

# THE LIVING LIGHT

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

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Whittier First Friends Church

10th Month, 2023

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## *Give thanks with a grateful heart for the past, present, and future possibilities*

*But Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible." : Matthew 19:26 (NRSV)*

God has charged us with the responsibility, not only of stewardship over material resources, but also of human resources. We are stewards, not only of things, but of life itself. We are all God's children of creation, which is God's loving gift to us. Our call is clear, it is our time to take charge to till and cultivate the earth, to care for and protect all that God has blessed us with.

We recognize that everything given to this Meeting from the membership of the past, present, and future will always be ours to manage, to cultivate, and share. This Meeting has been blessed with Friends full of passion. We recognize God's love and His blessings over our lives. This expression of our faith and testimonies is reflected through our actions; our faith determines the choices by which we live.

Our stewardship: the *Faith Promise*, is a key ingredient to continuing to move forward. It is



easy for all of us to say our prayers, to attend worship, and go through the motions of living day by day. But an important test comes in how we manage what God has given us as we continue to live day by day. His faith in us has given us choices. God never left us alone. Past F/friends who lovingly supported this Meeting's land, the buildings, the parking lots, Friends Schools, mission projects, community outreach, world organizations, and those who served different ministries, truly knew the meaning of "Friend of this Meeting".

Our mission: First Friends is "A Christian people called to listen, gathered to seek peace,

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## Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

**Dear Friends,** I love receiving news and pictures to go into the Friendly Fare, and I'm always sorry when I have to cut the cute details, and this month is a winner month for pictures and lots of details.

**Friends At Home:** Lea Thirkettle attended the special quarterly dinner at Morningside where they help the residents get dressed up for a



fancy meal. She visited with her mom,

**Marygene Wright,** and **Shirley Votaw.**

**Friends**

**Travel:** On September first, the

California **Beedes** met up in Richmond, Indiana, to celebrate & honor the life of their dear cousin, **Charles Jay Beede.** The Indiana Beedes hosted a beautiful weekend of get togethers, so that, while sprinkled with sorrow, they found much joy in spending time with each other, remembering and visiting people and places that



are dear and hold much meaning for each one of them.

This photo taken at West Rich-

mond First Friends Church at the luncheon after the service includes **Norm, Ben, Jo Nita, Tina** and **Lyn.**

**Friends Correspond:** Crystal (Cush) Weitkamp wrote that the family hasn't been down to Whittier since

**Natalie's** dedication at First Friends in May, 2019. Natalie is now 4.5 years old and recently graduated from preschool. This picture was of her first day of Transitional Kindergarten at Harloe Elementary School where she joins big sister **Julia** who is now in fourth grade. The family all sit and read each issue of the *Living Light* together, keeping their Quaker faith growing.



**Debi Nelson** sent in pictures and family news. Daughter **Melissa** & son-in-law **Dan Martinez** live about a mile- and- a- half from **Debi** & **Bruce.** Melissa is working at Bellevue College, and Dan works for the city of Issaquah. **No-**

**rah** started 4th grade and isn't really sure she likes it. She is on a soccer team and really seems to enjoy

it. **Jordan** is "cool" with school and is adjusting to first grade. He went to Robot camp during the summer designing things and then animating them. His passion for rocks is never ending. **Friends Sharing News:** Help to keep the Friendly Fare going. Email me a quick note and tell me your news. Send it to Lea at [leal-ouw@gmail.com](mailto:leal-ouw@gmail.com), or deliver to me at church on



**Sunday.** See you next month!



## Loletta's Lines

October is here! What month brings you joy? I enjoy October because the rush back to school and fall schedules have settled. Autumn weather is here, and I can smell the change. Some leaves even



change color. It reminds me everything exists in seasons of birth, growth, life, and death. One of the most well-known verses in the Bible is Ecclesiastes 3:1, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Each season is essential to God's creation - and it is good.

