

The Living Light

"...and Christ shall give thee light." Ephesians 5:14



Volume 55, Number 12 Whittier First Friends Church Twelfth Month, 2016

This Is The Day



At the end of each year new hope for humankind springs forth as we celebrate the birth of Jesus and rededicate ourselves to a new year of progress. First Friends will again mark the Blessed Season with many well-loved traditions.

Christmas activities feature our young folks. They will have lots to enjoy along with their elders. On **December 3** at 12:00 p.m. our youth will gather for **Candy Making** in the Fellowship Hall kitchen. They will put together an assortment of our favorite candies to be sold at the Christmas Dinner. Half of the proceeds will go to support a worthy cause chosen by them and the remainder will help subsidize youth activities in the coming year.

Our gala **Christmas Dinner** on **December 11** at 5:00 p.m. will feature a holiday revue, "Something Christmas," presented by the Sunday Schools, Youth Fellowship and Whittier Friends School. There will be a plethora of good things to eat for dinner as well as the treats concocted by the Youth Fellowship. Our kids will serve tables and participate in the benefit auction of a magnificent glass sculpture created by D and L Stained Glass. Tickets for the Christmas Dinner go on sale on **November 26**.

Monday Before Christmas is our traditional outreach to the community, offering a day of supervised Christmas crafts, singing, games and a movie, while parents shop or decorate. Children in grades K-6 will gather in Fellowship Hall from

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

Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends,

Friends Celebrate: Dave & Ginger Edinger celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary with friends at West Richmond Meeting, where they've worshipped since leaving Whittier. The extended Nelson and Cradler family gathered during the last weekend of October for the wedding of **Mark Brickley** (grandson of Esther Nelson) & **Natalie Contreras**. Chris Cradler writes, "It was uncertain until the last moment, but our dear 97-year-old Grandmother/Mother/Aunt made the day trip to San Diego for the wedding!" They took this "*Living Light Travels*" photo in the Balboa Park sun after the ceremony, (sadly without the bride and groom who were too busy with official photos.) Shown are **Melissa Nelson Martinez, Larry Ferguson & Chris Cradler, Karen Cradler Davis & Mark Davis, Bruce & Debi Nelson, John & Linda Nelson Brickley, AND Esther Nelson** holding the digital *Living Light* A grand occasion for all.



Friends About Town: Deanna Woirhaye recently closed her photographic showcase at the Whittier Art Gallery, which was well received. She also reports being accepted as a new artist into the 2017 Hillcrest Art Festival, where her photographs will be entered into a juried showcase. Mostly she feels very honored to have even been considered. Come visit February 24-26, 2017. In light of the many fears generated during this current political season, **Anathea Woirhaye** recently brought to meeting many gold safety pins to distribute among those interested indicating that she (and those who would join her) is a safe person to contact if one feels threatened and that she will do what she is able to help those who are

afraid of what may come. She hopes that other members of the church community join together on this.

School and Work News: After gathering a large number of orders for her school's (OCSA) one-time fundraiser, **Anathea Woirhaye** was able to win a professional six-class acting training and agent showcase package, which she hopes will further her personal performance art goals. On a Saturday in early November, Anathea did her first on-camera paid talent acting job, after being chosen in the auditions. Her project is currently under a non-disclosure agreement. **Cedric Woirhaye** was inducted into the National Honor Society due to his academic achievement.

Friends Visit: There were several visitors present on Music Sunday, including **Eric Bald's** aunt, visiting from Canada, and choir member **Ryan Hoffman's** grandparents. While making a fall visit to family in Southern Calif., Ed McCulloch, a British relative of choir member **Allison Coop**, had a letter of commentary on the U.S. election published in the Oct. 23 Los Angeles Times. His letters, they said, frequently appear in British papers. **Ami Troedsson** travelled from Oxnard to visit and fellowship with Friends. Here she is in a "selfie" with **Loletta** and **Mary** in the church office with the *Living Light* continuing our tradition: "*The*

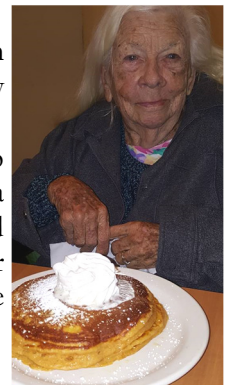


Living Light Travels." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.) When **Kirk Wright** came to church with his mother, **Marygene Wright**, on October 23, he was on his way back to his home in Oregon from attending an Earlham College Board meeting in Indiana.

