THE LIVING LIGHT

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

Volume 65, Number10 | Whittier First Friends Church | November 2026

All Church Retreat in Dana Point - 2026

With financial support from the Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program and much hard work and perseverance by the grant application committee and the retreat planning committee, First Friends was able to hold its first All Church Retreat since before the pandemic. 42 Friends from ages 6 to 98 stayed at the Dana Point Marina Inn in October for a weekend of fellowship, connection, and deep conversations.

The adult discussion sessions were facilitated by Vince Tango, an ordained UCC minister with a Master of Divinity (MDiv), a Doctorate in Education (EdD), and numerous certifications in counseling and coaching. Vince guided us in four separate sessions of introspection, "curious listening", games, activities, discussion, and sharing, each with a different focus guided by specific queries.

We began with an inward focus and queries such as "What is most important to me about being a Quaker and/or connecting with the First Friends community?" and "What has kept me connected?" Reflections included recognition of the inner Light in each person, respecting and learning from each other, and the consistency and stability of our faith tradition and its testimonies. Others shared the importance of acceptance, the intergenerational community, love, connection, and opportunities for a spiritual journey, growth, and change.

The next session continued with an examination of how our faith and connection



shows up in our daily lives with queries such as "How do I express my faith to others?" and "What does it look like to talk about our faith?" In small groups we also discussed Quaker beliefs and practices such as silence, open worship, and whether Quakers have pastors and read the Bible. This helped us segue into the next session about how and why we talk about our faith and what gets in the way when we try. Each person was given an extended time to share with their small group while others listened without interruption and then asked reflective questions. Some Friends found this difficult and exhausting while others found it satisfying and unique. This emphasized the importance of storytelling when sharing and allowing space when listening.

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Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends, It's been a long (very) hot summer and fall, and suddenly we have had rain. Okay, maybe not as much as last winter, but after so much hot weather, just a little rain seems like a lot. Our tortoises were very happy to get back out into the sun.



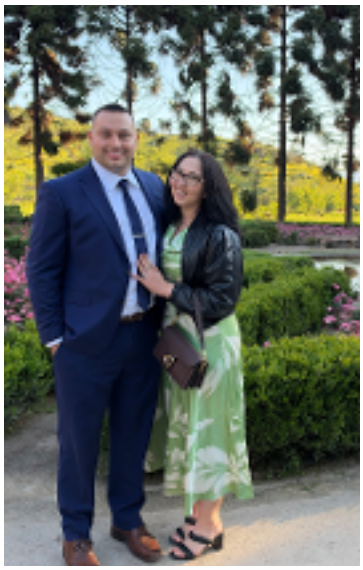
Friends Celebrate: Happy Birthday to **Mary Raymond** who turns 103 in November! On a side note, Happy Birthday to **Bob Secord** and **Lea Wright** whose birthdays are the same day as Mary.

Friends Visit: It was fun having **Steve Bates** and **Lynda Bates** home for Whittier College homecoming.

***School and Work News*: Avalon Caringella** had one of the lead parts in the Benton Middle School Fall Play, *Murder in the Haunted House.*



Friends Travel: **Anne & Harry Eggleton** took a long-awaited tour of Greece and Turkey in late September. They reported amazing food, culture, people, and they had a wonderful time. Here they are with the *Living Light* outside the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, continuing our tradition: "*The Living Light Travels*." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.) **Marilyn Fant** enjoyed a continuous stream of travel throughout the summer. It all started with encouragement from her new partner, Bill, to enjoy a relaxing week in Kauai. Shortly afterward, they attended a dear friend's classical piano concert in NYC, and a bit later, returned to NYC for baseball games on World Cup (soccer) weekend. This was immediately followed by baseball in Kansas City, which felt quiet and calm after the Big Apple. In California, Bill & Marilyn drove to Cambria for a visit with Harry & Anne Eggleton then on to Lake Tahoe for an invigorating time swimming and boating with Marilyn's brother. Her family vacation also took to the water at a house in Escondido. The culminating trip of the summer found them in Italy participating in a bicycling tour in Puglia, a region located at the heel of the boot. "Sites and food were fantastic!" she reports. It certainly was a summer full of activities, family, friends. and many memories. **Bella and Brandon Waterbury** traveled to Santiago, Chile for a wedding. It was a long trip for a few days, but it definitely left them with the desire to go back.



Friends Remember: Prayers for the family of **Sandra Robison** who passed away on Oct 4. She was the mother of **Amy, Kara,** and **Kurt Robison**.

The **Beede** family **(JoNita, Norm, Ben, Lyn Gruber** and **Tina Post)** lost their beloved Aunt **Louise Beede** in October. Lyn shared, "She will continue to be a beacon in my life as the embodiment of what we should strive to be as humans." She was 102! The day before she passed, Louise said, "I'm ready and unafraid, but curious." Encouraging words of peace and wonder. **Carrin Bouchard** shared that they had a family memorial on Big Bear Lake for her sister **Audine Votaw** as they sprinkled her ashes while sharing memories and a few tears. It was a beautiful day.

