



THE LIVING LIGHT

For the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.

Ephesians 5:9

Volume 59 Number 9

Whittier First Friends Church

October 2020

Stewardship 2020



A Time of Gratitude and Giving

2020 has been a disruptive year in many ways, and many of us are struggling to make our way in this changing time.

Our Meeting has much to be thankful for, including the support of our members, attenders, and broader community to help us adapt and be relevant to people living in pandemic isolation.

Our 2020 Stewardship campaign **A Time of Gratitude and Giving** begins this month and continues through early December.

Please watch for a letter in the mail, and prayerfully consider how you can financially support the Meeting in 2021 through your faith promise, as well as what time and talents you can contribute.

As a companion to Stewardship 2020, we will be exploring the Quaker testimony of stewardship over the next several weeks in Meeting for Worship.

As you follow the “leaves” in this month’s issue of *The Living Light*, we invite you to center on the activities and ministries of the Meeting and where your own gifts make a difference now and in the future.

Two New Friends

On Affirmation Sunday on September 13, we affirmed where we see God’s Spirit present in our Meeting, not only for “seasoned” Friends but for two new ones as well.

We welcomed a new member, **Cory Benjamin**, to our Meeting and a very new (three days old to be precise) Friend, **Hudson David Caringella**.

Hello! Glad you’re here!



A Letter from Lynda

Dear Friends,

I am writing you this letter to officially make known my retirement which will be effective as of December 31, 2020. It has been a privilege to serve as the Associate Pastor and Christian Education Coordinator of this wonderful meeting of Friends for what will be, by then, nearly 22 years. This decision did not come easily, or quickly but through many hours of prayer and discernment. This past July, I celebrated my 73rd birthday. While I have never thought of age as a deciding factor in answering God’s call and still don’t, it simply feels to Mike and I like the right time for us to move into a new chapter of our lives. I once read, “I can’t expect God to write the next chapter in my life if I don’t turn the page.” Mike and I are ready for that next chapter.

The past twenty-two years have been incredible. Words are not adequate to express the joy, blessing, comfort and support you have been to me through all the ups and downs of life. You were with Mike and I through the passing of our parents and the marriages of our children. You encouraged and walked with me through the process of recording my gifts of ministry. I want to thank you for the many opportunities you have afforded me over those years.



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Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends, Welcome to Fall, a time for harvest and pumpkins and Zoom. At our house, there's been some discussion and debating about the merits of pumpkin carving when there might not be a lot of friends to enjoy the outcome. I wonder how a Zoom meeting for pumpkin carving would work. Well, how about a Zoom Meeting to show off the results of pumpkin carving? Okay, how about people share their pumpkins on Sunday, November 1 at Meeting for Worship?

New Friend: Welcome **Hudson David Caringella**, born September 10, to parents **Cassie & Steven**, baby brother to **Landon** and **Avalon**. (I would be remiss if I didn't mention big brother **Bartholomew**, also known as baby cat.) Grandparents are **Dan & Lea Wright**, Uncle is **Philip** and great-grandparents are



Milt & Donna Wright and **Elinore Petoletti**. And many other cousins, aunts, uncles, etc.

Friends Celebrate: **Lynda & Mike Ladwig** will celebrate anniversary number 55 on October 16. Sounds like a time for emeralds or maybe some other sort of greenery. In August, **Amy Wright** married **Matt Hite** in Vancouver, WA. Her SoCal family was able to attend via Zoom.



Friends Move: Prayers of joy for **Stephan del George** and his new home in Maui. He has gotten through the quarantine period, and now the fun begins.

Friends Visit: A lovely part of Meeting for Worship via Zoom is that we get to see our Friends in their home setting. So many cats and dogs out there! And what a lovely view **Barbara Cote** has out her window with her redwood trees.

School and Work: It's a new school year, and



Anathea Woirhaye has happily gotten herself involved in the Redlands University Mock Trial team where competing schools try cases in a mock court environment. She is also in the theater department's upcoming New Works Festival where the actors will perform new plays written by students. In her attempt to enjoy to the fullest her most beloved holiday, Halloween, Anathea will wear 31 different costumes in October, one per day.

