

# 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 61, Number 11

Whittier First Friends Church

Twelfth Month, 2022

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## And Heaven and Nature Sing



### Christmas at the Meeting

**Sunday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m.**

Celebration with a Concern for Christmas (Zoom only--see page 5)

**Wednesday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m.**

A Contemplative Christmas Meeting for Worship (Hybrid--see page 5)

**Saturday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m.**

Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship (Zoom only)

**Sunday, December 25 at 11:00 a.m.**

Christmas Day Meeting for Worship (Hybrid)

## Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

**Dear Friends,** More than 14 years ago, I started writing "The Friendly Fare" column for *The Living Light*. When I stop to think about that, I'm amazed at how long I have been doing this. I'm not really worried, but sometimes I wonder if I have done more than my fair share. In other words, is there anyone else out there that would like to have a turn at this? I am willing to share, even if maybe just for one month.

**Friends About Town:** **Deanna Woirhaye** was very happy to have had the opportunity to show a collection of her photographic art at the Whittier Art Gallery. She spoke about how wonderful it was to be able to share some special time at the show's reception with so many friends and family, now an in-person event. Deanna now has plans to enter into the Gallery's upcoming "Miniatures" juried show where all art pieces have specific parameters to stay within. She looks forward to that time in this month.

**Friends At Home:** **Dan & Lea Wright** enjoyed having friends and family at their house for pumpkin carving before Halloween. Here is Papa Dan with his grandsons **Hudson** and **Landon Caringella**.



**Friends Visit:** **Rex & Paula (Cardoza-) Jones** were here in Whittier (from Indiana) visiting family at the same time as daughter Melissa, Alex and Everett Grabmiller (from North Carolina) who, were in the Southland also visiting family. Rex said they were happy to escape the snow storm. He reports that son Nathan is a librarian at an elementary school in Whittier. Paula shared this picture of Rex with his grandson Everett:



**School and Work:** **Landon Caringella** performed his first featured role with his middle school theatre group in November. Landon portrayed Star Guy, a comic book hero accidentally drawn with a special pen that made him come to life, who along with three other drawn-superheroes-come-to-life, attempted to save the city from the villainous Dr. Shock Clock. Landon's character was one of the most humorous in the script, as he was very full of himself and said such lines as, "You're using a pen from Peloponnesia. Everything you draw comes to life. And, man, oh man, are the girls in this town going to thank you for me." He had, not just his family in stitches, but the audience at large. Landon had many relatives and friends come to his performance, including parents **Cassie & Steven**, siblings Avalon and Hudson, grandparents Dan & **Lea Wright** and **Tom & Vanessa Caringella**, great grandparents **Elinore Petoletti** and **Milt & Donna Wright**, and uncle **Philip**. This was Landon's third performance at Benton Middle School. He is really enjoying the creative opportunities he has at a visual and performing arts magnet school.

**Friends Travel:** **Michael & Elisabeth Elliot** went on two trips. The first was to Tucson on the overnight Amtrak Sunset Limited—they love the train and "it was a lot better than sleeping on a plane," said Elisabeth. They had a wonderful time visiting Michael's brother and sister-in-law Greg, and Connie, as well as seeing Dave Temple, a design partner from Elisabeth's theatre past (and also a fellow La Habran) who is now a costumer specializing in vintage clothes for film and television—you may have seen pieces from his collection in "The Prom" and "Ratched" on Netflix.

*Continued on page 7*



## This Month in Meeting for Worship

<b>December 4</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>The Ultimate Moment</i> Luke 1: 26-28, Matthew 1: 18- 25a
<b>December 11</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Family and Cousins</i> Luke 1: 5-25, 39-56
<b>December 18</b>	Music Sunday
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>I'm Here</i> Matthew 1:24-25, Luke 2:1-20
<b>Christmas Day</b>	Loletta Barrett brings the message <i>Ripples in the Water</i> Luke 2:21-40, Matthew 2:1-23



At Monthly Meeting for November, on November 6, clerking duties were shared by outgoing Presiding Clerk Deanna Woirhaye and incoming Presiding Clerk Elisabeth Elliot. We offered our blessings to Pat Garland, whose mother Patrice has entered new life. Personnel reported that staff reviews have been completed, including for the pastor. There will be a slight change in the pastor's health insurance next year. Darrell Warren read a tribute to Deanna Woirhaye's service as Presiding Clerk. A minute of appreciation will be drafted for approval by the entire Monthly Meeting. Business and Finance reported that our expenses made it necessary to move funds into the operational budget. It has been a tough period for our investments.