Friends Travel: **Marilyn Fant** had a lot of fun recently visiting her son **Josh** and his family and exploring Old San Juan in Puerto Rico. Attending the recent annual meeting of the Friends Committee on National Legislation in Washington D.C., were **Elisabeth & Michael Elliot, Tim & Neva Root, and Rob & Sue Settlege**. **John Maurer** of the Berkeley Friends Church was also there as a WARSF representative. We look forward to more information next month about their travels.

Special Birthday Wishes: **Blossom Snively** celebrated her 94th birthday with a big pumpkin pancake breakfast!

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

December 4	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Signs of Peace II</i> Isaiah 11: 1-11
December 11	Becky Overmyer-Velazquez brings the message <i>Signs of Peace III</i> Isaiah 35: 1-10 and Matthew 20: 1-16
December 18	Christmas Music Sunday
Christmas Eve	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Signs of Peace IV</i> Isaiah 7: 10-17
Christmas Day	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Peace</i> Isaiah 9:2-7

Loletta's Lines



We close our year of "gathered to seek peace," in the season of Peace. To me it seems every year when we enter this season, our world feels less peaceful than it has ever been. We know of so many places where there is war and/or its accompanying misery. We can't help but know about those places. The media report daily about the disasters, and organizations regularly remind us of the needs of the people there.

We know that peace is not just the absence of war. It is also removing and preventing physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, economic and environmental violence. Peace requires freedom, justice, harmony and every child of God having what they need to survive and thrive. These essentials are too rarely available for human beings and for Creation. Whenever and wherever we pray and work together for them, we are following God's call to be part of the peacemaking and the kingdom building; co-creators in the Beloved Community of God.

But true peace is a much deeper and treasured place of centeredness and settled-ness in God. It begins with a Love that is unconditional, overwhelming, and everlasting. A Love we acknowledge and celebrate, especially in this season, as incarnate in the world. It is a Love that brings us Hope so darkness and despair can never reign, and it blossoms into Joy when it is shared, in a community of people unified in and through the One, the Source, the Light, the Giver of Life, the Creator, the Father and Mother, the Spirit. This Love is God who Jesus knew as Abba. Jesus taught us about, and gave us, the Peace he experienced in his relationship with God. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." (John 14:27) Friends, this is our Peace. May we love with the Love that transforms all fear and unsettled-ness, and share the Peace and Hope we know so it blossoms into Joy for all those around us. Amen.



Items that were approved at Monthly Meeting for November include: an organ project to reconstitute the swell mixture to a lower pitch, members of the 2017

Committees, and the continuation of Lynda Ladwig's recorded ministry.

Monthly Meeting for December is December 4. Lynda Ladwig is the guest chef.

This Is The Day continued from Page 1

9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on **December 19**. They are asked to bring a sack lunch. Other snacks are provided. There is a suggested donation of \$10. If you would like to help with this important event, please contact Lynda Ladwig.

What would Christmas be like without music? On **December 18** there will be **special Christmas-season music** with an instrumental trio at Meeting for Worship. First Friends will resonate with music of the season in a free **concert** by the **New Century Singers** on Sunday, **December 11** at 3:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room. Friends can enjoy **caroling** on the evening of **December 19**, with the Monthly Monday Mission group, along with the **wrapping of Christmas gifts** for the senior citizens of Brookdale Manor, across the street from our church.

