

# 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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Volume 59 Number 11

Whittier First Friends Church

December 2020

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## Home for the Holidays



*Merry Christmas by Viggo Johansen, 1881*

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

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## Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

**Dear Friends,** We have all been missing spending time with our friends and family, traveling, in-person gatherings, and yes, even school and work. We continue to adapt to the circumstances of 2020. I don't know anyone that isn't looking forward to 2021, but we can only hope that everything improves and we can get back to doing our favorite things. In the meanwhile, I think we are all rediscovering or finding new hobbies.

**Friends About Town:** Be on the lookout for **Cedric Woirhaye**, who passed his DMV test. We might pass him on the road. **Russ Litchfield** observed this big print version of the *The Living Light* turned up amongst three Citroën cousins: L to R, Mehari, 2CV, and U.K. built 2CV truck. These models are 1/24 scale. He has a stack of more models to build.



**Milt** and **Dan Wright** have been doing an engine swap in Dan's 1938 Chevy coupe, and *The Living Light* was there, too. This is Dan's first car, put together from pieces of two incomplete cars 45 years ago by the same two guys in the same driveway! By the time they are finished it will have an original engine, among other things.



**Friends Move:** They're SAFE! **Iris Harris** shared the news that daughter **Marina** & daughter's husband **Marc** drove to LA across crazy pandemic-infected states with the two cats and four years of Marc's absurdist paintings. They are so happy to be back, escaping another New York winter, and Marc already has a job. They are sharing an apartment with Marc's sister in LA. Marina is still singing, and is adding mezzo repertoire to her diva talents.

**Friends Visit:** One of the blessings of Meeting for Worship on Zoom is that we get to see our friends from far away up close. So great to see Friends like **Linda Flournoy**, **Anne & Harry Eggleton**, and **Bruce & Debi Nelson**!

**School and Work:** Congratulations to **Josh Fant** who passed his nursing exam. The **Caringella** family recently took a walking outing that ended with baby **Hudson**'s first visit to D & L Stained Glass. It was a perfect time for a picture.



**Friends Travel:** **Bill Ryder** visited his family in Iowa. He was set to return November 24, just in time for **Ashley's** 17th birthday on the 25th! Sadly, he returned to his hometown for his niece Dawna's burial and celebration of life, but he was able to connect with many family members and friends. He assured **Candice** he was practicing all safety measures.

Unless we end up on lockdown, **Liz Ellis** was looking forward to joining her daughter **April** in Oakland for Thanksgiving.

**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](mailto:lealouw@gmail.com). See you next month! Remember, your submissions are always welcome and needed. Maybe you can think of a creative way to take a picture for "The Living Light Travels."



## This Month in Meeting for Worship

December 6	Lynda Ladwig brings the message <i>Do You Hear What I Hear?</i>
December 13	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Emanuel or Immanuel?</i> Isaiah 40:1-2
December 20	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>What Prophets Know</i> Matthew 2:3-6
Christmas Eve	7:00 p.m. <i>Christmas Eve at Home with Friends</i>
December 27	Worship with Berkeley Friends Church



At Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on November 11, we began planning the renovation one of our rental properties which was recently vacated by a 30-year tenant. Trustees and the Technology Group gave reports on recent repairs to the Sharpless building, the Christian Education building, and the parsonage, including leak detection and HVA systems.

We continued to determine the description and scope of the merged Christian Education and Outreach committees, including the updating of information about conscientious objection. The Nominating Committee reported there are still some open slots on our 2021 committees.

We approved the full ministry recording of Lynda Ladwig.

Monthly Meeting for December is December 6 at 1:00 p.m. with the same Zoom code as Meeting for Worship.



**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](mailto:communiquaker@gmail.com).**

## The Facing Bench

"It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. everywhere you go." This song helps me get to "feelin' the seas'n." I do admit there is irony in "everywhere you go." This year, it has a completely different meaning. I adapted lyrics to match. "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, everywhere I go. There's a tree in my liv-ing room, decorated all year long, the ar-ti-fi-cial kind that doesn't die!"