*Continued on page 5*

**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).**

## Loletta's Lines

As the holiday season winds up to the climax of Christmas, I find myself thinking about the "reason for the season." According to the church calendar, Advent is four weeks of repentance and preparation, opening ourselves to contemplate hope, love, peace, and joy. It is anticipation of the coming of the Christ child, the Prince of Peace, the Light.



What is it that means most to you in this time? For some of us, it will be anticipating time with family we have not seen for a while. For others, it will be gathering with friends. For still others, it will be planning all the special treats that come with the season: trees and decorations, scrumptious meals and treats, presents tucked safely under the tree, the look on a child's face or a loved one's embrace. These are true blessings and joyous gifts for our celebration.

We also center on the sacred experience of the Holy One drawing near to Creation, incarnating with us in time and space. It happens in every moment, but once a year we recognize God's presence in a child from a marginalized, poor family, in an occupied country with oppressive secular and religious leaders. But, in reality, the child is everyone, everywhere, and in every time.

How can we hold back the fears with hope, the animosity between people with love, the wars and violence with peace, and experience the joy of these moments? Only by recognizing the places where we are, that our world is broken and then turning around. When we do, we can embrace the Presence, gain healing, and begin to co-create new Life here and now. And together immerse ourselves in gratitude. A blessed Christmas to you all, Friends.





## Russ' Reflections

*O Sapientia (Wisdom)...*  
*O Adonai (Lord of Might)...*  
*O Radix Jesse (Root of Jesse)...*  
*O Clavis David (Key of David)...*  
*O Oriens (O Rising Dawn)...*  
*O Rex Gentium (King of Nations)...*  
*O Emmanuel (God with Us): The 'O' Antiphons.*



## News from Whittier Friends School

Welcome, Winter Holiday Season! Our Whittier Friends School community is ready to ring in the season with joyful hearts and happy voices with several fun activities on the horizon.

Our biggest, most exciting upcoming event is our school Christmas performance on Thursday, December 15 at 6:30 p.m. Our preschool and elementary classes will be presenting a few different looks at Christmas, traditional and not-so-traditional, with some opportunities for children and family to join in song. Be looking forward to renditions of "Santa Shark," "Twas the Night Before Christmas" (light sabers may or may not be involved), and "Star Trip: May the Lord be With Us." Visitors are encouraged and invited to join us in this free family-friendly event.

Also in December is a fundraiser at Ruby's Diner. All day on Thursday, December 8, you may dine at Ruby's Diner, and when you mention Whittier Friends School, Ruby's will donate a percentage to our school. What's your favorite milkshake flavor?! We recommend the Oreo shake.

Now, for the invitation to our First Friends Church Community: who wants to join us for the IMAX film "Asteroid Hunters"? On Wednesday, January 4, our elementary families will be heading to the California Science Center for the IMAX film, plus a visit to the Endeavor shuttle and other interesting exhibits. If you are interested in joining us on the trip, email [cassie.wfs@gmail.com](mailto:cassie.wfs@gmail.com) and we will put you on the list.

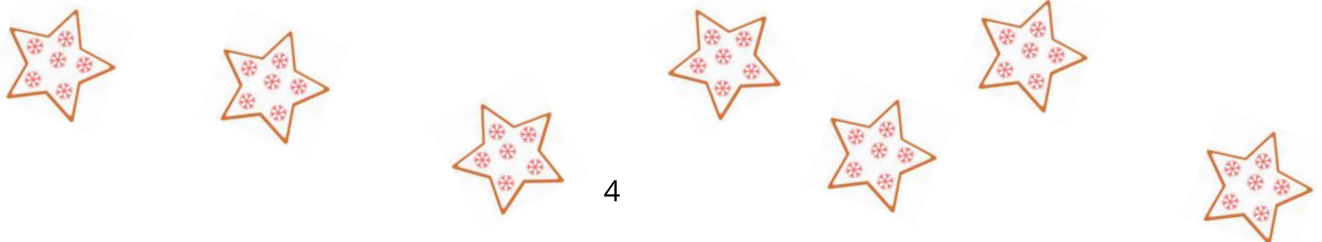
Thank you, as always, for your loving support for Whittier Friends School, a ministry of First Friends Church. Our school children are learning and thriving!

-Cassie Caringella

Their origin is unknown, but they appear in manuscripts from the 9th century and are probably older. Traditionally, the 'O' Antiphons are sung before and after the *Magnificat* (Song of Mary - Luke 1:46-55) at Vespers on the seven days preceding Christmas. Each one presents a name given to Christ from the Old Testament and a petition asking for the fulfillment of a Scriptural promise or prophecy. The first letter of each name in reverse order, beginning with the last one, form an acrostic: ERO CRAS - "I will be [with you] tomorrow." The antiphon texts are the basis for the verses of the Advent hymn, *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*.