On **Christmas Eve** we will gather at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room for our beloved Candlelight (read Flashlight) Service. And don't forget our gala **New Year's Eve Party and Countdown** in Fellowship Hall 6:00 p.m. until Quaker Midnight (9:00 p.m.)

As we say in California, "Have a Good One!"

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 communicaker@gmail.com.



YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

A Teambuilding, Hunger Solving Challenge

On November 6, two teams of youth took on the annual Interfaith Food Center scavenger hunt challenge. Amara Overmyer, Anatheia and Cedrick Woirhaye, and Ashley and Kat Ryder were accompanied by Candice Ryder and Mel Sturr. A list of clues, a \$50

target, and a ticking clock. Who would win? Everyone! The missions of obtaining food for the Interfaith Food Center, meeting the target, and having fun were all accomplished. Thanks to our youth for meeting this challenge! See if you can solve these clues and identify the grocery items: Edible fungus creamed in stock? Popeye has an obsession with this.

The Tree of Christmas Peace Mission

“True Peace is not the absence of war, it is the presence of justice.” Jane Addams

Our Outreach and Christian Education Committees have joined together in a warm, wonderful mission of sharing peace with our neighbors living on the streets; a Tree of Christmas Peace. First Friends has participated (and will again in January) in the Whittier Area Interfaith Council Cold Weather Shelter; providing overnight lodging, meals, blankets from November to March. The gift of space, food and volunteers by churches, the synagogue and mosque serves 40 individuals. But there are approximately 300 other individuals and families for whom there is “no room in the inn.” Last year the Interfaith Council was also led to respond to the new and growing need for overnight lodging for families with children in hotels.

Friends are invited to share their blessings of peace by adding a gift on or under the tree, or to the gift box in the foyer during the month of December. Decorate the tree with new socks, gloves, and hats. Put new blankets, jackets, umbrellas, and rain ponchos under the tree. Add a \$\$ gift to the gift box by cash, check or gift card. All the decorations and gifts will be given to the St. Matthias Soup hour to minister to our neighbors living on the streets. The financial gifts will go to the Interfaith Council for the fund for housing families. Share the warmth; share the Peace!



News from Whittier Friends School

Whittier Friends School is gearing up for a Merry Christmas, with plenty of opportunities to spread Christmas cheer! First up on the celebration list is a field trip, where we will get to see a few of our school friends in a performance of The Nutcracker ballet. Our school children will be presenting their favorite Christmas Carols and Christmas stories for our church community at the First Friends Church Christmas dinner, and then again performing a similar program for their families and friends. Finally, our students will be visiting Brookdale to share their songs with the elderly residents, bringing holiday cheer to the people there.

As always, we have a few fundraising opportunities during the month of December. Scrip gift cards can be purchased by Tuesday, December 6, and these gift cards will arrive in plenty of time for you to mail with your holiday cards! And on Monday, December 12, your dinner at Blaze Pizza at the Quad will warrant a donation to our school. For more information on dates/locations of our school's performances, or for fliers for our fundraisers, contact me at Whittier Friends School.

—Cassie Caringella

Outreach Sunday Observed

The Outreach Committee hooked up with the United Society of Friends Women International on Oct. 16 to celebrate our close ties with the larger world of Quakerdom. Carrin Bouchard, Clerk of OC and organizer of First Friends USFWI contingent, opened Meeting for Worship with a moving call for commitment to Friends' good works at home and abroad, before introducing our guest speaker, Colin Saxton, General Secretary of Friends United Meeting. Colin's Worship Message was “Light in the Darkness.” He told of his own journey from a troubled youth to find inspiration in Friends' testimonies and activities, especially in global Christian ministries. Colin's Quakerly credentials are impressive: a Friends pastor in Northwest Yearly Meeting for 16 years, a doctoral degree from George Fox Seminary in Newburg, OR, and an adjunct professor.

After meeting, Carrin and USFI members staged a fine potluck luncheon in honor of our guest. Colin presented an illustrated summary of FUM mission activities in Kenya, Palestine and Belize, projects of which First Friends have been active supporters for many years, to complete a memorable Outreach Sunday.