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!

Loletta's Lines



I have started singing in the New Century Singers Chorus. It can be hard work! My music reading skills are basic, and my pipes are rusty. But the challenge is part of finding joy and opening myself to it.

One piece we sang is from *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971 film). The movie is about a reclusive chocolate factory owner who holds a competition to determine the heir to his fortune. It is colorful, fun, suspenseful, and there is lots of chocolate and candy! Watch it with a box of your favorite candy!

The lyrics of the song "Pure Imagination" were written by Gene Wilder. I knew he was an actor and comedian but did not know his poetic side. His lyrics encourage using your imagination. "There is no life I know, to compare with pure imagination. Living there you'll be free if you truly wish to be." That is a fun thing to encourage in children and adults, but seems a little disconnected from reality. But if you listen closely to the refrain of the song, there is an important message. "If you want to view paradise, simply look around and view it. Anything you want to, do it. Want to change the world? There's nothing to it."

There are four children involved in the competition. Three of them display selfish characteristics that reflect the state of their families and the world, as they imagine inheriting the factory. The fourth child has the least privilege, and his family would benefit the most from the factory. But he is the one who opens his eyes to the paradise that he and his family already have - integrity, love, caring, compassion, sharing, and companionship. This ability to see, and gratefully appreciate what already is, enables him to imagine how he can change the world.

The moral of this story seems to be: how we meet challenges seems to depend upon how we see the paradise around us. If we find joy and open ourselves to it, we can use our imaginations to change the world. It seems gratitude and appreciation will set us free if we truly wish to be. Happy Thanksgiving, Friends!

Church Retreat continued from page 1



In our final session, we examined what we were grateful for and what we want to remember from the weekend. Friends expressed their feelings of acceptance, connection, affirmation, openness, sincerity, genuineness, safety, kindness, engagement, and trust. Others expressed the importance of listening as well as feeling heard, and of walking our own paths while recognizing that our struggles are other people's as well.

Throughout the weekend the children also participated in their own games, activities, and creative adventures emphasizing similar topics under the guidance of C.J. Conklin and Pam Laswell. They had the opportunity to share their creations and adventures in Meeting for Worship on Sunday morning and expressed that it was a fun experience that brought them closer together.

All who attended would agree that it was a transformative weekend for our meeting which encouraged spiritual reflection and brought us closer together. As we return to our daily lives, and the busy-ness that can overwhelm us, may we continue to question, reflect, and share our experiences with each other, with visitors to our meeting, and with those we encounter in life.



Russ' Reflections



All-church Retreat Singing

Thank you for the robust singing at our recent All-Church Retreat. We sang some newer but familiar songs from *With One Voice* that call us to mission in the world around us. We also learned a new song, "May This Church Be Like a Tree" that connects outreach with the image of a tree like that in our meeting's logo. We will find opportunities to sing it again.

Organ Re-dedication

November 1st will be a Music Sunday in which we will remember our departed from the past year, celebrate fifty years of service from our organ, re-dedicate it for the future, and offer Benjamin Britten's cantata, *Rejoice in the Lamb*, a paean of praise to God. We will sing several hymns using the various colorful sounds of our Harris organ. Please come lend your voice to the singing!

December Music Sunday

The Friends Choir generally offers a Music Sunday in December, and we typically alternate between an Advent or a Christmas focus. This year we will present two works with a Christmas theme on Sunday, December 20th: "*Run, Ye Shepherds, to the Light*" by Michael Haydn and Cantata 142: For Us a Child is Born, attributed to J.S. Bach. The Haydn piece focuses on the shepherds at the manger and the light and love they find there. The Bach piece concerns itself with the redemption that comes to us through the birth of Jesus, admonishing us to praise God for this holy gift. Be sure to invite someone to come to Meeting with you to celebrate Christ's birth with beautiful music!

Christmas Organ and Carol Sing

On Tuesday evening, December 22 at 7:30 pm, I will offer another Organ and Hymns program with a few favorite Christmas organ pieces and some carol singing. Please invite someone and come sing together and enjoy a cup of cheer afterwards.

