



FRIENDS JOURNAL

QUAKER THOUGHT AND LIFE TODAY

10/2026

Restore the Timeline

An Extremist for Love

**Disability, Faith, and Guatemala's
Social Debt**



Where community grows naturally.



Announcing the proposed North Forest Addition at Friends House. Spacious new residences where Quaker-inspired values guide daily life, residents shape the future, and authentic friendships flourish.



The North Forest Addition is pending approval by the Maryland Department of Aging.



Friends
House

Learn more

FriendsHouseExpansion.org • 240-797-0701
17340 Quaker Lane • Sandy Spring, MD 20860



LGBTQ+ FRIENDLY

Friends Publishing Corporation
Gabriel Ehri (*Executive Director*)

Editorial and Design Staff: Martin Kelley (*Senior Editor*), Gail Whiffen (*Associate Editor*), Sharlee DiMenichi (*Staff Writer*), Layla Cuthrell (*Video Producer*), Owen Buxton (*Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow*), Alla Podolsky (*Graphic and Digital Designer*), Patty Quinn (*Layout Assistant*), Renzo Mejia Carranza and Alfred Mbai (*Corresponding Editors*)

Business and Development Staff:
Sara Gada (*Director of Development*),
Katie Hewko-Dykes (*Office Administrator*),
Margaret Wood (*Ad Sales Representative*),
Ron Hogan (*Audience Development Specialist*)

Editorial Volunteers: Eileen Redden (*Young Friends Book Review Editor*), Jennifer Thompson (*Milestones Editor*), Nancy Thomas (*Poetry Editor*), Catherine Reid (*General Editorial*)

Additional Editorial Services: Patricia Dallmann, Erica Schoon

Board of Trustees: Ed Abraham (*Clerk*), Patricia Barber, Max Carter, Olivia Chalkley, Yves Dusenget, Bill Fellows, James T. Fussell, Abe Kenmore (*Recording Clerk*), Patrick McGrail-Peasley (*Treasurer*), Carl Magruder, Peter Murchison, David Nagle, Deborah B. Ramsey, Jerry Williams

Friends Journal (ISSN 0016-1322, vol. 72, no. 9) was established in 1955 as the successor to *The Friend* (1827–1955) and *Friends Intelligencer* (1844–1955).

Friends Journal is published monthly with the exception of a combined June/July issue by Friends Publishing Corporation, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102. Telephone (215) 563-8629. Email info@friendsjournal.org. Land acknowledgment: Friendsjournal.org/land.

Periodicals postage paid at Philadelphia, Pa., and additional mailing offices.

Membership: *Friends Journal* is a resource free to the public online for the purpose of communicating Quaker experience in order to connect and deepen spiritual lives. Sustaining members who make a gift at any level may receive the print and/or digital editions as a benefit of membership. Learn more at friendsjournal.org/subscribe.

Advertising rates are available at friendsjournal.org/advertise or by contacting Margaret Wood at margaret@friendsjournal.org or (800) 471-6863. Appearance of any advertisement does not imply endorsement by *Friends Journal* or Friends Publishing Corporation.

Postmaster: send address changes to Friends Journal, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Copyright © 2026 Friends Publishing Corporation. Permission should be received before reprinting excerpts longer than 200 words. Available on microfilm from Proquest.

AN INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE
SERVING THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY
OF FRIENDS

FRIENDS JOURNAL

Moving? Let us update your address.
Friends Journal, 1501 Cherry Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19102 • (215) 563-8629
(800) 471-6863 • Fax: (215) 568-1377
info@friendsjournal.org
Web: www.friendsjournal.org

Friends Journal October 2026

Restoring Our Parts of the World

One summer afternoon years ago I was reading an old Quaker journal. It was nothing too obscure. I believe it might even have been that of John Woolman, whose journal rivals that of Quaker founder George Fox in terms of lasting impact. Woolman was a small-town merchant in eighteenth-century New Jersey with a highly attuned sense of justice.

For a moment in my reading that day, I let myself feel a pang of jealousy. Woolman is most well-known for his strong advocacy against slavery, a cause that seems so very obvious to us today. It's easy to think any of us would have been as clear-eyed as he and brave enough to confront slave holders face-to-face as he did. Our modern Quaker dilemmas feel so complicated in comparison. What does it mean to be a Friend? What must we believe or not believe? Are there practices that define us—things we must or mustn't do to remain Friends?

I laughed out loud as I snapped out of this line of thought. Woolman didn't have it easy at all, of course. The slaveholding Friends he was challenging came from the richest and most powerful Quaker families in colonial America. In a slightly different timeline, he could have been drummed out of Friends just as his fellow antislavery advocate Benjamin Lay had been a few decades earlier.

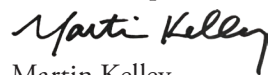
S.E.W. Smith starts this issue off with talk of timelines that I find compelling in a similar way. Modern science-fiction storytelling is full of what-if alternate history stories (a genre that's personal catnip to me!), but a phrase that's become popular on social media is a call to "restore the timeline!" The implication is that somewhere along the way, humanity took a wrong turn. In its most superficial form, the turning point was a particular election or the mis-adoption of some technology. But as Smith points out, "Quaker faith has always been about restoration." Wherever we are, we have a responsibility to do the hard work of imagining and co-creating a better kingdom of heaven here on earth.

Michelle Downey also looks to Woolman's *Journal* as a guide, in her meeting's case to work on immigration justice (I especially love how they paused to deliberate their own motivations in their discernment). Christopher E. Stern is back with a look at Jesus's timeline restoration, what he describes as a "real call toward transformation of our hearts in the present moment and time."

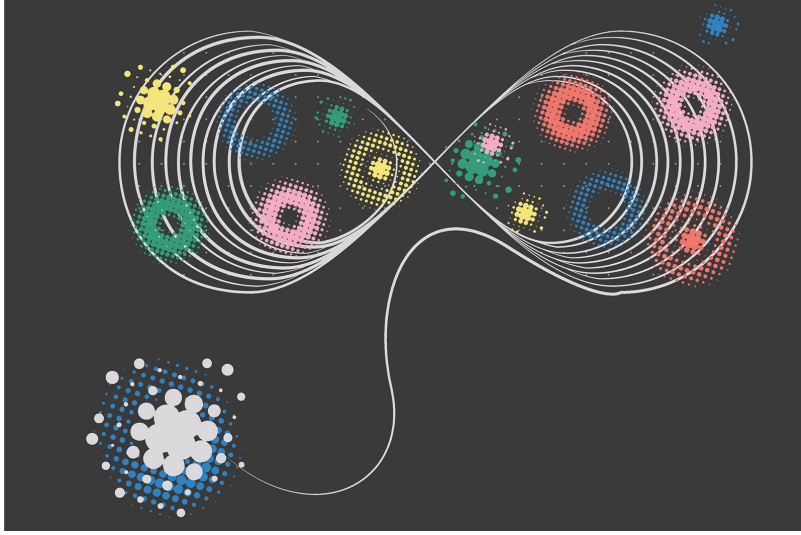
It's a packed issue, and there are so many good stories of Friends stepping up to heal the world, including a disability rights story from Guatemala, a hospital chaplain in California, and an American Quaker in wartime Vietnam whose work has been rediscovered. Don't miss the two features in the online edition: Quaker nerds will appreciate the interview of Michael J. Sheeran, whose 1973 outsider look at Liberal Friends in Philadelphia changed the way we looked at ourselves. And Jack Tripp's questioning of what we mean by "Quaker values" feels smart and fresh in a similar generational way.

The troubles, opportunities, and challenges for us Friends today are not so dissimilar to those of earlier generations of Friends. May we all find the peace and inward wisdom to restore our parts of the timeline.

