

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

May, 2025

He is Risen, Indeed!

"He is risen! He is risen, indeed!" On Easter Sunday, those in meeting for worship were greeted with this familiar call and response



by presider Elisabeth Elliot. The reading of Luke 24:1-12 recounted the story of the women's early morning discovery of the empty tomb and the other disciples' initial disbelief at the news. Pastor Loletta's message reflected on how, although it is not always easy or quickly done, we can view our struggles, our sadness, our confusion, in terms of hope, joy, acceptance, and gratitude.

Music Director Russ and the choir brought pieces which enhanced this message including

the choral call to worship, "Song to the Lamb" by Richard Prouix (accompanied by the handbells), the hymn "Christ Arose", "Christ is Living" by Robert Buckley Farlee, "Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven" (music by Beethoven, words by Christopher Wordsworth), and "Welcome Happy Morning" by Wilbur Held.

As an added bonus, the Easter Breakfast tradition was revived. For many years, the youth of the meeting, under the direction of Lynda Ladwig, cooked and decorated for this event. This year, the kitchen coordinators, Carrin and George Bouchard, with the help of many volunteers and contributors, laid out a bountiful potluck. Many Friends enjoyed the fellowship and tasty food prior to Meeting for Worship.



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

Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends, It's an exciting time of year for me. I love spring. And I love hearing what everyone has been up to.

Friends About Town: Accolades to **Tom Van Dorn** as he reaches another astounding milestone with the American Red Cross Blood Donation organization. On May 4th, Tom will have donated 1500 units (188 gallons) of platelets and 444 units of plasma. Tom is ranked 6th in the nation for these heroic totals.



Friends Travel: In March, **Lyn Gruber** met up with an Olney classmate, Anna Kirah. She said it was wonderful to spend time with her. They hadn't seen each other since 2019. They went to Dollywood for opening day. They saw Dolly for a fleeting moment as she rode by in a carriage as is tradition for opening day. In April, **Deanna Woirhaye** and **Candice Ryder** joined friends for a quick weekend getaway to Running Springs, CA, where they also visited Lake Gregory and Lake Arrowhead Village. **Marilyn Fant** was able to accompany **Bosè**



Robinson on a work trip to Milan and Paris for seven days. It was not just a work trip since they also explored the cities' tourist areas as well as less populated sections. It was

beautiful spring weather, and they enjoyed every second.

Friends Visit: **Carol Marshburn** & husband **John Ersek** came to California to visit **Ted & Mary Marshburn**. **Fred & Nancy** and **Ginger & Dave Edinger** were in Bellingham, WA, visiting sister **Linda Flornoy**. They also viewed the Mount Vernon Tulip fields.

Friends

Move:

Anne & Bedford McIntosh

have moved to New Mexico. Their new address is available through the church office.

Friends Remember: **Kathy Hood**, who loved to volunteer for things like Peace Camp, passed to new life in March. Keep her family and friends in your prayers.

School and Work: It's been about three months since **Brendon & Deanna Woirhaye** and their



three kids were captured all together. In April, **Anathea** came home from New York for Easter. She has accepted going to Oxford University in England to get her Master's of Science in Visual, Material, and Museum

Friendly Fare continued on page 3

Loletta's Lines

In May I am always reminded "April showers bring May flowers." It comes from growing up in Ohio where the seasons can change drastically, the winter seems to linger forever, and the rains in the spring bring a new sense of gloom and the question, "Will this ever end?" When we experience a season like that, we remember we are an Easter people. Beyond a torturous experience of loss and heartache, we know resurrection always comes. It is not just a promise but a cycle. After cold, dark, wet - always, and in all ways - comes the bloom of new life.

I looked at scripture for encouragement about blooming. The history of the people in the Bible shows them going through cycles of deep faithfulness and complete mess-up in their relationship with God. It also shows periods of plenty and long exiles from home. The gift from this is both poetic laments and joyful expression of hope and new life.