Friends Transported by Pictures and Music

An extraordinary artistic event occurred at All Friends Fellowship Night on November 9. Art photography by Deanna Woirhaye, teamed with music by Russ Litchfield, made one of the most enjoyable fellowship events of the year. Deanna's mood-producing photographs of nature, people and architecture, projected on a large screen, were embellished by a background of soft piano music.

Most Friends were familiar with some of Deanna's pictures, shown at Meetings for Worship, previous AFFN events, and local art displays. Some present had seen a preview of Deanna and Russ's collaboration at the September Peace Cafe. A greatly expanded program transported 36 Fellowship members at this AFFN.

Before Friends sat down for their potluck meal, Deanna gathered the group in the courtyard for a Native American blessing. She walked around the circle of Friends with a smoldering bunch of sage, inviting each to smell the healing fragrance while she chanted a blessing in the Cherokee language.

Deanna's pictures documented her extensive travels, including animals and village scenes in Kenya, where Deanna went four years ago as a representative to the 6th World Conference of Friends, and the stunning avant-garde architecture of Barcelona, where she and husband Brendon went two years ago. And there were scenes from the Grand Canyon and other national parks in this country, even familiar scenes in our own city that became engaging tableaux in the artistic mind of Deanna.

Russ's background pieces seemed beautifully phased with the sequence of photos. One piece would wind down with a sunset scene and the next bright piece would introduce a sequence of close-up photos

Start 2017 Volunteering for the Cold Weather Shelter!

Every winter from November until March the Whittier Area Interfaith Council sponsors a Cold Weather Shelter to provide overnight hospitality for some of the homeless people in our Whittier community.

In January First Friends Church will be coordinating with our friends and neighbors at First United Methodist Church (FUMC) to house and feed up to 40 homeless people. FUMC is graciously opening their doors from Monday evening, January 9 until Monday morning, January 16. They will provide an accessible location for dinner and sleeping, and we will be pitching in with the meals and night supervision.

Our participation will be organized through the cooperation of two committees, Outreach and Christian Education. Sign-up sheets will be available in the courtyard as we begin to seek volunteers to help with cooking dinners, hosting, and overnight supervision. There is a need for supervisors (one male, one female) to be on site from 6 p.m.-12 a.m. each night and also from 12-7a.m. each morning. Coffee and a hot breakfast are also provided.

Please consider how you might want to serve. So let us join together with friends to warm our hands and our hearts at the Cold Weather Shelter in January!

— Marilyn Fant

Coming in January...
The Living Light gets a new look!

of flowers or birds. Russ said afterward that he did not intentionally coordinate the two media, it just worked out that way! Some of the eight piano works were melodies of familiar hymns: "Gather Us In" by Marty Haugen, "Simple Gifts" arranged by John Carter, and "For the Beauty of the Earth," arranged by Jeanne Cotter.

The potluck supper was organized by Mary Marshburn, and her autumnal table decorations featuring an amazing variety of colorful gourds grown in her garden, helped to make the event one of the best of the season. This was the last AFFN of 2016.

— Bob Newton

Praise in Music Transports Worshippers

Music Sunday on November 6 began with J. S. Bach's "God's Time is Always Best" performed by the Handbell Choir, followed by the Call to Worship with modern composer Richard Proulx's "Te Deum Laudamus" ("Lord We Praise You") sung by the Friends Choir, accompanied by the Handbell Choir and Russ Litchfield on the organ.

The centerpiece of Music Sunday was Benjamin Britten's magnificent choral work "Rejoice in the Lord." This work, written in 1943, recaptures the transcendent spirituality of English poet Christopher Smart (1722-1771). As with many great writers, the value of Smart's work was not properly appreciated in his own time; in fact, he was for a time committed to an asylum for his "religious mania." The text of "Rejoice" is from "Jubilate Agno," a long poem written by Smart while in confinement.