In Friendship,



Martin Kelley
Senior Editor
martin@friendsjournal.org



Cover photo by Mike Newbry
on Unsplash

FEATURES

- 6** **Restore the Timeline**
S.E.W. SMITH
Learning to live in the 200-year present.
- 9** **Like Dew on the Tender Plants**
MICHELLE DOWNEY
Coming together to protect our immigrant neighbors.
- 13** **An Extremist for Love**
CHRISTOPHER E. STERN
The resurrection and the life of Jesus.
- 16** **Self-Reliance Is the True Road to Independence**
TONYA THAMES-TAYLOR
The Inner Light of Mary Ann Shadd Cary.
- 20** **Forgotten Photos Identify Vietnam War Political Prisoners**
JANE GRIFFITH BARTON
A Quaker antiwar activist's documentation reconnects people decades later.
- 24** **Disability, Faith, and Guatemala's Social Debt**
BELÉN HERNÁNDEZ
A Quaker perspective from Latin America.
- 27** **Ending Outward Wars**
SHARLEE DIMENICHI
The Quaker influence on the United Nations.

ONLINE FEATURES

Friendsjournal.org/online

Beyond Majority Rule, Four Decades Later

ALASTAIR MCINTOSH

Toward a Quaker Pedagogy

JACK TRIPP

POETRY

- 12** **Go to the Well at Siloam**
SHAUN MCMICHAEL
- 19** **School Nights**
CASEY MORRIS
- 30** **Some Solace**
DANIEL SKACH-MILLS

DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 2 Among Friends | 40 Books |
| 4 Forum | 53 Viewpoint |
| 32 Quakers and Money | 54 Milestones |
| 34 Witness | 56 Quaker Works |
| 36 Lives of Friends | 63 QuakerSpeak |
| 38 FJ Spotlight | |

UPCOMING ISSUES

Write for FJ: *Friendsjournal.org/submissions*

- **Quakers and Social Class** (due October 19)
- **Open Issue** (due November 23)
- **Ecology and Eco-Spirituality** (due December 21)



Budgets as a Tool for Liberation

See page 32 for an essay by podcast cohost Diana Yañez on how having a budget has helped her take risks and set priorities.

We can sing if we want to

I love John Holding's new terminology for worship ("How Can I Keep from Singing?" *FJ* Aug.). It's the relaxing of forms that were fitting in their time; a softening of healing hard edges; a time of deeper listening to newly found common ground hidden beneath habits that hurt. Singing and humming are so good for our health. They connect the brain through the vagus nerve to all the organs for energy flow and vitality. Group singing is especially good, intergenerational even better.

Regina St Clare
Lincroft, N.J.

I find that the Spirit moves me to sing. Holding lets me know that there's nothing wrong with this. Music touches my soul in a way words alone might not.

Michele Delehanty
Ruther Glen, Va.

There is so much depth of Spirit in music and song. Are we inclusive or exclusive in our time together in worship? I love this quote from George Fox: "Sing and rejoice, you children of the day and of the Light."

Nancy Alleman
Camp Hill, Pa.

Hope for overcoming warmaking

Scotty Utz's work with Guns to Gardens is a beautiful initiative, but as long as his country continues a philosophy based on weapons, nothing can change deeply ("Forging Peace and Disarming Hearts," *FJ* Sept.).

Peace must be cultivated not only in each heart but also politically and

Forum letters should be sent with the writer's name and address to forum@friendsjournal.org. Each letter is limited to 300 words and may be edited for length and clarity. Letters should be direct responses to published content; we do not accept letters on general topics or addressed to previous letters. We invite readers to engage in discussions in our online comment sections, located at the bottom of every published webpage; we frequently use online comments for our print Forum.

Friends Journal October 2026

socially. It's important to drive out the merchants of weapons and to educate children in peace and understanding.

Pierre
France

Thanks for letting me know about a movement I'd never heard of and discovering that there was a branch right here in my backyard in Philadelphia. It is an inspiring article, serious and thoughtful as well as humorous. While he may not be in the circus any more, he has at least retained a sense of humor about life.

Pierre's comments above are well taken. Our government right now thinks only of violence at home and abroad. It seems impossible to imagine that we could overcome the gun/military culture that dominates our political leaders and so much of our country. But efforts like Guns to Gardens give hope.

John Andrew Gallery
Philadelphia, Pa.

Online: Scotty Utz discusses his article in a Quaker Talk video interview with *FJ* senior editor Martin Kelley at Friendsjournal.org/scotty-utz.

Meeting people where they are

As Dewi Heald seems to suggest ("It's Not Just About War," *FJ* Sept.), we might be more effective at spreading peace if we focus on the ineffectiveness of war more than defending pacifism against the critics who characterize it as ineffective. To begin with, he advises us to make pacifism active rather than passive. Some will take Heald's advice to mean that we need more public demonstrations. Probably so. Still, I see some more suggestions there, one being that we engage in peace education and spread what we have learned with others. I'm thinking this would be more effective than more demonstrations because, hopefully at least, we'd meet more people where they are.

Tom Louderback
Louisville, Ky.

Finding our people

Thank you for Steven Davison's "What Can We Say?" (*FJ* Aug.). I feel

there is great value in trying to describe our positive characteristics, even though a great advantage of Quakerism is its openness. I have experienced a steady inner draw toward the Society of Friends in the past two years, but it is only this week that I have taken the step from being a "Quaker without a meeting" (my own term) to being an "attender." It's not going to be easy, since the nearest meeting that I can find is 70 miles from my very rural area. But I experienced an instant, strong connection to the meeting I attended. I feel like I have "found my people." I'm very eager to formally join the Friends, but I am trying to be patient and honor the process!

Mark Lama
Quincy, Mich.

It's a commonplace observation that when any person begins to experience communication/communion with God, that experience will usually begin with what that person has come to understand from their life so far. God can potentially show them more, but that's where they start. So there will necessarily be wide disagreement, at first, on what Quakers do or believe.

Do we tend to converge, over time, on a particular interpretation of what we basically agree on? There may well remain strong preferences for one way or another of expressing what it is we find ourselves agreeing on. Do these matter all that much?

Forrest Curo
San Diego, Calif.

Thank you for sharing this. A very useful summation of our Quaker approach to the Divine that speaks to my condition.

Riki Panganiban
San Francisco, Calif.

Thank you for putting it so succinctly. One of many reasons I was drawn to the Society of Friends was how inclusive it is in honoring individuals' spiritual walk.

Vicki Stagg
Via Facebook

Continues on page 53



Restore the Timeline

Learning to Live in the 200-Year Present

S.E.W. Smith

Giving in to a moment's scrolling shows yet again the futility of the effort. The source, verifiable. The facts, brutal. A great wrong done to the undeserving by the powerful. A now-ingrained feeling of helplessness. Because the post comes from a longtime friend, it needs time to respond with a "caring" emoji and the simple phrase: "Ugh. We live in the worst timeline." Some days later, I notice someone has shared mutual

sympathy with my comment and replied, even more concisely, with the exhortation: "Restore the timeline!"

"Restoring the timeline" is a motif that fills every element of popular culture: from books to television to movies to anime to political cartoons to tragic pleas for sympathy online. It has become a shorthand way of expressing a kind of dissipated and enervated withdrawal from the struggle. A mishmash of string theory, quantum mechanics, and the speculations of countless creative artists over several centuries, it conveys the notion that our world today exists on one of many (perhaps infinite) timelines pervading our social chatter. Embedded within this notion is a kind of positivist assumption: *This is it? Is this the best timeline*

S.E.W. Smith is a longtime member of Grass Valley (Calif.) Meeting and is a lifelong theater artist, writer, and educator, who is in his third year as a doctoral scholar with the University of Birmingham's Quaker Studies program.

available? Did we get penalized somewhere back along the way? Are you sure we didn't take that left turn at Albuquerque?