Isaiah 35 comes in a period of exile, loss, confusion, and despair but brings the assurance this is not the end, and it will not last. "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom...abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing...They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God'... Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert...and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come...with singing; everlasting joy shall be



upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

In every age, in every place, in every moment, there is both challenge and opportunity. We can respond with joy knowing flowers come, too.

Friendly Fare continued from page 2

Anthropology. **Elyse** has confirmed her acceptance to Cal Poly Hombolt for next year to study Wildlife with a probable focus on Ornithology. **Cedric** continues at Cal Poly Pomona working to complete his BS in Environmental Biology. **Mel Sturr** and daughter **Bella** traveled across the country to Baltimore to get Bella settled in for nursing school. They stopped for a visit with Mel's brother, **Rob**, in North Canton, Ohio. They also stopped in to visit with **Bob & Sabron Newton** in Sandy Spring, MD. Bob and Sabron send



their greetings. Here they are with the Living Light continuing our tradition: "The Living Light Travels." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

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!

Russ' Reflections

Music Ministry News

We will be holding a Hymn Festival, "We Are One in Mission", on Saturday, May 24th, at 11 am. What is a Hymn Festival? It is a structured "service" based on the singing of hymns with scripture and commentary organized around a theme. Our festival will be based on the theme of "Mission." We have invited singers/choirs who participated in our Community Thanksgiving Celebration to join us, along with singers associated with the Mission Collaborative Churches and hope some will be able to join us. A few of the hymns will be choral arrangements so if you are interested in singing with the choir, please come at 9 am on that day (May 24th), to rehearse. Sheet music will be provided. Invite a friend, and come join your voice with others. "We all are one in mission; we all are one in call, our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all."

The Friends Choir will end its formal season on Sunday, May 25th, and our Section Leaders will be on hiatus for the summer. Thank you to Nick, Eliya, Daniel, and Aaron for your dedicated service to our Meeting.

In June, (June 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29), we will have a Summer Choir in Meeting for Worship. Anyone who would like to sing an anthem is invited to the Music Room at 10:15 am, on Sunday mornings, to rehearse a simple choral piece and the hymns. Come once, twice, or all five Sundays. Here's an opportunity for you to dip your toe into the ministry of the Friends Choir. If you play an instrument, and are willing to play in Meeting for Worship, contact Russ to indicate your interest. We will gladly find and prepare music and develop a schedule.

During the month of July, Russ will again present a series of Summer Organ Concerts on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm (July 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29). Look for more information in the June Living Light.



News from Whittier Friends School



"Biomes of the World" is Whittier Friends School's Open House theme this year. It will be held on Wednesday, May 14, at 6:30 pm, and you're invited! The elementary students have been working hard on felt-board stories and dioramas of their chosen biome and will eagerly share with you all about the natural worlds they have been studying. Preschool children have also been working on themed art projects about the "biome" they live in: the city! The collaborative city they have created on their bulletin board is truly a sight. And, of course, the upper elementary students will be sharing their award-winning History Day LA projects about Book Censorship and Women's Rights to Vote.

Our annual Open House is also the last chance for early enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year. There is a discount on tuition if paperwork and fees are received by Friday, May 16. We urge you to contact us if you are interested in knowing more about our Quaker school. Members of First Friends Church receive a special tuition rate! Email Director Cassie Caringella for more information.

In support of our studies this year, WFS children took a trip to the Natural History Museum on Thursday, April 17, to see the life-size dioramas and the dinosaur exhibits. It was the first time for even some of the parents



Preschool and kindergarten friends admire various triceratops skulls at the Natural History Museum

in attendance, and they marveled at the size of the bones on exhibit. You can learn about things in a book, but sometimes you just don't fully understand the magnitude until you see it in person. We are so fortunate to live near this incredible museum.