News from Whittier Friends School

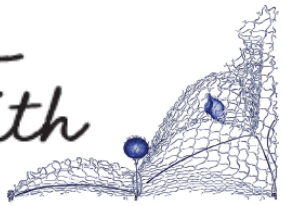


Body, Mind, Spirit, and Voice: At Whittier Friends School Sunday, we shared what Whittier Friends School Meeting for Worship (our school's "chapel" time) is like for children ranging in age from 4 to 13 years old. Meeting for Worship with children might sound like an oxymoron to some, with people wondering how children can sit quietly and find value in the silence. On Sunday, October 18, guests, school families, and First Friends community members in attendance experienced this unique format firsthand. Continuing the theme of how the body is connected to the mind, spirit, and voice, the children sang a few songs to highlight this connection. These included "If You're Happy and You Know It" in English, Spanish, and French, as well as "Grab Another Hand," where the whole congregation joined in with joyful voices and extended hands. Several students, along with Director and Teacher Cassie Caringella, also shared a message about the history of Whittier and the relationship between the city's founding Quakers and education.

The most special part of Whittier Friends School Sunday, however, was experiencing Open Worship alongside the children. Many people felt led to speak, including our students, family members, alumni, and church members. Though some younger friends stepped outside with their families to get their wiggles out, many children sat through the stillness and shared in the centering. As noted during the message, learning to appreciate this centering time takes practice, so families are encouraged to join First Friends Church any Sunday!

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Casting our Nets in Faith



Whittier First Friends is a place where we share an abundance of love, space, and support: Love shared among our members and attenders; space to worship and gather in beauty and comfort; and support for ministries and missions near and far.

Now is the time of year when we begin to create our budget for the next year. Support of our staff, upkeep of our facility for the use of the community, outreach and significant giving - all of these are our collective responsibility and opportunity to help fund.

Jesus spends a lot of time in the company of fishermen, and teaches through their work - sorting the catch, sharing that which nourishes, and trusting God to multiply the catch when it is small. He speaks of nets that gather all varieties of fish, giving the blessing of choosing what to keep and what to release. He transforms a small amount of loaves and fishes to a bounty that ends up feeding a multitude. And He asks fishermen to abandon their nets so they may become fishers of men.

We, as a Meeting, do many of these things every day as well, through discernment, financial prudence, transparency, and the constant listening to the Spirit. We look at what comes up in our own nets, and sort what we put in our basket, what we need to share, what we need to save, and what we need to let go. While we steward our resources with care, our current giving and other income do not fully meet the needs of our ministries or the rising costs we face. Some days our nets are sparse, but with God's love, there is always enough. Some days our nets are near overflowing, in the time and talent each of us contributes to the Meeting and in treasure as well. Through our faith, we keep our nets full and our people fed.

First Friends Church requests that you create a plan for financial support for 2027. This is not a hard and fast commitment. We know that life changes and sometimes we are blessed with full nets and have more resources we can share with the Meeting, and other times our nets are light and we have less to share. We do strive, however, to get our best estimate of what individuals can give so that we can put together our budget for the next year. We will have physical cards mailed to you and available at Meeting that you can fill out and return. Or you can fill it out electronically at https://forms.gle/vh2dUdU7boXv78yv8, or snap the QR code. We ask that everyone fill out a plan for support by Thanksgiving, so we can bring an annual budget for approval at December Monthly Meeting.

And be sure to save the date for the Stewardship Luncheon on November 8th, after Meeting for Worship, our treat from Business and Finance. Stay for Monthly Meeting if you like, but it isn't required.

Whittier Friends School continued from page 4

At the rise of meeting, visitors toured our school classrooms and sampled WFS's traditional Beautiful Bean Soup. This fundraising tradition was originally started by school founder Gwen Woirhaye and continues to be shared with new generations of soup lovers. If you didn't get a chance to pre-order, additional soup mixes may still be available. They make cute Christmas gifts!

Please support our upcoming fundraisers, which include WFS Day at Ruby's Diner in the Whittwood Mall (Wednesday, November 11, all day - eat in or take out - must show the flier) and See's Candies. The link to order candy can be found here: yumraising.com/store/winter-2026-wfs-holiday-2026-c98e/Lea_Wri7523

-Cassie Caringella

World Quaker Day



Every fall, the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) designates the first Sunday in October as World Quaker Day. This year's theme was "Let Peace Be Among Us." FWCC held a worldwide online worship service on Zoom across continents and time zones, and First Friends participated with a small gathering of Friends who met in the Library for the last two of the six hour-long sessions offered for our time zone. Each hour was hosted by different Friends who gave ministry before entering into a period of waiting worship. We heard from peacemakers in the Middle East as well as representatives from the Quaker United Nations offices in New York and Geneva. According to FWCC, more than 900 people from at least 50 countries registered for the event.

The message in our Meeting for Worship that morning was offered by Clerk of the Meeting, Elisabeth Elliot, who spoke about the historical origins of the peace testimony among early Friends. In the afternoon, we planned a Peace Walk event which included sign making, a time of centering, singing, and inspiration, culminating with a walk to City Hall where we were to gather at the city's peace pole to sing and center before returning to the Meeting House. We invited numerous faith and community groups as well as prominent city and county leaders. And we posted it on our social media accounts for weeks.