Friends Travel: **Randy Smith & Mary Boltz** set off on vacation near Truckee CA in late August. Their first stop was in Gardnerville NV for a visit with Mary's cousin Sue Kennedy and her husband Carl. Mary is the eighth and youngest of her DeHoff family cousins, and Sue is the second oldest. From Gardnerville, they were scheduled to stay in a cabin in Thousand Trails' Snowflower Park but the smoke from all the fires was so bad that plans were changed, and they ended up staying in a resort in Solvang. Here are Mary and Sue with the Living Light continuing our tradition: "*The Living Light Travels.*" (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

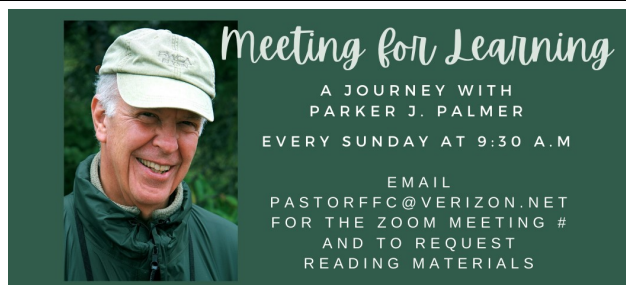


Friends Correspond: We continue to receive lovely letters and greetings from Friends as they continue to stay close to home. In response to Ministry and Counsel's Friend to Friend outreach activities, **Martha Fopiano** sent a six-page letter to **Candice Ryder** sharing her family history (dating back to pre-Civil War) and her time before and after her attendance at First Friends. I wish I could share her whole letter here. Another newsy letter was received from **Marshall Hockett**. He sent a copy of the book *Tripping 1975: Falling in Love One Country at a Time* that he and his wife **Debbie** recently published about their travels. We have it available in our library if you'd like to read it. They were on a cruise and almost got stuck in Rio when the pandemic hit! He would appreciate prayers for his health regarding his heart and his recent Parkinson's diagnosis.

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. See you next month!

This Month in Meeting for Worship

- October 4 World Quaker Day
Getry Agizah brings the message
What Does It Mean to Be a Quaker Today?
- October 11 Lynda Ladwig brings the message
Oh, What to Wear?
Matthew 22:1-14
- October 18 Whittier Friends School Sunday
Love
- October 25 Matt Hisrich brings the message
- November 1 Music Sunday



At Monthly Meeting on September 13, we were grateful to hear that many Friends schools staff have been able to be paid by the Friends United Meeting Global Impact Fund during the pandemic. Members of the Business and Finance Committee will be attending a stewardship and

Continued on page 7

Messages from Afar

October once again celebrates the gift of Zoom and brings messages from two Friends from distant locales.

On Friends World Committee for Consultation World Quaker Day October 4, Getry Agizah of the Friends United Meeting Friends Church Peace Team comes to us live from Kenya. We've heard so much about Getry from our friends in Kenya this summer and we are thrilled to have her share her message. And Berkeley Friends Church and West Richmond (IN) Friends meeting have been invited to join us!

On October 25, we're happy to welcome back Matt Hisrich to our virtual pulpit. Matt is the Dean of Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Indiana.

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

It was a strange day with surprises lurking around every corner. I forced my eyes wide open but wandered like I was in a fog, stumbling to find words, hands unsteady, and steps uncoordinated. Everything I did was ineffective, mistakes abounded, and my brain felt like it had turned to pudding (not the rich chocolate kind). It could have been one of those silly slapstick comedies—but it was just another frustrating day in the pandemic.

My grandmother's word for this is discombobulated. This is a word that sounds just like it feels: confused, upset, uncomfortable and frustrated.

So what to do on those days? Especially when they come so often living in isolation from each other? First, I admitted it was happening, because it was. Continuing to run my head into a wall made no sense. So I told myself, "STOP self!" Stop trying to do things that just aren't going to work right now and stop making yourself feel bad because you are having an "off" day.

I decided to take a nap and then do the dishes. I figured even if I got water all over, the floor might get clean!

Second, I recognized it as normal. It is normal to have an "off" day. Everyone has them. Blame it on low biorhythms, a bad night's sleep, or even (what it probably was) being overheated in a heat wave. One of the most useful things I learned in emergency management is it is normal to feel abnormal in the midst of abnormal times—including pandemics. In fact, it is abnormal to feel normal! Rather than deny it, it is healthier to just say, "Oh, things are weird and strange!"

I also decided to seek Biblical help. I Googled: "Bible verses when you are discombobulated." Perhaps understandably, nothing came up. But I did find; "Trust God with all your heart, and do not lean on your own insight." (Proverbs 3:5) I heard two things. Trust that God is always present, even in my discombobulation! And lean on a Friend. When I did, frustration soon melted into laughs. It really was my very own silly slapstick comedy.





YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Not many of us get the opportunity to visit Israel and Palestine and certainly not in the time of a pandemic, but that is exactly what Young Friends Fellowship did this past month. So, taking all safety precautions, we decided to limit our visit to a virtual travel tour via Zoom.

We went first to Israel where we visited the cities of Jerusalem, Masada and Tel-Aviv and ended with a glimpse of the Sea of Galilee.

Starting our tour in Jerusalem, we found a thriving modern city. Adjacent to the modern Jerusalem is the old city, and it's like looking into a time capsule.

Jerusalem is the home of three world religions that have been coveted and fought over for centuries. For Christians, it is where Jesus was crucified and resurrected. For Muslims, this is where Muhammad journeyed to Heaven, and for Jews, this is where the Temple of Solomon stood.

Beautiful and ornate buildings with significant meaning and stories are represented at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Dome of the Rock. At the Western Wall, the surviving bit of foundation from the old city, the faithful place their prayers on slips of paper pressed into the cracks of the wall.

Our next trip was to Palestine with its security check points, bordered walls, and fenced walkways leading from Palestine into Israel where some people travel daily to better paying jobs into the state of Israel. Even through a virtual tour, you know you are now in occupied territory.

Just across the Jerusalem border is Bethlehem, not the little town we sing of at Christmastime, but a busy and thriving city. While most of the city is Muslim, there is still a Christian presence. Nativity Square marks the center of Bethlehem, and the Church of the Nativity is built upon the site believed to be where Jesus was born. Inside this ornate church, originally built by the first Christian Roman Emperor in 326 AD, you can glimpse a section of the original mosaic floor from the 4th century.

A local guide tells us that Jesus is the second most important prophet for Muslims and that they also believe in Mary and worship her. In fact, she has a whole section in the Koran named after her.

Continued on page 5



News from Whittier Friends School

Whittier Friends School has attempted to make "back to school" feel as traditional as possible even while schools in Los Angeles County grapple with opening remotely due to health precautions. Our preschool is fully open and ready to serve families in our community, though we all must follow strict health and safety protocols.

We managed to have an annual family event in August, though "Parent Work Day" (traditionally a day-long clean-up day on our campus) was reimaged as "Parent Donation Day" (when parents could swing by our campus to pick up remote school work and drop off donations of cleaning supplies). Though our elementary school classroom cannot be fully open due to county regulations, we have held virtual class sessions with our children so that they can learn together and see each other. Our elementary teacher Marielle Askew has even offered tutoring in small groups for our elementary families who need the additional learning support. We missed our field trip to the LA County Fair, and we miss our whole group playing together, but we look forward to some normalcy, such as the upcoming Picture Day, and Whittier Friends School Sunday when our school children will share in Meeting for Worship on October 18.

If you know of a family with preschool age children who need childcare, we would appreciate the referral! We even accept funding from Options for Learning for families who qualify for low-income support (see optionsforlearning.org for more information about qualification). And if you did not receive one of our Annual Giving Campaign letters and are interested in supporting our school financially, request a letter from Lea Wright, financial manager, at lea.wfs@gmail.com. Lea can also be emailed with questions about enrollment, as school director Cassie Caringella continues on maternity leave.

—Cassie Caringella



'A Letter from Lynda' continued on page 1

I believe I have grown personally, professionally, and spiritually and am very pleased with the work we have done together. I have been privileged to work with some amazing children, youth, and adults, and I know that together we have experienced moments where the Spirit has been at work challenging us to see beyond our boundaries and beliefs and moments when God's love has been made visible through our efforts to be Friends in ministry to each other, to our local community, and to the global community.

I also want you to know that this decision does not mean I am leaving Whittier First Friends. This is my church home, and I look forward to continuing my membership. As I work to make this transition as seamless as possible over the months ahead, I will ask you to remember this above all else: while I am moving on, listen, because God is still speaking. You can expect to hear that from me again and again in different settings and in different ways. In the words of Jeremiah, "was For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:11-13)

In God's Love and Care

Lynda Ladwig

Associate Pastor and Christian Education Coordinator

Help us to celebrate Lynda's retirement and thank her for sharing her wonderful gifts and years of ministry with our meeting with a love offering. Please send your gift to the church office with a note on your check "LL Love Offering" before December 1.