At Meeting for Worship on December 18, the Friends Choir will present a musical service based on these 'O' Antiphons. We will begin with an arrangement of *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* for solo handbells, played by Linda Krantz. We will sing musical settings of each antiphon by Peter Hallock, followed by a reading from scripture, a hymn or anthem, and a short poetic prayer. Hallock's settings begin with the Latin text chanted, followed by a choral setting with organ. The *Song of Mary* by Ronald Arnatt will be sung after the final antiphon, followed by open worship. We will conclude with the singing of *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*.

It is our hope that these texts and musical settings will lead to a deeper experience of Christmas.



## Silent Night, Thoughtful Night



The holiday season, as always, is turning up the volume on our lives with parties and presents, carols and cookies.

Christmas is fun but also overwhelming. For some, it can also be a challenging time. We may miss a loved one, have difficult memories from holidays, or experience bittersweet feelings that unsettle us. Or perhaps we are tired because the spirit of the season seems lost in the bustle.

On Wednesday night, December 21 at 7:00 p.m., we will take time to be quiet and settle into the Spirit's presence with a Contemplative Christmas Meeting for Worship. This will be a time of reflection, contemplation, prayer, and silence, as we will allow our feelings, thoughts, and concerns to be shared with God in a time of open worship.

Contemplative Christmas Meeting for Worship will be hybrid. Friends may join us in Fellowship Hall or online. Details on how to log on will be shared in the enews, the *Whittier Friends Weekly*.

## A Time for Giving

A giving tree will be shining the spirit of Christmas and beckoning your gifts during the month of December. The Christian Education and Outreach committee is sponsoring a Winter Mission Project to support two Whittier non-profit organizations, The Soup Hour and the Interfaith Food Center.

Bring your gifts of men's winter accessories (only socks, caps, gloves, and scarves please) to the Meeting House foyer and place them under the tree.

Cans of hearty, healthy food are also welcome. If it is easier for you, just mail in a monetary gift with a designation in the memo line, or go to our First Friends Church website, click the donation button, and add a comment "Winter Mission Project." Your donations will be totaled and transformed into Whittier Friends School grocery gift cards!

In January, we will make a joyous delivery of warm items, food, and gift cards to The Soup Hour and Interfaith Food Center.

## Playful Night, Festive Night



Log in and join us for our Celebration with a Concern for Christmas on Sunday evening, December 11 at 7:00 p.m. This online party is in the spirit of our Advent Evenings at Home.

Our celebration will combine all the worship, music, fun, and fellowship we have experienced in years past, including the return of some favorite activities.

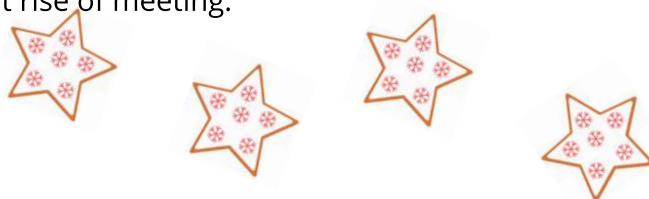
Details on how to log on will be shared in the enews, the *Whittier Friends Weekly*. Have some fun, and decorate your Zoom location and background, and dress festively! Sit down with us and a mug of cocoa, Christmas cookies, or whatever makes your taste buds' season bright, and join us for a spirited online gathering.



*'Monthly Meeting' continued from page 3*

We approved a proposal from the Hospitality working group that, for all Meeting gatherings, masks be highly recommended but not required, that proof of vaccination and social distancing no longer be required, and that we continue to be diligent in monitoring conditions and guidelines, and be ready to respond as the level of risk rises from the current level of Low. All Friends are encouraged to take precautions as they are led. We discussed suggestions for Loletta's upcoming sabbatical. A traveling minute will be drafted. The Ministry Development working group is now meeting twice a month. A list of qualifications and a job description is outlined, and under further development. The Flourishing Friends online discussion group is already doing inspiring work (see page 6).

Monthly Meeting for December is December 4 at rise of meeting.





Lisa Adam



John Bateman

Ted Marshburn

Steve Caringella

Jay Oberholtzer

Elisabeth Elliot

Amara Overmyer

Holly Haworth

Jack Huffaker

Chris Thirkettle

Russ Litchfield

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!

## Friends Unite to Influence Policy

First Friends took a leadership role with Friends Committee on National Legislation this year by hosting the first remote gathering of FCNL's annual meeting in Washington DC.

Over three days, Friends gathered in Fellowship Hall to meet with lawmakers, participate in Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business, and hear exciting messages from Friends in action.

See the January issue of *The Living Light* for a complete report.