It's hardly a new idea. Sir Thomas More wrote *Utopia* in 1516, and even Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, wrote an alternative timeline into the plot of his novel *1945* (co-written by William R. Forstchen in 1995). You may have your own personal favorite of this broad genre. My current front-runner is Robert Sobel's *For Want of a Nail*, a "rediscovered" history book from 1973 that recalls how the American rebels lost their brief and violent revolution against the British Empire. The counterfactual story has devotees in every genre and even boasts its own prize, the Sideways Award. That said, the ability to alter either one's personal or societal timeline is—as the talking heads say—having a bit of a moment right now.

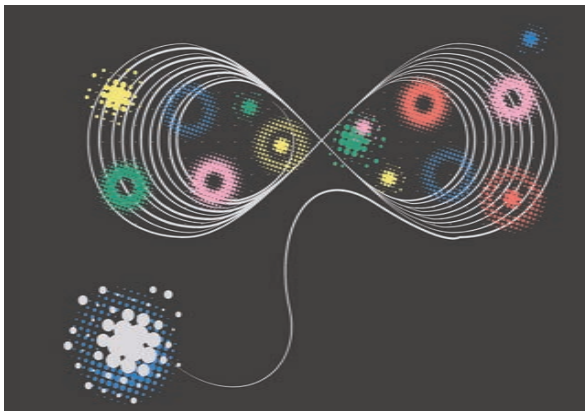
The clichéd story has varied little since Mark Twain's *A*

But that also means that everything that we do matters, as well.

That promptly ensnares us in Marianne Williamson's poem (made famous by Nelson Mandela), that "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us." Psychologically, we want the power to change history; spiritually, we fear the power to change history. But we in Quaker society have lived in the truth that not only can we change history, we are history made manifest, each and every day. Why treat "restoring the timeline" not as a trope of science fiction or a curiosity for those fascinated by quantum mechanics but instead as a very real and sacred opportunity for all of us?

Quaker faith has always been about restoration. The history of the Religious Society of Friends has been 375

Image by Greg Daines on Unsplash



If this is—as I wrote in my moment of despair—us living in the worst possible timeline, then we can make “Restore the Timeline” a mantra, a motto, a call to action. What we do today is the foundational task for restoration of a better tomorrow.

Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. An errant time traveler, whether by accident or design, transgresses in some fashion, minor or major, thereby shattering the very world from which the traveler comes. Ray Bradbury's short story "A Sound of Thunder" lays out the quandary succinctly and helped establish the notion of the "butterfly effect."

A veritable pantheon of authors struggle with the various conundrums which appear as soon as one dips an imaginative toe into the waters of temporal anomalies, which are in equal parts murky and tantalizing. Psychologists like Matthew Schneider-Mayerson have delved into why we engage in "what ifs" so urgently.

On the one hand, it's a matter of contrast: sure, we won, goes the thinking, but what if we could have won without the deaths of so many innocents? On the other hand, there's the inference that everything that someone does matters. The road the famous person took matters; therefore it would matter if she had taken a different one.

years of restorative faith in action. The efforts of the early Quakers centered around a struggle to seek and find the original intent of the teachings of Jesus. In a 2018 article in *Quaker Religious Thought*, Paul Anderson went back to look at the struggles of early Quakers who suffered because they hoped to restore Jesus's original teachings, amplifying the accuracy of William Penn's description of the Quaker project as "primitive Christianity revived." The line between "revival" and "restoration" is fairly narrow. "Revive the timeline" might not scan as well as "restore" it, but we should at least draw support from the idea that we walk in the path Mary Dyer and others have already trod.

Closer to our own timeline is the mind of Elise Boulding and her "200-year present." Its most basic form is the recognition of our own position in time: we can reach back into a world of 100 years ago by means of the oldest person around us in our lives, and we can also project

forward our thoughts to the potential 100 years yet to come for the youngest baby born in our present-day. Stretching our lives out into a wingspan of two centuries, Boulding argues, fundamentally changes our perspective and provides us with an obligation and humility that help us move forward with each and every decision we make.

It is a well-worn meme that points out our ready acceptance of the domino effect, in which our future changes irrevocably through minor actions in the past, as well as our stubborn refusal to acknowledge our power to alter the future through minor actions in the present.

How liberating that simple shift of consciousness becomes! Restoration can be as simple as it is profound. Everyone who has ever pruned a forgotten fruit tree to spur its growth understands the power of restoration.



Photo by Kateryna Hliznitsova on Unsplash

Our 200-year present, though, shows us the route that allows us to bypass that refusal and draw the necessary strength to gird ourselves for the efforts required to restore the timeline.

Despair is cancerous and heavy with the weight of self-fulfilling prophecy. The ubiquity of present-day communication media accelerates a person's ability to absorb or deflect the onslaught of injuries done to others around us. If this is—as I wrote in my moment of despair—us living in the worst possible timeline, then we can make “Restore the Timeline” a mantra, a motto, a call to action. What we do today is the foundational task for restoration of a better tomorrow.

How liberating that simple shift of consciousness becomes! Restoration can be as simple as it is profound. Everyone who has ever pruned a forgotten fruit tree to spur its growth understands the power of restoration. Anyone who has crawled under a 1964 Dodge pickup to replace a worn-out U-joint grasps its importance. All of us

who have sewn a button back on, repaired a torn seam, or sanded down and repainted a beloved piece of furniture know experientially the satisfaction of restorative work.

How much more satisfying will it be when we make our own contributions to the repair of the world as it might be! It is no simple act of quixotic madness to advocate for political reform, but it is a time-traveling adventurer's dream. Teaching others to build a more peaceful world is not spitting in the wind. Rather, it is the work of improving on L. Sprague de Camp's protagonist Martin Padway, the time-travelling would-be world

builder in *Lest Darkness Fall* from 1939. In the place of throwing up one's arms and shouting “whatever” like some variation on “the Dude” Lebowski, reimagine yourself as a Quakerly *isekai-jin* (異世界, “person from another world”) on an adventure to find sense in a place you find has lost its senses entirely.

You have restored, first and foremost, your own sense of membership in a greater struggle: the reconnection to the collective revival of an unrealized but surely improved world. You may not succeed now, but you have stepped into the stream of your own 200-year present.

In California and Oregon, we have witnessed the ability of many laboring souls to restore the flow of the Klamath River. It was a generational effort in the twentieth century to restrict its flow and massively damage the ecological pathways which led to and from that river. Just so, it has been a generational effort to allow the river to run once more to the sea. Boulding's 200-year present continues. It never ceases. Neither should we. ■



Like Dew *on the* Tender Plants

Coming Together to Protect Our Immigrant Neighbors

Michelle Downey

As Friends facing current events, we may struggle with what our response should be as we confront the enormity of the pain in our world. How do we open ourselves to discernment that might lead to action in our community? Are we examining our answers about the steps we are taking as individuals and as Quaker meetings to ensure justice for those in our communities? Our work should not end with declarations of good intentions. As my meeting discerned our role in protecting immigrants in our area, we looked to the bravery of early Quakers who stood up for their beliefs. Those Friends can be an inspiration to us now: models of discernment in their obedience to Divine Guidance,

Michelle Downey is a member of Fayetteville (N.C.) Meeting and North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative).

allowing us to live out our testimonies.