October 1, we celebrate World Quaker Day and our Quaker connections. Our focus is **Ubuntu**, which in simple terms is Community. As individuals, we are each a community in miniature: body, mind, heart, and spirit. To be whole, all these parts must be nurtured and encouraged. In fact, **we only exist because we are nurtured and encouraged** because we exist in community.

It is also true the community only exists because of the individuals, **we are - because I and you - are**. The larger body cannot be whole without all its parts - and the variety of gifts we bring. Following the Spirit and working together, we minister and serve. But more importantly, we nurture our relationships with God, each other, and our neighbors. We even learn how to love our enemies as human beings by bringing justice into situations. When we discern Spirit's leading together, it can feel instantaneous, needing little discussion. Other times, it can take a long time to listen and understand God's direction. But either way, together we become whole - a Community. And it is good.

As we grow in Spirit and love individually and as a community, we become Light, joy, hope, and peace in the world. Along the way, we find both challenges and opportunities. But, in essence, they are the same each season of life: to find ways to love God, one another, ourselves, our neighbors, and our enemies more deeply. Then we understand God's message. We are each and together an essential part of God's creation - and it is good.

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## Monday Nights With Quakers

Are you missing the "Walking With Quakers" class on Monday nights? Or wish you had joined the sessions? Maybe you want to extend your worship and learning experience beyond Sundays, or simply want more time with Friends. If so, we have a solution! All are invited to join us Monday nights by Zoom from 7 to 8 pm to discuss a specific topic related to Quakerism. The topics are based on short *Quaker Speak* videos, a project of *Friends Journal*. We begin on October 2, with "Where We Touch God, and God Touches Us," an interview with Christopher Sammond from Poplar Ridge Friends Meeting about how he has experienced divine leading. Future topics in October include "Envisioning a Strong Future for Quakerism," "Welcoming vs. Inclusive," "A Few Favorite Aspects of Quaker Faith and Practice," and "How I Practice Quakerism Throughout the Week." So come one, come all to these thought-provoking, inspirational, and spirit-led conversations with Friends. Check the weekly newsletter for the Zoom link or contact Candice Ryder at [cryder55@hotmail.com](mailto:cryder55@hotmail.com) for more information.

## Russ' Reflections

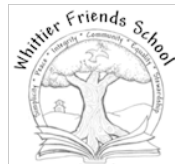
### Vibrant Faith, Vibrant Singing, Vibrant Sharing

One of the delightful experiences I had at my summer organ concert series was that we ended each evening by singing a hymn. There were generally about 25 in attendance, mostly friends from other traditions (Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutherans, a family of Orthodox, and some "nones" - not all were musicians), not Friends. The singing was strong and confident, even though most of the hymns were unfamiliar to those present. I wonder if this is because robust singing is encouraged in these faith traditions and Quakerism has downplayed music in its history.

We have had some moments in the past 18 years at First Friends where members have sung with more confidence than recently. Perhaps this is because we have fewer persons physically present in our meeting space or because our choir is smaller and cannot provide as strong a support for the singing. The pandemic really cut the wind in our sails. This fall, we are hoping to add to the numbers of the choir (rehearsals at 9 am Sundays, followed by worship at 11) and we are seeking section leaders to support Friends who want to sing in Meeting.

It seems to me that vibrant singing is a sign of a vibrant faith and is a vibrant witness to those who come to us seeking a place to support their spiritual journeys. Our worship is not a time for us to be passive observers, but a gathering of active listeners to the words and music we hear and to the promptings of God/Spirit in the silence. We have an opportunity to actively and outwardly unite as a com-

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## News from Whittier Friends School



It was such a joy having a "Grand Pals Day" celebration at Whittier Friends School in September. The preschool and elementary children had a total of nineteen guests with them, mostly grandparents, but some parents and aunts and uncles were also in attendance. Over the course of a few hours, the children and their guests engaged in activities that helped them celebrate the concept of "exploring." All children and their guests made an ornament together that said, "In life, it's not where you go, it's who you travel with," a quote by Charles Schulz to commemorate their time together at Grand Pals Day. The elementary guests also got to take part in a space-themed scavenger hunt (space exploration), studied shells and ocean fossils and made a shell pressing in clay (ocean exploration), and were even able to tell each other riddles themed to world travel. Finally, all guests and their child hosts enjoyed a meal together. Being the first in-person Grandparents day celebration since 2019, it was especially exciting. Most children had never participated in a Whittier Friends School grandparents day event before.