'Youth Fellowship' continued from page 4

Heading towards the mountains we see that the rocky terrain of Palestine is graced with terraces of olive trees planted and maintained for centuries in this land. We see the harvesting of the olives where everyone, including students and children, work the groves. Then the olives are taken to a communal press where they are turned to golden oil.

According to one olive farmer, "the olive tree is the poor man's tree; it asks for nothing and gives everything."

Continued next column

Continuing on, we come to Hebron, the largest city in the West Bank and a commercial center where nearly one third of the West Bank's economy is generated. It is also a city of high security. In this city where the Jewish settlement is literally living above the Palestinian Market, the tension is thick, from the wire net to keep the Arab marketplace free from the garbage of the Jewish residents above, to the Israeli troops posted to maintain control. All because this city is the home to the tomb of Abraham and his family, housed in a medieval church that operates as both a mosque and a synagogue and divided by bulletproof glass. This site is sacred to both Israelis and Palestinians.

The desert is striking and it isn't hard to imagine the peoples of the Bible wandering this land.

We pass through Jericho, a city that has been continuously inhabited for 10,000 years. This city is nearly a 1000 feet below sea level and the air is thick at this altitude. We continue on towards the lowest point on earth, the Dead Sea. The River Jordan empties into this inland sea. With no outlet and hot temperatures, this sea is about six times as salty at the ocean, and locals enjoy floating like a corks, and covering themselves with the therapeutic black mud.

Finally, we leave Israeli security, checkpoints and watch towers behind and enter Ramallah, a Palestinian controlled city. As we wait at the checkpoint, Iwe have plenty of time to ponder the political art on the border walls.

Ramallah is effectively the capital of Palestine. The tomb of Yasser Arafat is next to the Ministries office. The city offers shopping and commerce and is much like any other large metropolitan city. It is in this city that, with its colleges and schools, you feel the possibility of peace and sense hope for the future.

—Lynda Ladwig





Russ' Reflections

Saints and Quakers and Music

Quakers don't commemorate Saints like Christians in other denominations do. This is not to say we don't recognize those who have had a profound impact on the Religious Society of Friends, such as George Fox, Margaret Fell, John Woolman, Elizabeth Fry, Rufus Jones, Parker Palmer, or Philip Gulley, or others outside our circles such as Francis of Assisi, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, or Maya Angelou, but we do not make special observances for them throughout the year. We do remember our departed, usually on Memorial Day weekend, but we typically do not observe the occasions of All Saints Day (November 1) or All Souls Day (November 2) though some of us enjoy Halloween (also known as All Hallows Eve, October 31, the eve of All Saints Day).

This year, since November 1 falls on a Sunday, our Friends Choir section leaders will prepare and record music appropriate to All Saints and All Souls Days, along with some music appropriate for the fall season. We plan to sing several pieces by Charles Villiers Stanford, *Jubilata in B flat* (Psalm 100), *Te Deum in B flat* (an early Christian text), *Iustorum animae* ("The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God"), and Stanford's hymn tune *Engelberg*, written to carry the text, "For All the Saints." In addition, we will present a setting of the Beatitudes by Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. A Kontakion, from the Eastern Orthodox Memorial Service, will complete our musical offering: "Give rest, O Christ, to thy servants with thy saints, where sorrow and pain are no more; neither sighing, but life everlasting."

We invite you to remember weighty Quakers and other "saints," and departed loved ones as we offer this sublime music in Meeting for Worship.



Right Sharing of World Resources—The RSWR team in Sierra Leone has cautiously restarted activities. They were recently able to do in-person training and disburse the grants from the Spring 2020 cycle. For the

Fall 2020 cycle, they will conduct site visits with social distancing, providing partners with information about the virus and needed hygiene supplies. rswr.org.

Western Friend Discussion Community—Mary Klein, editor and executive director of *Western Friend*, the magazine of Pacific Yearly Meeting, has recently implemented an online community forum as a nexus of ongoing mutual support among Friends in the West. westernfriend.org.



Take a Walk With Quakers

A new online class and worship group exploring the Quaker faith will be offered Monday nights starting October 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Walking With Quakers will meet via Zoom for six 90 minute sessions through November 9. Lynda Ladwig and Elisabeth Elliot will facilitate the sessions, which will include study materials and discussion, while placing an emphasis on queries and worship sharing.