Throughout his journal, eighteenth-century Friend John Woolman spoke candidly of struggling to overcome his fears when he felt led to act, yet he lived dedicated and obedient to his faith in order to affect his world. Here are his words:

Where people are sincerely devoted to follow Christ, and dwell under the influence of his Holy Spirit, their stability and firmness, through a Divine blessing, is at times like dew on the tender plants around them, and the weightiness of their spirits secretly works on the minds of others.

To find a sense of grounding in the Spirit, our first step is to slow down, quiet ourselves, and make ourselves ready to receive. Woolman writes:

Photo by Okeykat on Unsplash

With prayers and tears I besought the Lord for his assistance, and He, in loving-kindness, gave me a resigned heart.

This quiet reflection can come not only in the meetinghouse. While working in his orchard, our new member Nate Crew received the message that would become our “Minute of Intent to Protect [Immigrants]”. As a brand-new Quaker, he did not yet fully understand the activity of creating Quaker minutes, which indicated this declaration of faith was a true exercise in obedience, as Divine Guidance formulated every word and then guided him to bring it forward to the meeting. The words that Nate brought to us were only adjusted in minor areas, and then we were in unity to adopt this as a minute. The ease of spirit with which this occurred felt grounded. Yet, with that adoption, we had to face our various levels of comfort or discomfort regarding the proposed actions. The tolerance for risk varies widely within the meeting, and we acknowledged the need for this variation to be held tenderly by all.

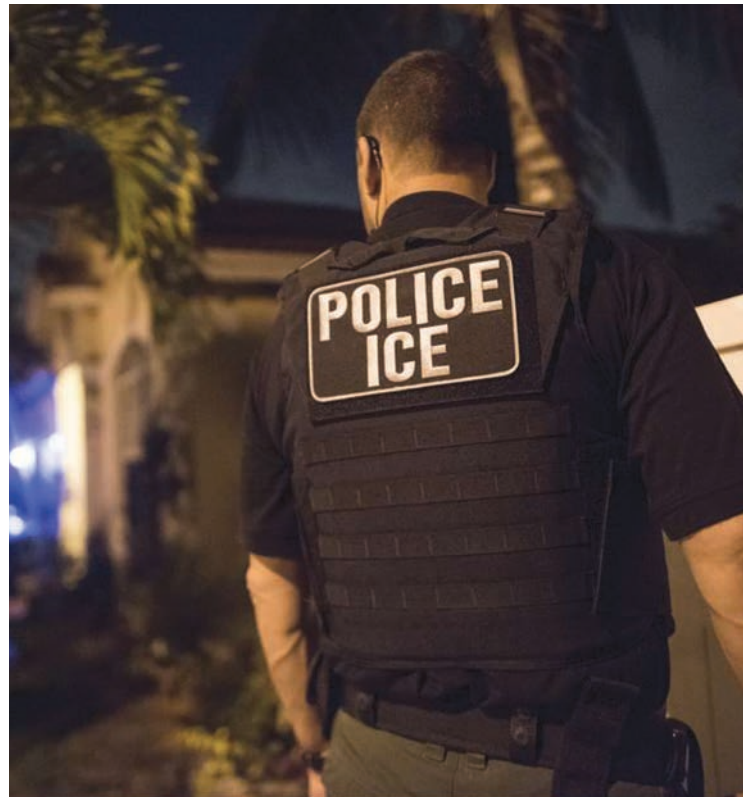


Photo by Defence Visual Information Distribution Service, www.dvidshub.net

Fayetteville Friends Minute of Intent to Protect

As human beings we are all children of God and recognize that among us are many dear friends, family, neighbors, coworkers and others who are immigrants in this country or otherwise marginalized. Some of us have achieved citizenship, some have green cards, some have visas, some are in pending status or similar legal limbo, and others still lack official documentation. Often, this variety of circumstances exist within a family, and the resulting vulnerabilities can be very real, complex, and difficult.

As faith communities inspired by a common sense of divine standards in goodness and compassion, we join in publicly stating our intent to peacefully yet determinedly defend the defenseless and vulnerable in their need. In all morally upright and ethically sound matters we will continue as faithful Americans to cooperate with our government and receive all government agents in goodwill; however, if a case arises of persecution, oppression, or forcible removal of immigrant populations from among us, we will weigh human authority against our leadings to submit to Divine Authority regarding disgraces

against the humanity of those in our community. As and when the situation calls for action, we will readily provide shelter, cover, aid and advocacy for our beleaguered neighbors.

We earnestly hope that such a preemptive posture as represented by this minute may prove unnecessary. Yet behind our hopes and prayers, and even as we operate from a general stance of political neutrality, we yet agree to stand ready together to physically assist those persons who may seek our help, to facilitate legal assistance as far as possible, to persistently petition legislators, to send delegations and speak with key government officials, and/or to publicly denounce inhumane government policies which would aim to tear apart immigrant families or inappropriately harass harmless people. We hereby state our intent to take these and similar peaceful actions as such needs may arise.

Remembering that we are all flawed and oft-mistaken human beings, we take this stand not from a spirit of pride or conflict, but in a soul-searching hope for an American future of harmony, peace on earth, and goodwill toward everyone.

We take seriously an elder's advice we received some years back to examine carefully our motivations when contemplating publishing a minute. What actual actions will lead from it? Are we merely posturing or "virtue signaling" when we minute? As a very small meeting, we must also carefully weigh any commitment to action, because we simply do not have the ability to manage an overload of promises.

Our initial outreach consisted of mailing over 850 paper copies of the minute to places of worship in the five counties that surround us. We had originally pictured our role as providing sanctuary to immigrants. As we began to receive signatures from a wide variety of faith

As my meeting discerned our role in protecting immigrants in our area, we looked to the bravery of early Quakers who stood up for their beliefs. Those Friends can be an inspiration to us now: models of discernment in their obedience to Divine Guidance, allowing us to live out our testimonies.

organizations, however, we discerned that our actual role was to be a public face of this movement and to protect the identities of our signers and others doing the work. We had to reconcile ourselves to this change in vision, but we moved forward in obedience.

John Woolman wrote about his struggle to heed Divine Guidance when it differed from how he thought he should act:

One day, being under a strong exercise of spirit, I stood up and said some words in a meeting; but not keeping close to Divine opening, I said more than was required of me. And I was taught to watch the pure opening, and to take heed lest, while standing to speak, my own will should get uppermost, and cause me to utter words from worldly wisdom, and depart from the channel of the true gospel ministry.

We moved forward to embrace our public-facing role and sent the minute nationwide. In all of our correspondence, we emphasized that even if the receivers

did not feel led to sign onto it, we welcomed a response to our email in which we might hear how the Spirit was moving among people across the country and learn how the work was progressing with them. This alleviation of our isolation helped diminish our discouragement at the enormity of the task; it can help all of us to hear about successes.

The minute was sent to local newspapers, published in *Western Friend*, and hand-delivered to the office of Senator Thom Tillis. Nate shared his testimony in the Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation newsletter and spoke in front of the Fayetteville offices of state representatives. The clerk of the meeting spoke about our work on a nationwide Quaker call.

At times, we have faced comments from those who do not share our feelings of compassion for our immigrant neighbors, friends, and family. John Woolman also recognized that what he was proclaiming was not always going to be warmly embraced by the community in which he lived. He often felt he had to brace himself to speak against slavery to those he encountered who were holding people in enslavement. He said:

Acting contrary to present outward interest, from a motive of Divine love and in regard to truth and righteousness, and thereby incurring the resentments of people, opens the way to a treasure better than silver, and to a friendship

exceeding the friendship of men.

Our work has led to community partnerships that have invigorated our meeting and enriched our understanding of God moving among people of many faiths (or of no faith practice at all). Early on, we hosted a workshop with our local Organizing Against Racism group to discuss the current situation in our area and to develop strategies for safety and security protocols. Our training work has been assisted and facilitated primarily by Siembra NC, an organization focused on grassroots defense of immigrants, workers, and communities.