Russ used the Children's Message to explain Christopher Smart's universalist religion to worshippers. All of God's creation, animate and inanimate, sings praises to the Creator. The Wonder Box contained a few life-like toy animals, including a skunk and a snake. Russ explained that each has its special talents, unique lifestyle, and place in the Great Scheme. Each is an existential tribute to the Creator. Even writing has its ordained role. Russ showed the children the letters "H" for "Spirit" and "L" for "Love," as per Smart's poem. The children remained seated on the stage while Baritone Ryan Hoffmann and Mezzo-soprano Allison Coop serenaded them with modern composer Barrie Capena's charming "A Modern Benedicite," a child's hymn of praise, while the offering was being taken.

"Rejoice in God, O ye tongues. Give the glory to the Lord." The choir sang this opening phrase of Britten's work, introducing examples from Smart's poem of famous animals who came forth to praise God with instructive stories: Balaam's ass, Ishmael's tiger, and Daniel's lion. Soprano soloist Samantha Sanchez followed with Smart's charming tribute to his cat Jeoffry, whose elegant grace extols its Maker. Then came Allison Coop with Smart's praise of the humble mouse, who, Smart claimed, is really a creature of great valor that will defend its mate even against the prodigious cat!

Tenor Evan Mooney sang lines of the poem that were appreciated by all worshippers present: "For the flowers are great blessings...For the flower glorifies God." Baritone Ryan came on with the sacredness of



American Friends Service Committee—Please give to help the AFSC partner with communities severely affected by Hurricane Matthew to provide the most immediate needs for families, including hygiene kits, food, temporary roof materials, blankets, flashlights, and more. AFSC Haiti field staff are on the ground coordinating with local partners to improve the situation in their communities. afsc.org.

Friends United Meeting—Members of the 11-day Living Letters trip to Cuba, January 9–21, will participate in whichever building project is highest priority at that time, working alongside Cuban Friends and skilled professionals. There will also be plenty of time for worship and fellowship with Cuban Quakers. fum.org.



Singing and Wrapping the Christmas Spirit

All are welcome to join together for some joyful caroling at Brookdale, Uptown Whittier on Monday, December 19 at 6 p.m. We are expecting as many as 25 residents to gather around the piano with Russ Litchfield accompanying the voices. Nearby friends will find a wrapping station where they can bring gifts for some special holiday decorations. So come and spread cheer by singing or wrapping for December's Monthly Mission.

— *Marilyn Fant*

letters: "For H is a spirit... for L is love." The choir followed with poetic tributes to musical instruments and rhymes. The work ended with a resounding "Hallelujah" for the inspiration of the artist, which comes "from the heart of God."

Cesar Franck's mighty "Psalm 150," sung in English by the choir, capped a memorable musical Meeting for Worship. For the Postlude, the Bell Choir returned for their third offering with a stirring rendition of Richard Strauss' "Festival Procession." All worshippers remained seated, transported by the power of music and the skill of our musicians.

— *Bob Newton*



ALL FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

Join us for the next All Friends Fellowship Night on Wednesday, January 11 at 6 p.m.

Outreach & Mission Projects

Before we say farewell to 2016, the Outreach Committee (OC) would like to update our Meeting on the outcome of a few events and projects organized for members to participate in throughout the year.

Springtime and fall, our committee changes Fellowship Hall into a "Peace Café." A place where friends and the community can dine, listen, hang out and enjoy the presence of peace-minded people. Dinner, music, art and dance entertain each friend who walks through our doors. Our hostesses, JoNita Beede and Holly Overin share their musical talent, oversee the scheduling of performers and invite crafters to sell their art or special wares. All funds raised during these two evening events help our *Summer Peace Camp* program for children ages 5 to 13, offering scholarships, purchasing supplies and creating learning activities. The camp is held during the last week in July. This year's theme: *Earth: Respect, Preserve and Protect*.