The first session will offer an introduction to the beginnings and development of the Quaker faith, and how the past is reflected in the present. The second session will explore the testimonies. The third and fourth sessions will delve into the worship experience and Quaker ways of doing business. The fifth and sixth sessions will discuss Friends' tradition of social justice and bring the class full circle to the community in Whittier and query what it means to be a Quaker today.

Along the way, we will meet Quakers whose lives have spoken over the years within the context of a range of topics.

Walking With Quakers is intended for Friends new to the faith as well as seasoned Friends. Those interested in becoming members of the Meeting are especially encouraged to join us.

For further information about *Walking With Quakers* and to register, email Lynda Ladwig at christianed_ffc@verizon.com.

—Elisabeth Elliot

WIRED—The Technology Report

The Technology Group has been involved in a lot of discussion since it was formed last year, and recently completed network upgrades in the Meeting House to facilitate video and audio broadcasting of services.

At the request of our tenant Beth Shalom back in March, a temporary network cable was run from the office workroom out to the back of the Meeting House, with a WiFi router connected and on a stand. This enabled Beth Shalom to broadcast their services using Facebook, but we were worried about the safety and reliability due to the temporary routing of the cable.

We were able to find a permanent route for new network cables that did not require any hole cutting or other modifications to visible walls or finish woodwork, taking advantage of a small access door in the back of the Meeting House that once served audio equipment which was moved elsewhere long ago.

With the support of Trustees and an electrical contractor, we installed new permanent high bandwidth network cabling which is safe and out of sight.

We also added two 120 volt power receptacles above the HVAC soffit (ledge where the clock is hung) in the back of the Meeting House. This made it possible to move the WiFi router up to the top of the HVAC soffit where it is safely out of the way and almost out of sight.

Beth Shalom continues to broadcast as before, but all of the permanent wiring is now safe, reliable and out of sight.

These improvements will also serve Friends when we are able to come back to the Meeting House in person, and allow us to continue to connect with distant Friends that have been able to join us on our Zoom meetings. Hopefully, we'll then have the best of both worlds.

The committee will continue to carefully consider technology to serve Friends in the future, including consulting with Monthly Meeting regarding how a video screen can be installed in the Meeting House in a way that will preserve the worshipful space and not detract from quietly elegant architecture we love.

—Michael Elliot

'Monthly Meeting' continued from page 3

The Nominating Committee is now meeting weekly and hopes that Friends will prayerfully consider how they can serve the Meeting next year. Budget work sheets for the new year have been sent to all Clerks. An endowment fund for Whittier Friends School was proposed and discussion has begun.

Monthly Meeting for October is October 11. We ask that at least one representative from each family attend via Zoom.



Cupcakes for a Cause

Please share this order form with friends and family!

Youth and Young Adult Fellowship are baking cupcakes to raise funds for the Dig Deep Navajo water project, which brings clean, running water to the Navajo people, where even a ¼ cup of water for cupcakes is a luxury.

All cupcakes are \$8.00 for a half-dozen. Cupcakes are not available for individual purchase. All orders are due by November 8.

Please make checks payable to First Friends Church with *Youth Fundraiser* in the memo line.

Please mail or deliver order forms to First Friends Church, 13205 Philadelphia St, Whittier, CA 90601.

Contactless pickup will be November 23 (Monday) from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the church. Come to the east parking lot and follow the signs. Delivery can also be arranged.

Questions? Please call Lynda Ladwig at 909-234-1948.

#	Flavor	#	Flavor
_____	Half-Dozens of VANILLA	_____	Half-Dozens of CHOCOLATE
_____	Half-Dozens of LEMON	_____	Half-Dozens of PUMPKIN SPICE
_____	Half-Dozens of CARROT CAKE	_____	Half-Dozens of RED VELVET
_____	Half-Dozens of ASSORTED		
_____	Total Half-Dozens x \$8.00		
_____	Total \$ enclosed		



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Suanne Ramirez

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Sharon Rollins
Jasmine Sturr
Kathryn Weber
Loren Woirhaye
Michael Wood
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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!

Return Service Requested
 Postmaster: send address changes to:
 The Living Light
 Whittier First Friends Church
 13205 Philadelphia St
 Whittier, CA 90601-4303

Periodicals
 Postage Paid at
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The Living Light
 USPS 316-320
 Volume 59 Number 9
 Issue Date: October 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.

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A Time of Gratitude and Giving

WHITTIER FIRST FRIENDS
 STEWARDSHIP 2020



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

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