October 15, our school looks forward to Whittier Friends School Sunday, also known as

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and sent forth to serve. We are an open and affirming faith community" as stated on the webpage. Our reason for being here today is to celebrate God and to celebrate God's presence and His power and His love and His promise of fulfillment. In celebrating these realities, new life is given to us. The realization of that new life involves a daily recognition that God holds us in His loving grace, and we are the stewards of His material resources and His human resources as well.

Celebrating Friends today: We are still here, we are strong, and we are a beautiful community of people who love each other and welcome new folks. The new gifts that you bring continue to carry our legacy forward. We have evolved in having an online component, the mission collaborative, and Peace Day. We are growing spiritually, emotionally, and loving each other. We are growing in understanding the Quaker traditions. We are faithful to their legacy and are carrying it forward in new ways and facing new challenges with hope.



***Summer Worship on Zoom in Fellowship Hall***

The *Yearly Faith Promise* is one way to plan and remember the spiritual insights reaffirmed by generations of Quakers from this Meeting in

order to carry on God's work. Our actions, our lives, and our giving are the most accurate measure of our faith. The material things in our lives, our time, our talent and treasures, speak so clearly about what's most important for us; they mold and shape who we are and how we live. We need to ask ourselves: Do we allow God to enter these areas of our lives? Does He impact our thinking in our choices? Quaker Christian Stewardship is faith in action. Our stewardship season begins in October. Please look for a plan for support letter, or fill out your plan online at

<https://forms.gle/JC7FwHNStNdqsQ9o7>.



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***continued from page 4 - Whittier Friends School***

Back to School Sunday. Our school children and their families will join First Friends Church on that

day, sharing songs and scriptures and messages about the theme, "The body is made up of many parts." We



We look forward to sharing with our First Friends family our take on what it means to be a strong community made of unique individuals. Please plan to join us that day as we show our appreciation and respect to our school's founders, you!

## AFFN - IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

Pharaoh Khufu, ruler of ancient Egypt in the Fourth Dynasty, might have been pleased to learn that, 5000 years after his death, millions of people will have visited his tomb at the Great Pyramid near Cairo. The immortality sought by the pharaohs in building their monumental mausoleums is realized in this and many other World Heritage Sites of modern Egypt.

Loletta Barrett brought a slide show of Egypt's rich historical legacy to All Friends Fellowship Night, Sept. 13. Twenty-five Friends enjoyed the travelog, as well as the pre-program potluck supper arranged by the Hos-



pitality Committee under the direction of Mary Marshburn.

Many cultures and dynasties are recorded in Egypt's vast fabric of art and architecture, dating from Prehis-

tory 7000 years ago to the modern nation at the juncture of three continents. Loletta chose culture rather than chronology to describe her guided tour of Egypt earlier this year. Her outstanding photos of temples, mosques, Christian churches, and synagogues emphasized the all-absorbing role of religion in Egypt's history. The pictures were captioned to provide context for a well-organized narrative.

The names of places visited by Loletta's group are redolent of ancient history: Karnak, Luxor, Abu Simbel. The largest collection of royal tombs is the Valley of the Kings in Lower Egypt. Many Americans learned of this World Heritage Site through the traveling exhibit,



arranged some years ago by the Egyptian National Museum, of art treasures from the tomb of King Tut (Akhenaton IV). This was the only royal tomb that had not been pillaged over the centuries.