During the month of June, we asked members to supply seed packages or make a donation toward *American Friends Service Committee – Los Angeles* project: *Roots for Peace: Building Healthy Communities*. The program was designed in 2009, working with young people to develop their leadership and community organizing skills around food justice, urban gardening, and health and nutrition. Through the program, youth gain the skills to critically analyze issues and implement community-action projects that address health inequities in Los Angeles. Crystal Gonzalez, Roots for Peace Program Coordinator, teaches about the power of hands in action. Crystal was overwhelmed over the support our meeting gave.

June 11, OC hosted a special luncheon event for Friends Committee on Legislation (FCLCA), inviting Kevan Insko, Director of Development and Outreach, to our meeting. The idea was to enlighten Southern California Friends and the community about the importance of lobbying. FCLCA is a nonpartisan, statewide public interest lobby founded by Quakers in 1952. Their supporters include people of all backgrounds and beliefs. FCLCA advocates for California state laws that are just, compassionate and respectful of the inherent worth of every person. Together, we can bring a voice of conscience to

On Our Calendar...

Monthly Mission	Monday, January 23 6 p.m.
Whittier Friends School Parking Lot Sale	Saturday, January 28 7 a.m.
Cold Weather Shelter being held at First United Methodist Church— preparing and serving meals. Staffing the overnight shelter.	Monday evening, January 9 thru Mon- day morning, Janu- ary 16
Family Movie Night	Friday, February 3 6:30 p.m.
Quarterly Clerks' Meeting	Sunday, February 5 At Rise of Meeting
Whittier Friends School Grandparents Day	Friday, February 10

Remember the Interfaith
Food Center when you
shop for groceries!



California politics. FCLCA is one of many Quaker organizations OC supports.

Friends United Meeting (FUM) Summer Mission Project was design to help Friends Theological College (FTC) in Kaimosi, Kenya. The *Power for Pastors* project focused on raising funds to assist in purchasing Solar Panels. FTC Library is semi-computerized, power is needed to check materials in and out; research for information; classifications and cataloging. With no power, FTC can't function. Each panel costs \$1,500. This cost covers installation, wiring, battery and inverters. They need 32 panels to cover the building. OC Mission support program started July 3, ending September 4, raised a little over \$800.

This month, Outreach and Christian Education Committees are joining together to host a *Tree of Christmas Peace* mission project. Please take time to read about this upcoming program and to post the dates in your calendar. In January, FFC will be helping with the Cold Weather Shelter program. The 2017 Outreach Committee members will continues to seek, review, connect and create ways our meeting can lend a helping hand following His leading.

In Peace, Carrin Bouchard, Clerk f Outreach Committee

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Elisabeth Elliot Editor
 Judy Browning Copy Editor
 Loletta Barrett Pastor
 Lynda Ladwig Associate Pastor
 and Christian Education Coordinator
 Russell Litchfield Director of Music
 Ministries and Organist
 Mary Boltz Office Administrator
 Lorenzo Mora Custodian

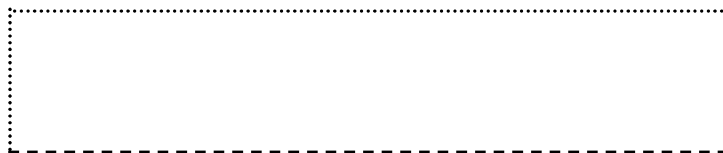
Telephone 562-698-9805

FAX 562-698-1127

www.firstfriendswhittier.org

Whittier Friends School Staff

Marie Kaneko School Committee Clerk
 562-945-1654

**Order Your Christmas Poinsettias**

Please place ____ poinsettia plant(s) in the Meeting House
 on Christmas Day, at \$7 each.

Order deadline is Sunday, December 18, 2014

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Name _____

Phone _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

☐ I will take after worship ☐ Deliver to shut-ins.



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

Peggy Anderson
 Audrey and Carlos Bailey
 Helen and Jack Carlisle
 Phil and Liz Ellis
 Rose Nedrow
 Maureen Russell
 Vi Smith
 Ami Troedsson
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 Gerry Wolfe

You can also read *The Living Light* at www.firstfriendswhittier.org