Our workshops have covered protocols for participating in ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) watch programs, strategies for approaching workplaces to ask for commitments to Fourth Amendment protections ("the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures" without a warrant based on probable cause a

Continues on page 51

Go to the Well at Siloam



Image from commons.wikimedia.org

**Tell the waters who sent you.
Soak in them. There's nothing special
about Siloam, nor in your moans.
What matters are your eyes, waiting**

**in their silt-sealed caverns to be
seen and to see. They're universes
veined by the spectrum of light and color,
absorbing and reflecting heaven. The word**

**of truth into the reviling crowds
nattering about what matters.
So many graveled words—dry, broken, grave.
They growl about who to blame**

**for your condition before and after Siloam
because your unsealed eyes blind them
by revealing the weakness of their sight.
What matters is, you've been sent,**

**now you see, and what you know
can hone rocks into stones
for a hearth, for slings,
for riverbeds, for a home.**

(John 9)

Shaun Anthony McMichael
Seattle, Wash.

The Pool of Siloam, 1870. Page 58 of *Scenes in the East: Consisting of twelve coloured photographic views of places mentioned in the Bible*, with descriptive letter-press, Henry Baker Tristram, 1822–1906. Original held and digitized by the British Library.

An Extremist *for* Love



The remarkable African American biblical scholar and activist Obery Hendricks Jr. writes, in *The Politics of Jesus*:

The quest for social justice is actually the most fundamental ethic of the entire biblical tradition. . . . I take the unequivocal stand that the biblical social justice tradition is so humane and powerful that if Christendom was ever to take it seriously, humanity would be infinitely better off. It is to this tradition that my work and my life is dedicated.

In my own experience, the Jesus I encounter in the Scriptures, within me, and as the Light within all of us is this Teacher of Love. He is the one that Martin Luther King Jr. called “an extremist for love.” When a group of religious leaders wrote a newspaper editorial addressed to King calling him an extremist and saying that he should be more compliant and patient, and less radical, he replied in his famous “Letter from Birmingham Jail”:

Was not Jesus an extremist for love: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Was not Amos an extremist for justice: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.” Was not Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel: “I bear in

Depiction of Jesus Christ, interior of Hagia Sophia Basilica, Istanbul, Turkey.

Christopher E. Stern

Christopher E. Stern is a recorded Friends minister and member of Middletown Meeting in Lima, Pa. He is a retired special education teacher and part-time coordinator for Concord Quarterly Meeting in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Chris is the author of the 2023 book Who Turned On the Light? and the recently released QuakerSpeak video “Resisting Fake News About Jesus.”

Friends Journal October 2026

my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Was not Martin Luther an extremist: “Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God.” And John Bunyan: “I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience.” And Abraham Lincoln: “This nation cannot survive half slave and half free.” And Thomas Jefferson: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. . . .” So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice? In that dramatic scene on Calvary’s hill three men were crucified. We must never forget that all three were crucified for the same crime—the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thus fell below their environment. The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, truth and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment. Perhaps the South, the nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists.

We need more extremists for love today! And especially now, in this time, and that is why finding the real Jesus in us and among us is so important. He calls us all to be “extremists for love.” That is the center of his message and the reason it is called good news!

One of my favorite original skits is called “The Reluctant Patient.” It is about a patient (modern Quakerism) that is in denial about its spiritual decline. In the second act, the doctor (God) tells the patient (modern Quakerism) the bad news about their condition:

Your tests have uncovered a lot of buildup (in your arteries) from hurt and misunderstandings in the past. There is also a very large hardened area of fear and denial that is further constricting the blood flow to your heart. Frankly, due to the many precipitating factors, we really do not know how much surgery will be needed until we can open you up and get a good look inside. Are you willing to be opened?

The patient expresses a real reluctance to believe the diagnosis and a preference to continue things as they are. The doctor insists on moving forward and recommends “our experienced surgical team headed by Dr. Jesus, the Christ.” This causes an immediate negative response. The patient challenges the doctor’s referral by pointing out the narrow-mindedness and judgmental qualities of many people who claim to have been operated on by this surgeon. The doctor agrees with the patient’s assessment

and laments how much this is true but reassures the patient that the real work of Dr. Christ and his team is to “open up the constricted areas, not make them narrower.”

The doctor strongly urges the patient toward this experience:

The way forward toward a new heart and all the newness of life that you long for is to recognize that you cannot fix this yourself. You cannot keep self-medicating the symptoms. You need the help of a Power greater than your own to bring about these essential changes within you. Face the facts and make the right choice! Choose Life!”

This dialogue has deep roots in my own experience of searching for the real Jesus among all the fake news that impacted my life in so many negative ways. The fake news that I experienced in my life closed me up, made me critical toward others, and insisted that I judge them. It put everything into small, walled compartments built to keep others out. The real news continues to open my understanding and heart towards others and helps me to search for ways to learn and to grow toward the Light that comes in. This is how I know it’s true!

My mother was a Holocaust survivor. She said that she did not believe in God because an all-powerful God would not have allowed such cruelty, hatred, and mass killing to occur. God would have intervened. I never argued this with her; she had suffered enough and had lived through the nightmare of what happens when humanity loses its way and travels down a tragic path. History shows us that when we become obsessed with wealth and power, we find that all our compassion, caring, and even our humanity (our ability to love) is destroyed. When we become driven by resentment, and bitterness, and obsessed with revenge, we become cold and unfeeling toward others, especially those we have learned to hate. These are dangerous places for us to go, and they never turn out well.

Jesus lived in a time of great cruelty and persecution. In



This is the “resurrection and the life” he calls us to: not some fake pie-in-the-sky man-made belief system that claims it can get us into heaven but the real call toward transformation of our hearts in the present moment and time. He calls us to abandon the fake news that is driving us to destruction by building walls between us, separating us from seeing and experiencing God’s love for ourselves and our neighbors.

Photo by Luca Bravo on Unsplash

the Sermon on the Mount, he calls us in a completely different direction. He warns us of the dangers of following the paths of greed and hatred and calls us to learn his way of love. Even in the midst of being tortured himself, he still calls out for forgiveness, compassion, and caring for the “least of these” among us (Matt. 23). Ultimately there is freedom and new life found in God’s love and forgiveness, a greater freedom than we can ever find without them. This is the real good news and the truth I find in the resurrection story.

In contrast, the fake news about Jesus is a dangerous perversion of Christianity into an apocalyptic nightmare of death and destruction. It falsely connects Jesus’s return to all this evil, persecution, and hatred gone amok. To me, this fake news is nothing short of selling our souls. It allows us to continue to follow our worst and most selfish inclinations by claiming that this is all part of God’s plan! The devastating outcomes of following this fake news (wars, racism, climate crisis, the Holocaust) offer further proof of its ungodly destructive nature. This is a devilish distortion of Jesus’s basic teachings and true vision of God’s selfless love.

Let me be absolutely clear: when we give up on Jesus’s vision of loving one another, we can have nothing more to do with him (Matt. 7:21–23). This was and is his primary mission, and if we don’t see this and come to know this as our Guiding Light, we cannot call ourselves followers of Christ.

I have been hooked on an Irish home renovation series called *Room to Improve*. In this series, a gifted young architect is brought in to help different families and people with renovating their homes. The homes that need renovating are often quite similar. They are old buildings with small, compartmentalized interiors and little access to the outside spaces. There is very little sense of how the rooms fit together and often not enough space for family and friends to gather together. They were built simply to keep the elements out and to keep the people warm before there was proper insulation and central heating.