And don't forget, WFS has begun enrollment for our Elementary Summer Enrichment Program, which will occur from June 23, through August 7, on six select weeks of summer. Some themes include "Digging Dinosaurs," "World of Wizardry," and "Time Travelers." Children do not have to be from WFS to attend the program. See our website <http://whittierfriendsschool.org> or email cassie.wfs@gmail.com for information about this, or about enrolling for the 2025-2026 school year.

Be sure to follow Whittier Friends School's adventures on Facebook at facebook.com/whittierfriendsschool/ and on Instagram at instagram.com/whittierfriendsschool/ and check out our wishlist at <https://amzn.to/2QK8Yp8>

-Cassie Caringella

**Don't Miss Out!
Mark Your Calendar Now**

Save
the
Date

Founder's Day

Saturday, May 10, 10 am to 2 pm

Central Park in Uptown Whittier, 6532 Friends Ave. (corner of Bailey Street). Join the fun as we celebrate Whittier's history, local businesses, and community organizations at this family friendly event. Entertainment, antique cars, homemade bread and more.

Volunteers needed for table duty (one and two hour shifts). We will have tables for our Meeting, for Whittier Friends School, and for our Friends Committee on National Legislation Advocacy Team. Contact the church office if you can help (or just show up!)

Peace Cafe

Saturday, May 31, 5:30 to 9 pm

Fellowship Hall. Food, crafts, artists, open microphone entertainment - singers, musicians, poetry reading

Fundraising event to support Peace Camp week for kids

Vendors, crafters, organizations, and performers needed

Contact Jo Nita Beede 562-665-5088 jonitabd@gmail.com to reserve your spot now!

Free Admission - Donations Accepted



Peace Camp - July 14 to July 18, 9 am to 3 pm

"Peace is My Superpower"

Arts and crafts, stories, games, snacks, conflict resolution skills, songs, values
Kids entering 1st through 6th grade in the fall -
Open and affirming of all children and families

\$100 for the week for first child;

20% sibling discount

Register by June 3 and save additional \$25.

For more information send an email to

friendspeacecamp@gmail.com

Memoirs Writing Group Shares at April AFFN

In April, All Friends Fellowship Night featured the beloved annual tradition of story-sharing by the Memoirs Writing Group. Following a hearty potluck dinner, nine members of the group each read one of their own stories. Some were humorous anecdotes, some were insightful reflections, and others were full of personal history.

Sharon Heck's piece gave details of childhood vacation car trips with her siblings and parents. Mary Marshburn reflected on memories of being the mother of four children during the days when their home was being custom-built and how two ornate chandeliers gifted from an estate still hang in their home 59 years later. Mel Sturr's essay told of a local stray cat that found its way into his home and heart despite his resistance to adopting another pet.

One humorous story by Nancy Cowardin revealed that despite her lack of interest in (and knowledge about) football, she fulfilled her dream of becoming varsity cheer captain. Sadly, this lack of knowledge showed when she led the "We want a touchdown!" chant while the opposing team had the ball. Understandably, she had to answer to the football coach the next Monday. Mahlon Woirhaye recounted his dismay at waking up to soaked bed sheets when his wife was out of town, only to later realize the culprit was a leaky waterbed, not incontinence as a result of aging. Ted Marshburn shared his memory of his most unusual house call as an ophthalmologist when he did a favor for a fellow physician by diagnosing and treating a horse with a "cloudy eye."

Marie Hegwer-DaVita shared how her quilting skills have helped her preserve the artwork from old T-shirts and that each image evokes associated memories of activities, events, and destinations. Kathy Marin



chronicled her mother's (Helen O'Brien) extensive and impressive accomplishments including work as an activist and innovative educator. Perhaps the most intense story of the evening was Gabriel Cassar's recounting of his family's forced exit from his native country of Egypt 50 years ago. Details included the tragic loss of his only brother at age 19, smuggled cash and jewelry, harsh discrimination, and brutal treatment at the hands of authorities.