That day, however, we were reminded of Proverbs 16:9: "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps." or the more contemporary version: "Man plans, and God laughs." As it turned out, Whittier experienced unusually hot weather that day, with temperatures hovering around 100 degrees, even at 3 pm. So after Meeting for Worship, the planning committee, along with other Friends. met to seek discernment for the safest way to proceed. Ideas were shared, and after prayerful consideration, it was decided



that we would welcome those who showed up despite the heat, and offer a modified route to anyone who still desired to walk as well as peace related activities to those who chose to remain indoors.

So while some participants stayed in Fellowship Hall to make peace cranes or color or simply connect with others, some of us headed out to walk. With our signs and safety measures in place, we walked the short distance to Central Park in Uptown and around its perimeter, stopping at the Circle of Friends memorial benches to center and sing before returning to Fellowship Hall for a closing song. The memorial honors longtime Whittier resident and member of First Friends, Gwen Woirhaye, for her deep commitment and service to the community and our church. Taking time to pause, rest, and reflect there seemed particularly fitting, as it represents the Quaker values of quiet contemplation and peace. And, as a Friend recently reminded us, Central Park sits on land originally gifted by Whittier's founding Quakers, so the park itself is a symbol of our connection to our community as well as the city's Quaker heritage.

Though the day didn't go exactly as we imagined, Spirit was present throughout. It was an afternoon filled with much love, connection, and, of course, peace! So much so, that Friends have expressed a desire to continue with Peace Walks on the first Sunday of each month after fellowship time. So won't you join us? Friends on a short walk to inspire and demonstrate that true peace is not a political outcome, but an internal practice to be cultivated within the heart.

How Whittier's Street Names Tell the Story of Its Founding

Most of us know that Whittier was founded by Quakers, and that it was named after the Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier. That explains the names of Greenleaf Avenue, Whittier Avenue, and Friends Avenue. We also probably know that Philadelphia and Penn Streets were named after the city of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, both established by the English Quaker, William Penn, to promote religious freedom, tolerance, and peace. But, how about some of Whittier's other street names, like Bailey Street, Comstock Avenue, and Milton Avenue to name a few? Chris Krause, a local historian, Whittier native, and childhood friend of Mel Sturr, gave a presentation at the October All Friends Fellowship Night about the naming of Uptown Whittier's thoroughfares which showed that most were named after its founders and prominent citizens, while others for prominent Quakers.

Long before settlement, this area was inhabited by the Tongva/Gabrieleno Nation, and under Spanish rule, the land became part of a grant given to Jose Manuel Nieto. In 1887, a group of Quaker investors, financiers, and developers from the Midwest formed The Pickering Land and Water Company, to purchase what was, by then, the John M. Thomas Ranch, to establish an agricultural community. The five primary directors and founders of the company included Aquila H. Pickering, who had been commissioned by his church to found a colony on the Pacific Coast; Jonathan Bailey, the company's first president; Hervey Lindley, developer and businessman; John H. Painter, investor and promoter; and T. Elwood Newlin, the company's original secretary.

John Painter helped lay out the town's initial map and grid system, which consisted of nine avenues (running north and south) and six streets (east and west) from Whittier to Hadley and Pickering to Painter. He lent his and the other directors' names to some of the streets and avenues. Lindley Baldwin, the surveyor responsible for drawing up the original town site



map was also honored with Baldwin Street (which later became part of Mar Vista Street.)

Another namesake was Quaker banker and Whittier resident, Washington Hadley, who was honored with two street names. Helen Street was named after Helen Newlin, daughter of T. Elwood Newlin, and granddaughter of Washington Hadley. Camilla Street was named in honor of Kate Camilla Lindley, wife of Hervey Lindley. Wardman Street was named for Aubrey Wardman who moved to Whittier in 1903 to set up and manage the Whittier Home Telephone & Telegraph Company.

In addition to John Greenleaf Whittier, notable Quakers that never lived in or visited Whittier, yet were honored with street names, include Elizabeth Leslie Comstock, a prominent British-American Quaker minister, abolitionist, and leader of the Underground Railroad and British Quaker, statesman, orator, and reformer, John Bright, champion of free trade and human rights.

Of course, College Avenue was named for Whittier College, which was also founded in 1887 by a core group of families who believed that higher education was an absolute spiritual and civic necessity for the new community, and adjacent Earlham Drive was named after Earlham College, a well-known Quaker college in Richmond,

For more articles about Whittier's early history by Chris visit: https://whittiermuseum.org/blog/

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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!

Upcoming Events

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11
6PM
All Friends Fellowship Night with Pastor Loletta

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25
7PM
Harmony Center's Gratitude Gathering

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12
Whittier Christmas Parade

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13
First Friends Church Christmas Dinner