The architect is always approaching the renovations by looking for more ways to bring natural light into the

Continues on page 51



Self-Reliance Is *the* True Road *to* Independence

Mary Ann Shadd Cary, 1850s. Library and Archives Canada, C-029977.

The Inner Light of Mary Ann Shadd Cary

tonya thames-taylor

Photo from commons.wikimedia.org

In 1882, Williams Wells Brown—a former slave-turned-abolitionist, novelist, and historian—described teacher, editor, and lecturer Mary Shadd Cary as “tall and slim,” “resolute and determined” with an “intellectual countenance [and] bright, sharp eyes, that look right through you.” In his book *The Rising Son* he added that Shadd Cary was a skilled debater who forcibly took “advantage of the weak points of her opponent.” He even went so far to conclude that “had she been a man, she would probably have been with John Brown at Harpers Ferry.”

The 69-year life of Mary Shadd Cary (October 9,

tonya thames-taylor is a member of various Quaker boards and associations, women's and ethnic associations, and America250 commissions of Chester County, Pa., and West Chester University. She worships at Fallowfield Meeting in East Fallowfield, Pa., and is a former trustee of Friends Publishing Corporation. Recently, the Pennsylvania Humanities Council distinguished her as a “Window Keeper,” which recognizes Pennsylvanians who strengthen civil life through the humanities. She enjoys gardening and visiting art and historical museums.

1823–June 5, 1893) offers a master class in the values of self-reliance and humanitarianism that are associated with the grit and spirit of independence that are being celebrated during America250, the semiquincentennial of the founding of the United States.

Throughout her life, she revealed her self-evident truths with pen and voice when she advocated for abolition, temperance, self-determination, integration, and equal employment and pay regardless of gender.

Her freeborn parents, Abraham and Harriet Shadd, were abolitionists who provided their children with the witness and testimony of their home being a safe house for those self-emancipating from the physical and mental shackles of the United States’ race-based slavery.

Modeling self-determination, Shadd Cary’s parents packed up and moved roughly 17 miles from Wilmington, Delaware, to West Chester, Pennsylvania. Their move was prompted by the state of Delaware, a slave state, which restricted public funds for education to white children in 1829 with the Free-School Act. Black parents

were forced to rely on private or church-run schools.

In West Chester, under the guidance of Quaker Penelope Darlington, Shadd Cary thrived as she trained in Latin, literature, and math and deepened her insights of the Light Within. The Quaker understanding of the Light Within encouraged her to prioritize her individual conscience over restrictive social and religious rules and to believe in universal equality regardless of race and gender. Witnessing the abolition activities of her parents and having the moral fortitude to mind the Light Within despite external pressure, 16-year-old Mary Ann Shadd, after six years of Quaker education, began her long teaching career. Throughout the 1840s, she taught in West Chester and Norristown, Pennsylvania, with some stints in Trenton, New Jersey, and in Wilmington, Delaware.

A determined Shadd convinced a Black educator to start a school in Canada, and she moved there in 1851 after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 deputized whites to surveil Black people and actions, stripped suspected Blacks of their voice in court, and financially incentivized finding Blacks to be guilty of being slaves. The act extended the legal reach and power of the slaveholders of the South, increased the vulnerability of self-emancipated Blacks, and jeopardized the liberty of free Blacks.

To combat this assault on Black life, Shadd Cary wrote a 52-page pamphlet entitled “A Plea for Emigration, Or, Notes of Canada West,” that was published in 1852. She encouraged Blacks to join her in what is now Ontario. For her, Canada offered opportunities of integrated education and churches, quality land, and less-obstructed pathways to the “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence.

Capitalizing on the conversations generated about Canadian emigration, Shadd Cary, then age 29, launched the newspaper *Provincial Freeman* on March 24, 1853, in Windsor, Ontario. By doing so, she became the first Black woman editor and newspaper publisher in North America.

The official motto of her newspaper was “Self-Reliance is the True Road to Independence.” The motto demonstrates her rejection of segregation and the pseudoscience found in—what was called in the nineteenth century—“complexional distinctions,” which were used to justify color-based hierarchy. She firmly opposed the dependence of Blacks on white philanthropy and charity. Four years before, in the March 1849 edition of the newspaper *North Star*, 31-year-old editor Frederick Douglass published Shadd Cary’s full response to a query he had posed about how northern Blacks could improve themselves. At 25, she replied that they could “talk less

and do more.” Her move to Canada models her response.

On January 3, 1856, at 32, she married Canadian barber Thomas F. Cary; she had her first child, Sarah, at 33. She was carrying a son, Linton, when Thomas died in 1860, which made her a widow and single mother at around 37. That same year, her fledgling newspaper, which after years of financial woes, ceased publication, although some accounts have the paper folding as early as 1857.

By 1863, she had returned to the United States, worked to recruit for the United States Colored Troops (USCT) in Indiana, and freelanced for newspapers before moving to Washington, D.C., to work as a teacher and principal.

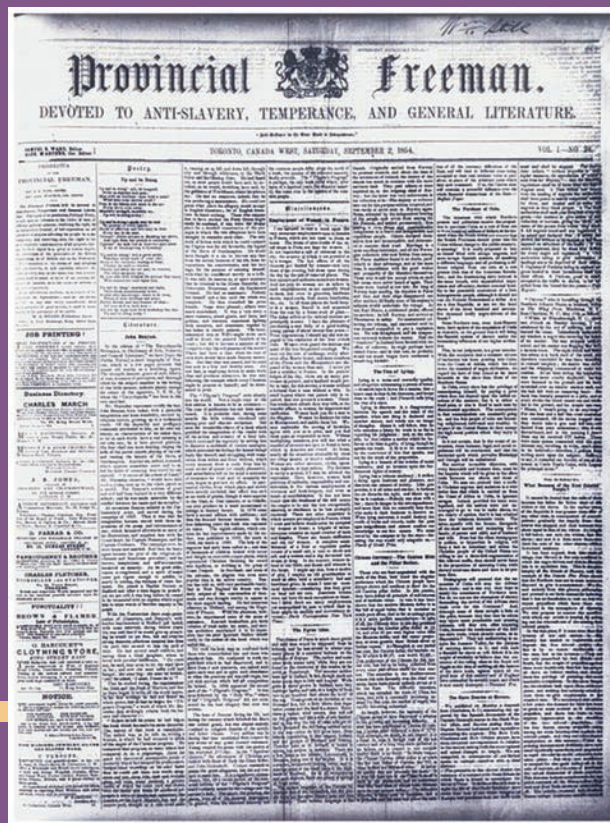
In 1869, she joined the inaugural class of Howard Law School. Her delayed official graduation from Howard Law School in 1883 happened for these reasons. First, she was a single mother of two children without a support system. Second, the law school was temporarily shut down from 1873 to 1877 due to a severe national depression. Finally, the laws at the time prohibited women from being admitted to the bar.

During her interrupted studies of law, she worked as a teacher and principal, signed petitions calling for the

The life of Mary Shadd Cary offers a master class in the values of self-reliance and humanitarianism that are associated with the grit and spirit of independence that are being celebrated during America250.

franchise of women, and created an organization that was a forerunner of the Black women’s club movement in the 1890s.

In January 1874, along with the pioneering suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Quaker Susan B. Anthony, Shadd Cary testified in the U.S. House Judiciary Committee that “the strength and glory of a free nation [it] is not so much in the size and equipment of its armies as in the loyal hearts and willing hands of its men and women.” She linked the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the necessity of Black women’s suffrage. Two years prior, in January 1872, before the House



The official motto of [Shadd Cary's] newspaper was "Self-Reliance is the True Road to Independence." The motto demonstrates her rejection of segregation and the pseudoscience found in—what was called in the nineteenth century—"complexional distinctions," which were used to justify color-based hierarchy.