We may only get to go from bedroom to living room to kitchen to dining room this year, or maybe front porch or back yard—socially distanced, masked holiday greetings. So what do we do to "get our Christmas on?" I am incredibly grateful that we will explore a new tradition! Our Advent Evenings at Home sharing will be a sacred time for me. It combines things that are the true meaning of the season. Anticipating and celebrating God's precious gift of Love, Light, Joy, Peace and Hope to the world with people I love deeply, and sharing thoughts, feelings, songs, stories and traditions that bring meaning to our lives.

I think my favorite Christmas memories include cleaning the house to prepare for baby Jesus (a baby born in a stable cares about clean?) and setting up the manger—the most important item in the Christmas box. Going to pick out the sorriest Charlie Brown tree with my Dad (one we could afford from the back of the lot). Then sitting in the pew on Christmas Eve with my family; babies and foster babies already sleeping on our laps, the light of candles shining in the darkened sacred space, quiet and gentle sounds of worship in awe. God is among us, Immanuel!

We will drive home going the long way around to see all the beautiful lights, singing Jingle Bells and everyone (except my Dad!) hoping for more snow. By the time we get home my siblings and I will be wide awake. I organize and they, under protest, cooperate in our own nativity tableau for smiling parents, grandparents and uncle. In the morning we will be allowed to open our stockings, waiting for grandparents to arrive. And then begins a day of wild sharing, love, food, and togetherness.

That was fifty years ago. Much has changed and many more Christmases have gone by. Yet the centerpiece still remains: the Light shining, worship in awe, God is among us, Immanuel. May this season bring you peace, love, hope, and joy, dear Friends family.





### Russ' Reflections

## Baby, Teacher, Redeemer and King

John Jacob Niles was a collector of folk songs. *I Wonder As I Wander* was a song he heard from the voice of a child, Annie Morgan, in Murphy, North Carolina, and wrote down, added some verses, and published in 1934. It ponders the question, "...why Jesus the savior did come for to die for poor ordinary people like you and like I?" and gets at the reasons Jesus came to Earth as a baby human, to live, to teach, and to bear the sin of the world on the cross, only to rise again to new life.

Jazz musician, Dave Brubeck, and his wife Lola, while writing a cantata, *Posada*, recalling the Christmas Story, wondered how to connect the old story to our present day experience. The phrase, "God's Love Made Visible," led to this hymn that makes a connection between the birth of Jesus and our lives today. "...Joyfully pray for peace and good will! All of our yearning he will fulfill. Live in a loving way! Praise him for every day! Open your hearts and pray. His love shall reign!"

"Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled! Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings. Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die, born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth." Charles Wesley uses these images to help us understand God's more mystical purposes in sending Jesus to dwell with us.

Past, present, and future. Emmanuel, the Cosmic Christ, Alpha and Omega, the Word from the beginning, the Light that shines in the darkness, the Word that was with God, the Word that was God, the Word that became flesh and lived among us: "We have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." We Friends are more focused on life in the here and now rather than the hereafter, but at Christmas we sing hymns that express these foundations of Christianity that transcend time.

May you find inspiration through these hymns this time of Christmas.



## News from Whittier Friends School

Whittier Friends School enjoyed Halloween festivities a little differently this year. The children were encouraged to wear their costumes to their daily Zoom session, and those children who have been attending Homework Camp (in-person tutoring) were invited to wear costumes in person. This picture shows our children in their creative and festive ensembles, while wearing their facial masks.



Rather than our usual Feast Day, we shared recipes with each other and have done some fun crafts, including "homemade" pumpkin pie using a plate, tissue paper, and cotton balls.