## What Makes Us Flourish?

This fall, the Meeting became one of the first members of the new online discussion group Flourishing Friends. Emerging from the leadings of Colin Saxton, Director of North American Ministries of Friends United Meeting, and Scott Wagoner, pastoral minister of High Point Friends Meeting in High Point, NC, the group is made up of Friends from all over the country, and we are grateful for everyone's participation, energy, engagement, and excitement during this journey.

Quaker meetings, and congregations across the board, are facing immense challenges. Many of these challenges are around attendance, finances, and engagement. Challenges include aging congregations, limited resources, and a changing world. In the midst of this, congregations can often drift towards languishing which can lead to simply surviving and then dying. We believe that congregations and local meetings can also choose to flourish. This means choosing to move beyond simply maintaining and moving towards flourishing both in the present and the future.

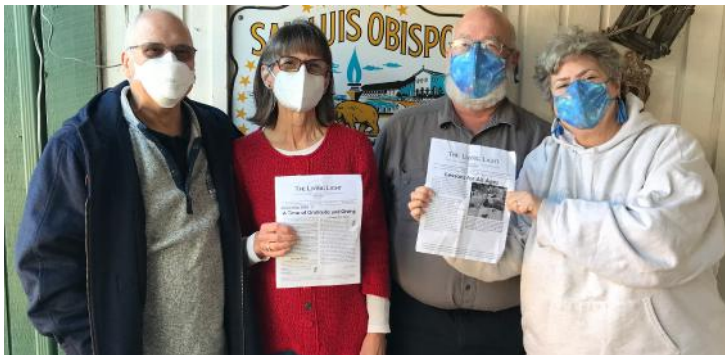
Some of the queries Flourishing Friends are  
*Continued on page 7*





*'Friendly Fare' continued from page 2*

Then, in November, the Elliots took their annual trip to the Live Design International trade show in Las Vegas, the highlight of which was the opening night performance of the Tony Award-winning "Freestyle Love Supreme" with co-creator Lin-Manuel Miranda ("Hamilton" and "Encanto") performing with the company. Thanks to Elisabeth's cousin Will, for that little perk! They continued their road trip on to San Francisco for Thanksgiving with Michael's brothers Dane and Jeff and their families, stopping to see friends from high school and Disney along the way, and finishing up with a drive down Highway 1 and breakfast with **Anne & Harry Eggleton** in Cambria. Anticipating a "The Living Light Travels" photo op, both Anne and Elisabeth brought a copy with them!



**Ted & Mary Marshburn** traveled to Phoenix, stayed a few days with son, **Paul** and his wife **Marcee**, and attended Marcee's son, **Jon** & Jon's bride **Katie**'s beautiful wedding. **David & Viki** and **John & Linda** were also able to attend the wedding.

**Friends Correspond:** **Ami Troeddson** sent greetings and appreciation for *The Living Light*

**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), or deliver to me at Meeting for Worship on Sunday. See you next month!

*'Flourishing Friends' continued from page 6*

seasoning are:

- Do you have a stated mission statement? (That's an easy one for us--we do, it's on the bottom of page one of every issue of *The Living Light*!). But the second part of this query requires more pondering: If so, how is it being faithfully expressed right now?
- What are models that are working in your meeting?
- Where do you see misalignment? What are the obstacles (clutter) getting in the way of you faithfully living into your mission?
- How do we create communities of spiritual practice?
- How do we develop our committees as formational spaces of worship?
- How do we help Friends truly listen to God?
- How do we do away with "parking lot discussions"? How can we enable Friends to have full and honest conversations in the context of meetings in community rather than afterward or outside the Meeting?
- Do we see Quakerism as an aging religion without a need for or focus on growth? Or are we comfortable and satisfied with things the way they are and resistant to change?
- How is our Meeting going to be sustainable and how to do we reach younger people, connect with our neighbors, and integrate them into our loving community?

And finally, perhaps the widest-ranging query of all:

- How do we share our story with others?

Which one(s) of these are most important to you?

Who knows--our first encounters as Flourishing Friends may develop into a mission to maintain a continuing discussion with Quakers all over the world in unity!

--Elisabeth Elliot

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## **For your 2023 planning...**

**Fully-hybrid Monthly Meeting is**  
**on the following Sundays in 2023\*:**

January 8  
February 8  
March 12  
April 16  
May 21  
June 11  
July 9  
August 13  
September 10  
October 8  
November 12  
December 10



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

**Barbara Cote**  
**Kathy Hood**  
**Rose Nedrow**  
**Kathy Robison**  
**Ami Troedsson**  
**Carol Urner**  
**Gerry Wolfe**

*\*These dates are tentative as events arise that require our attention.*