The writing group started as a class by Carl Nelson in 1992, called *Writing Your Own Life Story*. After those initial twelve weeks, it has continued to meet, although the faces and facilitators have changed over the years. The group convenes every Monday afternoon at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall from September through May and is open to anyone interested in participating. No talent is required, and gentle guidance and feedback are provided. If you have an interest in reading stories from past memoirs groups, you can purchase their paperback entitled *Memories 2017* on Amazon.

The next AFFN (and last one before we start weekly summer picnics in the park) is Wednesday, May 14, at 6 pm, when our program is actually a short walk over to Whittier Friends School after the potluck dinner to see the students present their science and history projects at their annual Open House. We hope you can join us!

ESR Visit

On Sunday, April 6, Gretchen Castle, Dean of Earlham School of Religion and Jim Higgenbotham, Associate Academic Dean and Professor of Pastoral Care, visited Whittier First Friends. In addition to Gretchen bringing the message in Meeting for Worship, the pair joined the Adult Sunday Morning Book Discussion, and later shared fellowship and an update on current ESR programs over an abundant potluck luncheon.

A Message of Hope for Hard Times

Gretchen's message in Meeting for Worship was one of hope and strength through God. Through a variety of difficulties in life - divorce, job loss, Quaker divisions, to name a few - Gretchen says that by prayer and affirmation of her faith she has experienced the love, joy, and comfort God provides. She explained that her "hardened heart" became softened through daily worship. Understanding and loving friends have helped guide her on her journey. Her work with the global ecumenical community during her ten years at Friends World Committee on Consultation taught her about collaboration and momentum. And now she experiences joy at ESR as she inspires people on their own path.

She concluded that the secret to being content, regardless of the situation, is to depend on the unwavering strength of God. We should not let our outward experiences control our inward thoughts. She wrapped up with a quote from Thomas Kelley: "Life from the Center is a life of unhurried peace and power. It is simple. It is serene. It is amazing. It is triumphant. It is radiant." And finally, she reminded us to always "Hold to God's unchanging hand."

ESR Update

After worship, Friends gathered in Fellowship Hall for a potluck and update on current ESR programs. Established in 1960 as

an "experiment" by Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, to address the growing need for Quaker leadership, Earlham School of Religion was the first Quaker seminary in the world. It has long offered a three-year Master of



Divinity degree open to those of all faiths and religious backgrounds. Recently it has expanded its programs to include three more Master of Arts degrees, as well as several certificate programs. Additionally, they offer an "Occasional Student" program, audit opportunities, and cross registration with Bethany Theological Seminary (with whom they share the campus.)

ESR's Master of Arts programs include Religion, Peace and Social Transformation, and Theopoetics and Writing. Certificates include, Bivocational Ministry, Entrepreneurial Ministry, Quaker Spirituality, Quaker Studies, Spiritual Exploration, Spiritual Formation, Spirituality in a Multifaith World, and Writing as Ministry.

The website explains it best: "We look around the world and see that ministry isn't bound to the pulpit...Ministry isn't just a vocation or a calling. It's a way of being in this world - seeking to make it whole. This is the ministry that ESR supports and equips...We may be teachers, chaplains, or peace workers...storytellers, businesspeople, or health care providers. We may be journalists, spiritual directors, or pastors. In every vocation, on every one of life's paths, we can find vital ways to serve this world."

If you would like to find out more about their programs or how to support ESR financially, visit: esr.earlham.edu.

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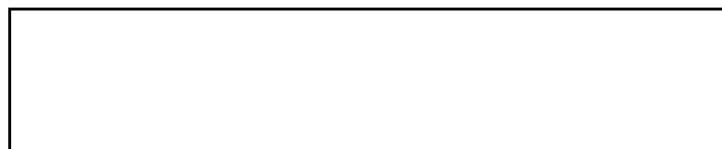
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**If we've missed your birthday, we apologize
(and happy birthday)! We work hard to keep
our birthday calendar up-to-date, so please
let us know if we're forgetting anyone.**

Thank you!



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