other and

that to gather in person means many protocols for distancing and cleaning will need to be met.

One of the areas of debate right now is the effects of group singing on the spread of COVID-19. Recently, the American Choral Directors Association and the National Association of Teachers of Singing held a webinar with some medical and scientific experts discussing the medical and social impacts of singing together. The conclusions were that group singing is potentially a dangerous activity during the pandemic. Even with masks and other barriers, the deep breathing required for singing can expel droplets and aerosols (micro droplets) that could contain the virus and spread it for considerable distances. If this happens for any length of time, the air in a room can become filled with potential virus. It has also been shown that air conditioning/heat systems can magnify the circulation of the air so that droplets/aerosols can have even wider dispersion.

This has been devastating to me and many of my colleagues who are involved in music ministry and other choral music organizations. I profoundly miss the regular gathering of our choir for practice and worship and I know others do also. However, we acknowledge that it will be many months before we can safely gather in person to pursue our art. I do not expect to assemble the Friends Choir any time soon. People have suggested having a "virtual choir" but, given the limitations of our technology, this is not something we can do. It is deceptively complicated and requires many hours of preparation and editing. As cool as it is to watch these virtual choir presentations, it is not the satisfying experience that singing together in person is.

For the time being we will try to have opportunities for our section leaders and other individuals to record music that we can share for Meeting for Worship. Please hold our section leaders, our choir, and me in your prayers as we find our way forward in these confusing times. Thank you and stay tuned!

Is It OK To Talk About This?

You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than this.--Mark 12:31

With all of the strife and heartache in the world, referring back to this Bible verse is necessary. Within the past few months, it seems like the two illnesses that have come to the forefront are COVID-19 and racism! With the death of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor causing protests worldwide and a call for change, we must all do our part in ending the rule of white supremacy. Here at First Friends, we decided that our part must start with understanding. Every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. we have an hour-long conversation with Friends as well as folks from other churches unpacking and sharing experiences from our friends of all backgrounds and races. During this hour, we discuss topics under the scope of racism, white supremacy, the Black experience in America, Black history, and much more. We dissect articles, television ads, videos, and other forms of media in order to learn and grow in our alliance for our Black brothers and sisters. This is a safe space where everyone is welcome to ask questions, spark conversations that are usually deemed controversial, and dive headfirst into uncomfortable subjects all in the name of dismantling white supremacy. Through these candid conversations, we are able to come together and be able to be better neighbors and allies for the Black Lives Matter movement.

We are creating a community of Friends who are committed to learning about and unlearning white supremacy and growing towards creating a world where racism is not so prevalent and where freedom truly exists for everyone. If you are interested in bettering our world, dismantling white supremacy, and becoming a better neighbor for our Black brothers and sisters, please join us on Zoom on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Please contact Loletta to get a meeting number and password.

—Bose Robinson



**Best Wishes to
Jasmine & Jenna
Sturr who were wed
recently on their
front porch. Friends
were able to share in
the celebration on
Zoom.**

Sunday Classes Resume September 13

You've heard the old saying that the more things change, the more they stay the same? Well, in this era of isolation, this adage is still true, but perhaps processed in new and creative ways and implemented in ways that make sense for today but with the same goals and desires that have always been a part of our spiritual journey together.

On September 13, Sunday/First Day School/Meetings for Learning get started and adults, children, and youth can learn more about ourselves, our faith, and being followers of the living Christ.

Adults will meet at 9:30 a.m.—the Zoom ID number will be the same as Meeting for Worship. Candice Ryder has agreed to share her gifts by facilitating a class that will spend time with the writings of Parker Palmer. The purpose of this class is not just to gain “head knowledge” from or about Friend Palmer, but to put into practice what we learn. Through our readings, we will be encouraged to grapple with the external contradictions of our society and culture as well as with the contradictions we find in our own lives.

The children and youth class begins at 10:00 a.m. in another Zoom meeting, where we will be listening and discussing the stories of the Bible presented by storytellers from the Museum of the Bible.

Come and experience the dance of teaching and learning to be God's people together.

—Lynda Ladwig

'A Rainbow of Peace' continued from page 1

Craft and activity materials were gathered and assembled ahead of time for no-contact delivery to each camper, and while most of the 15 campers were Whittier locals, one joined from Murrietta, and two as far away as Nebraska!

“It was a special blessing in itself,” said co-director Candice Ryder, “because we were able to include kids that wouldn't have been able to attend otherwise, due to the distance.”

Co-director Cassie Caringella moderated the daily Zoom sessions which lasted from 10 to 11:30 a.m., the week of July 13 –17. Music Coordinator Russ Litchfield shared the traditional Peace Camp songs as well as other color-themed sing-alongs from various online sources.

Continued next column

Monday kicked off the week with a message from Lynda Ladwig about the Light within every human followed by an exploration of how white light consists of all colors of the light spectrum. Barbara Healy-Sprague created videos to demonstrate how a prism separates white light into rainbow colors and how colored lights can be combined to make white light.

Campers were provided with colored finger lights and their own prisms for extended exploration. Later they made sun catchers using white glue and colored glass stones.

Tuesday's focus was friends and family with an emphasis on how we can understand our own feelings as a step towards inner peace. Campers wrote poems about feelings and painted “peace rocks.”

Wednesday brought one of the highlights of the week when campers learned how to peacefully express their voices on important issues. After listening to a reading of *Black is a Rainbow Color* by Angela Joy, campers explored ways to express opinions and protest peacefully. Then each camper wrote a letter to U.S. Representative Linda Sanchez—and then had the opportunity to read it to her when she joined the Zoom session! Sanchez graciously noted each child's concerns and answered how they are being addressed in Congress.

Thursday's activities centered on stewardship of the earth, with a video and discussion on climate change, a scavenger hunt, and a scratch-off picture board art activity.

Friday wrapped up the week with a virtual field trip to D&L Stained Glass to observe how various colored glass pieces can be combined to make designs, pictures, and other creations. “This is something we would not have been able to do with 15 campers in person,” said Cassie, “because of the limited space in a shop which is filled with glass.” Later, campers created their own colored glass votive candle holders using tissue paper. They celebrated the end of camp by making individual ice cream and slushies the old-fashioned way.

Many heartfelt thanks go to the committee members and other supporters who put in long hours to supply ideas, create lessons and activities, sort and pack supplies, and accompany this year's campers on their Peace Camp journey. Thank you, also, to those who donated supplies and funds, including last year's Peace Café, to make this enriching experience possible.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.—John 14:27

—Candice Ryder

Return Service Requested
Postmaster: send address changes to:
The Living Light
Whittier First Friends Church
13205 Philadelphia St
Whittier, CA 90601-4384

Periodicals
Postage Paid at
Whittier California

The Living Light
 USPS 316-320
 Volume 59 Number #8
 Issue Date: September 1, 2020

The Living Light is published monthly (except for August) by Whittier First Friends Church, 13205 Philadelphia Street, Whittier, California, 90601-4303. Periodical postage paid at Whittier, California.

Elisabeth Elliot Editor
 Marie Kaneko Copy Editor
 Loletta Barrett Pastor
 Lynda Ladwig Associate Pastor
 & 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

Whittier Friends School Staff
 Candice Ryder School Committee Clerk
 562-945-1654



Lots and Lots of Lights—the Woirhaye family traveled and brought some memories along— issues of The Living Light from years past.



*Please
 remember in
 prayer
 those Friends
 unable to
 worship with
 us physically
 on a regular
 basis.*

Peggy Anderson
Jack Carlisle
Rose Nedrow
Kathy Robison
Ann Smith
Ami Troedsson
Carol Urner
Gerry Wolfe