Front page of the *Provincial Freeman*, September 2, 1854.

Judiciary Committee, she argued that she deserved to vote because she was a taxpayer, and stated that "the crowning glory of American citizenship is that it may be shared equally by people of every nationality, complexion, and sex."

In 1880, she formed the short-lived Colored Women's Progressive Franchise Association to center Black women's voices in the conversation about the merits of self-reliance in financial uplift.

After being admitted into the bar in 1883, she worked as a lawyer until her death in June 1893.

Interred initially at the Columbian Harmony Cemetery in D.C., Shadd Cary's remains—along with 37,000 others—were dug up in the 1950s to make room for the current Rhode Island Avenue-Brentwood Metro station in Washington, D.C. While the new developer promised to move the bodies to what is now National Harmony Memorial Park in Landover, Maryland, the moving of the tombstones was not a part of the agreement, so they were sold, given away, or tossed in garbage heaps. Many of the tombstones disappeared, including that of Shadd Cary.

The story of what happened to the grave of Shadd Cary

and other notable Blacks in the cemetery—such as dressmaker Elizabeth Keckley and Chester County native Osborne Perry Anderson, the only Black survivor of John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry—tells a physical story of erasure.

Her story is essential to the America250 commemoration because her views, pen, voice, and action chronicle liberty as an ongoing quest for "we the people" to "create a more perfect union."

On June 6, 2018, 125 years after Shadd Cary's death, the *New York Times*, posthumously featured an obituary to rectify its 167-year-old historical inequity of featuring mainly white men. On her 197th birthday in 2020, a Google Doodle that appeared in the United States, Canada, Latvia, and various African nations featured Shadd Cary.

Mary Ann Shadd Cary's self-evident truths interrogated America and demanded her native country to live up to its highest ideals, so all can freely exercise their inalienable and legal rights. Her foundational Quaker education, combined with her commitment to justice, opened pathways for her to pursue, with intention, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" on her self-awareness terms. □

School Nights

Our DSM-IV* was a blooming garden
Of highlighted pages, sticky notes,

Worn hand-creased gospel to explain
My brother's every knack and whim:

No bright lights or blaring music,
Save when the summer storms blew in.

Every three math problems equals
A hissing glass of Cherry Coke.

A heavier seat for his tricycle
Soon hid a web of Juicy Fruit.

Routines. Affirmations. Flashcards:
Words to expressions to rolling

Bins full of leaves down the curb.
What we didn't anticipate was

Perhaps most important, closest
To him of all. His hands riffling

Autumn leaves, finding one alone
To hold in the wind before it's gone.

Casey Morris
Oxford, UK



Photo by Ethan Hoover on Unsplash

* *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, fourth edition



Forgotten Photos Identify Vietnam War Political Prisoners

A Quaker Antiwar Activist's Documentation Reconnects People Decades Later

Jane Griffith Barton

Imagine: your photo was taken many years ago when you, Hien, were a political prisoner in a special unit in the Quang Ngai hospital during the war in South Vietnam. After the war, you were freed. Fifty years later, you are stunned when a journalist, Huong Bui, comes to your village with some black-and-white photos and asks you if you can identify anyone in them. She tells you, "There is not a single name written on the back of these

photos." Your eyes fill with tears when your own face stares back at you from one of the pictures.

The next day you contact a former prisoner you know from a nearby hamlet. Word spreads about the photos, and two more former prisoners come to your house and identify themselves among the photos. A few weeks later, another prisoner drops in to visit. He doesn't find a picture of his face, but he shouts with astonishment, "Those are my feet handcuffed to the bed."

How did this extraordinary project to locate unidentified Vietnamese political prisoners from pictures taken 50 years ago by an American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) staffer evolve?

Jane Griffith Barton is a former co-director of American Friends Service Committee's humanitarian projects in Vietnam from 1970–73.



Opposite page: Le Thi Chuc (Bon) in 1972.

Left: Four former prisoners, from left: Le Thi Chuc (Bon), Le Thi Nam, Nguyen Chan, and Dang Van Hien.

Below: Legs of Nguyen Chan handcuffed to bed (1973) with Smith and Wesson handcuffs.

This story began with the agreement between AFSC and the South Vietnamese government when the AFSC project was begun in 1965. Influenced by the Quaker practice of visiting prisoners (based on the Society of Friends belief that all people have the Light Within), AFSC requested that the South Vietnamese government allow staff to visit prisoners and provide medicines and nutritional supplements for children held with their mothers. In 1970, Marge Nelson, a physician with the AFSC project, testified before the U.S. Congress that she witnessed physical signs that some of the prisoners had been tortured.

As the war intensified, the South Vietnamese police and military in Quang Ngai became increasingly paranoid about who among the population might be cooperating and supporting “the enemy,” the local Viet Cong. The South Vietnamese government, with funding and training from the United States, initiated a program of rounding up, incarcerating, and interrogating hundreds of local people as political prisoners. Since all men of draft age were required to carry papers identifying their status, it was mainly women and girls who were imprisoned and questioned. The U.S. government contracted with Honeywell Corporation to implement a program of “face recognition.” South Vietnamese families were required to be photographed and identified. In one of the photographs, a mother poses with her three children each holding South Vietnamese flags, all standing under a banner that reads “Determined to kick the communist gang out of South Viet Nam.”

Nearly a thousand individuals were imprisoned in barracks surrounded by concertina wire and guarded by South Vietnamese soldiers in watchtowers. These political prisoners weren’t hidden. The compound was right on the dirt main street of Quang Ngai, the capital city of a coastal province. The AFSC staff heard credible rumors

that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and South Vietnamese military trained by the CIA tortured people inside an interrogation room in the compound.

In 1972, as the South Vietnam government anticipated a visit to Quang Ngai by Senator Ted Kennedy’s staff from the Senate Committee on Refugees, certain political prisoners, particularly ones who had signs of torture, were moved from the large detention facility to a small building on the grounds of the Quang Ngai hospital. That way, if the American observers visited the facility holding the political prisoners, they would not find prisoners with signs of having been tortured.

As co-director of the AFSC program at that time, I discovered the “secret” ward on the hospital grounds and began to visit the 40 to 60 prisoners on that ward with a medically trained staffperson. The Vietnamese guard seemed totally indifferent to my visits.



He usually went off for a smoke, leaving me alone unguarded with the prisoners. Two prisoners shared a single bed and were handcuffed together and to the bed frame. Over a series of months, I took photos with a Nikon camera that I’d tucked into a canvas shoulder bag. The prisoners spoke freely; I asked questions and took



Left: Nguyen Hoang, Jane Griffith Barton, and Huong Bui earlier this year.

Below: Quang Ngai Detention and Interrogation Center.

Opposite page: 1973 antiwar posters featuring the prisoner photographs.

notes. The women touched my arm or leg in the familiar way that Vietnamese people touch each other. Most of the prisoners had been tortured. Prisoners had broken bones. A 67-year-old woman, who claimed the bag of rice she had in her basket was for her family, not local guerillas, was savagely beaten, resulting in a multi-fractured leg and paralysis. The women were often tortured with electricity attached to their nipples or genitals. And they suffered seizures as a consequence.

I was only able to slip a journalist into the prison ward one time. Jacques Leslie, former war correspondent for the *LA Times*, witnessed female political prisoners having convulsions and wrote in his memoir, *The Mark*:

Like a grenade lobbed into an ammo dump, the first seizure induced another one, and another. . . . I stared dumbfounded as everyone . . . in the room soon either

was in convulsions or was caring for someone who was. . . . I spoke with an 18-year-old; she had a gaze so deep I could see miles into her eyes. Her beatings were so fierce, she told me, "I didn't know pain anymore; I was already dead." Considering that Americans were widely known to condone and even participate in the torture sessions. . . . I was amazed at her candor.