Our unusual fundraisers have been well-received and we thank you all for the help with spreading the word. We really appreciate the generous contributions to our school Giving Campaign, as well as donations toward our new endowment, which supports families who seek financial aid for their students. We hope you are enjoying the Beautiful Bean soup mixes, created with love by Gwen Woirhaye for our school to sell. It is not too late to purchase Magic Mushroom popcorn kernels, packaged as cheerful gifts, but perfect also for popping at home. Additionally, the last day to purchase See's Candy through our school's special website link is Friday, December 4. You can access our school's website at [whittierfriendschool.org](http://whittierfriendschool.org) to place an order to ship directly to your house. Your order is shipped as soon as you order, so no need to wait for our school to place the order. And a big thank you to everyone who ordered See's Candy through the website. We appreciate those orders so much!

We know that December will be another month of changes to traditions, but we look forward to spending time virtually with our school families on Zoom as we celebrate the holiday season.

—Cassie Caringella



## Fierce Love

What does fierce love require? Overcoming distance imposed by the pandemic with technology, addressing organizational biases, and standing up to injustice. This was accomplished at the Friends Committee on National Legislation annual meeting by finding unity in the Spirit. In spite of having to meet via Zoom, this year's participants doubled from 400 to 800! Meetings for worship and business, discussions and worship sharing, workshops, educational and award presentations culminated with advocacy. Friends affirmed the new priorities submitted by monthly meetings across the United States (including ours!) and learned there are opportunities and challenges with a new Congress and administration.

FCNL dove deep into Diversity, Inclusion and Equity through a presentation acknowledging where our biases originated and affirmation of a covenant statement of how we will behave and journey together as a community. We heard updates from FCNL staff who work "on the Hill" daily. Then we celebrated accomplishments through an address from Julian Castro (HUD Secretary under President Obama 2014-2017) and awards given for peacemaking to Senator Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and justice work to end the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and violence against indigenous people by Representative Deb Haaland (R-NM). Finally, Friends and friends of Friends engaged in active witness to our senators and representatives; we made 230 visits to offices representing 45 states in one day! Sixty-plus Californians met with our Senators' offices and four members of First Friends met with our Representatives—Tim Root, Sue and Rob Settlege, Loletta Barrett (and her nephew Travis attended his first Quaker event and was impressed by our values-based lobbying!).

Adrenaline, learning, meaningful work, and deeply moving worship almost overcame four days of Zoom exhaustion. Thankfully, there's no jet lag to recover from so after a little rest, we'll reengage!

—Loletta Barrett

2020 Annual Meeting and  
Quaker Public Policy Institute



Friends Committee  
on National Legislation  
uniting with justice



Lisa Adam  
John Bateman  
Steven Caringella  
Derek Creelman  
Ann Davidson  
Elisabeth Elliot  
Jackson Garland  
Madelyn Garland  
William House  
Jack Huffaker  
Russ Litchfield  
Ryan Marshall

Luke Marshburn  
Elise Marshburn  
Brooke Marshburn  
Holly Marshburn  
Ted Marshburn  
Becky Memmelaar  
Jay Oberholtzer  
Amara Overmyer

Chris Thirkettle  
Milton 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!

## On the Four Sundays Before Christmas...

Advent Evenings at Home have begun! Join us every Sunday before Christmas at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom for an hour or so of worship, reflection, sharing and activities.

On December 6, the Elliots will lead worship followed by a celebration of Family Christmas Dinner traditions, including an online auction of a new stained glass masterpiece by Dan Wright.

On December 13, the Woirhayes will lead worship, followed by a visit to the Secord's Christmas fantasyland and a Carol Quiz.

On December 20, Dianne Wemmerus will lead worship, followed by a play presented by the Caringellas and a special game featuring guests near and far.

—Marilyn Fant



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*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**

As of this writing, the youth are baking up Cupcakes for a Cause. The kitchen has been cleaned, our social distancing work stations prepared, and our masks are in place. We love being together as a small group and we are adhering to all the protocols necessary to accomplish this endeavor.

We are thankful for the generosity of those who have ordered cupcakes and for those who have made donations of money, and purchases of supplies that will allow all proceeds (over \$1,000) to go directly to the Dig Deep Navajo Water Project.

—Lynda Ladwig