After the Pharaonic Period, Egypt was ruled by the Greeks, Romans, the Crusaders, and the Islamic Caliphates. Each culture left its unique imprint. The fabled Library of Alexandria was built by the Greeks and destroyed in the First Century BCE by the Romans. Its place is taken by a handsome modern library. Exquisite mosques date from the rise of Islam in the 7th Century CE. Crusaders of the 12th Century built churches, some of which are well-preserved. Alexandria has long been a center of Hebraic culture, represented by several imposing synagogue buildings.

The Nile River has dominated the history of Egypt from ancient to modern times. Construction of the Aswan High Dam in southern Egypt has liberated Egypt's agriculture from the drought- and- flood cycles endured over centuries. Loletta's pictures of verdant rice fields and date orchards, framed by stark deserts, showed that Egypt is a land of geographic, as well as cultural, fascination. Join us on October 11th to hear about Loletta's time in Washington D.C.

~ Bob Newton



munity by singing together with confidence. I wonder what sort of witness our reserved singing manifests to our meeting and to those outside it. I recently heard this phrase in a Quaker podcast: [they were] so opposed to proselytizing (converting people) that they forgot to evangelize (share their faith and experience). What would happen if we spoke about our church to others and invited them here to experience vibrant and confident worship? What would happen if we were more vibrant in proclaiming our faith in song?

You have my permission and encouragement to be bold in your singing. This is definitely part of our tradition as a programmed meeting. You have my encouragement to sit closer together toward the center of our space so you can hear each other better. We will try to support you better with the choir in your midst when we can. You are encouraged to invite people you know who like to sing or play music to participate in our music ministry which is here to support our community and worship. To quote a hymn (No. 407 in our hymnal), "...in our worship and our living keep us striving for the best." Let us strive to become more vibrant Friends, in our worship and our living.

### **Intergenerational Meeting for Learning begins October 1, 2023**

We are excited to begin our season of learning on Sunday mornings with a renewal of our intergenerational class. This experience is open to all Friends at 9:30 am, on-site and online. Each week, we experience a storybook which provides a lesson that connects us to our Quaker values and challenges our thinking about expanding our welcome and openness to others. Each week in the ENews, you will find information about the book, the queries we will be discussing, and the Zoom link. We will start with *This Way, Charlie*, by Caron Levis and Charles Santoso. Please join us!

### **A Calendar Item! Learn to Engage in Democracy beyond Voting!**

Mark your calendar for an opportunity to expand your understanding and participation in our Democracy. On November 15-16, 2023, First Friends Church and the Whittier FCNL Advocacy Team will host an opportunity to learn an easy and fun way to engage beyond voting. We create relationships with our elected representatives and meet with them to ensure they understand our priorities and concerns as they carry out their responsibilities. We will talk to our representatives about funding peacebuilding programs that de-escalate conflict, stop violence, and prevent genocide. And save money! Mark your calendar and plan to come!

### **Right Sharing of World Resources: October 29, 2023**

On October 29, Jackie Stillwell, General Secretary of RSWR will bring the message in Meeting for Worship. At Rise of Meeting, Friends are invited to a lunch presentation by Jackie and Ruth Bueso about RSWR. Ruth serves as Country Coordinator in Guatemala. We have also invited Friends from the Claremont Friends Meeting to join us. Watch for an email asking for reservations in late October. Lunch will be \$7. Donations for the ministry of RSWR will also be appreciated. Please plan to come and welcome RSWR, and hear about their important ministry.

### **Nominating Committee Time**

It's that time of year for all the Friends to consider how we are led to support the work of our meeting. As Friends gather to work and worship, we learn more about each other, ourselves, our gifts, and about God's purposes in our lives. Please be in prayerful consideration for how you would like to be involved, and be open to the Spirit and the Nominating Committee call!

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

**Barbara Cote**  
**Kathy Hood**  
**Rose Nedrow**  
**Kathy Robison**  
**Ami Troedsson**  
**Marygene Wright**

**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!**