When I returned to the United States in 1973, my former husband, David, and I were sponsored on an AFSC and Amnesty International speaking tour. As hard as it was to leave Vietnam knowing these political prisoners were still imprisoned, I was grateful to campaign and create awareness that the U.S. government was initiating and funding the random and illegal incarceration of Vietnamese people for their alleged political beliefs.

Three decades passed. I returned to Vietnam in 2006 and visited the Museum of Vietnamese Women in Hanoi. Noticing there were no photos of Vietnamese women who had been held as political prisoners, I donated some of my slides to the museum. Huong Bui, who received my photos, was deeply touched by the pictures. She was born after the war ended and was amazed to learn that women were tortured and held as political prisoners. Huong vowed that someday she would investigate and use the photographs to discover if any of the prisoners were still alive.

In 2009, with some clues from a former AFSC Vietnamese staff member, Huong Bui traveled from Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) to Quang Ngai province. Amazingly, she was able to locate a number of the former prisoners. In a modern photo, she stands with two of the political prisoners whose photos I took 50 years ago. I had photographed them behind the bars of the special ward for tortured political prisoners at the hospital. Huong published an article in a journal revealing her astounding findings. And this takes us back to the beginning of the story: how several former political prisoners identified themselves from 50-year-old photographs.



The matching of former political prisoners to my old photos continued. Traveling from Quang Ngai to Ho Chi Minh City in 2024, Pham Thi Xuan Vien, a former prisoner, contacted Huong. Vien told Huong:

When I received the photo from Mr. Hien, I was stunned, overjoyed, and burst into tears. It was really me, back in the Quang Ngai hospital. . . . Even though we were patients, the police were afraid we would escape, so they shackled our feet together. The person shackled with me was Ms. Nguyen Tran Thi Lan. Ironically, Lan never received a stipend from the government for being a former political prisoner. Lan had no record or verification. Once I had the photo of Lan's feet and my testimony of our being shackled together, Lan received back payment and new monthly allotments. Lan often laughed with me, "Imagine my good fortune, being chained to you in prison 50 years ago!"

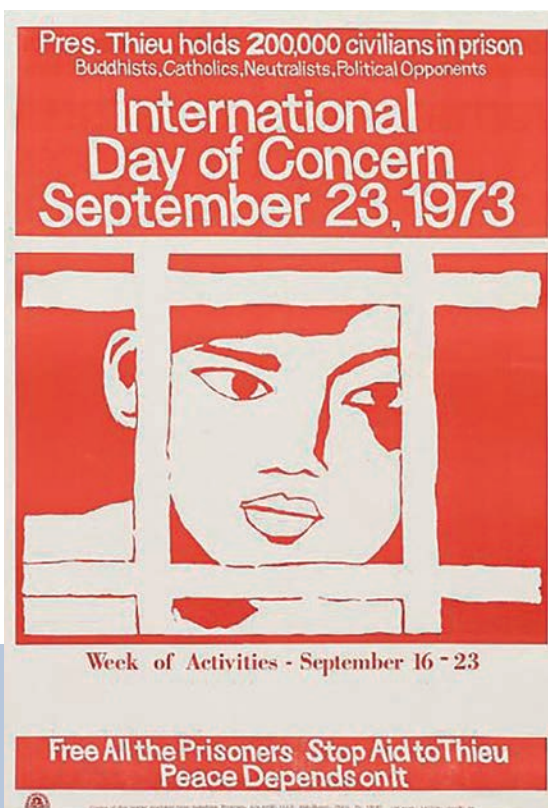
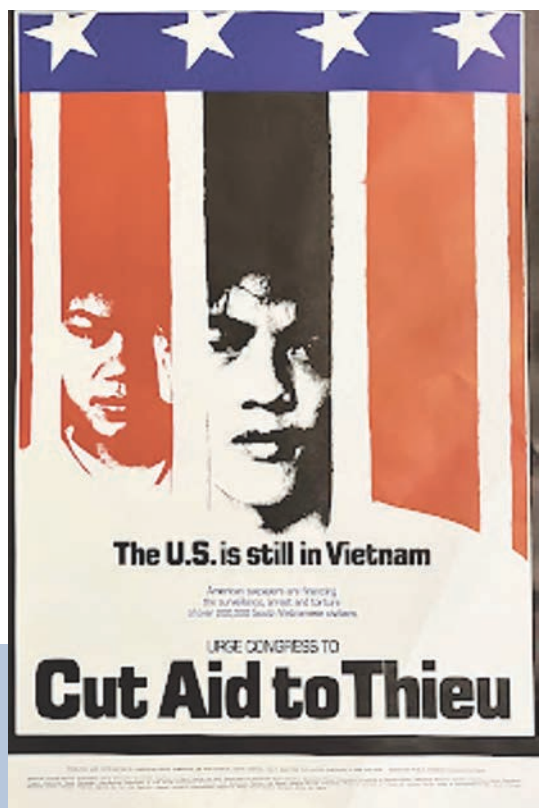
Although Huong had discovered some of the prisoners "alive and well," I didn't know of Huong Bui's detective work until she traveled to the United States 20 years later in 2026, when she was able to locate me. Huong requested that she come to visit me in my home because she had some startling news to share. I vaguely remembered her from my 2006 visit to the museum. Additionally, she and her husband wanted to interview

me for a documentary. I didn't know how to prepare for their visit, as I didn't know why Huong Bui wanted to meet me.

Huong arrived and immediately shared her story of finding some of the former prisoners. Time was short, and she wanted to interview me, but I was overwhelmed by her news and found it hard to concentrate. I felt happiness and a release of the burden I had carried for years: that I didn't know the fate of the prisoners I'd photographed. Yet difficult memories flooded me as I recognized that many prisoners that I had photographed were not alive.

I hope to visit Vietnam one last time, particularly to share with two of the former political prisoners—Hien and Bon—the story of how their faces were transported onto a poster that was widely used by a coalition of antiwar organizations. I'd like to tell them about the major effort on the part of many Americans, and eventually some members of the U.S. Congress, to stop funding the Vietnam War and to free political prisoners. On behalf of Amnesty International, I spoke to audiences in the United States, the Netherlands, and France, and I even testified in a German courtroom about political prisoners in South Vietnam. I wanted them to know about the hundreds of individuals who stood strong to advocate for their freedom and the thousands of other

political prisoners imprisoned. Their faces had inspired a major movement on behalf of their fellow prisoners in many places in the world. Hien and Bon had never traveled outside Quang Ngai province, but their faces had traveled the world. □





Disability, Faith, *and* Guatemala's Social Debt

A Quaker Perspective from Latin America

Belén Hernández

My life began with a decision that others made for me. I was born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus; doctors told my father that I would not survive more than three days and that it made no sense to “waste” resources on a child like me. The message was clear: my life was expendable. Before I learned to speak, I had already been classified as irrelevant.

This is not a story of overcoming. It is an uncomfortable acknowledgment of how society often decides—without saying it aloud—who deserves to live with dignity and who does not. I survived. And that fact exposes a truth that Friends have held for centuries: there is that of God in every person. My survival was not a medical error; it was an affirmation of an Inward Light that no diagnosis can

extinguish, even though in Guatemala and throughout much of Latin America, systems continue to insist on ignoring it.

Friends communities in Latin America live within diverse social realities that are shaped by unequal economies, fragile healthcare systems, and structures that continue to treat disability as a situation calling for charity rather than as a condition of people who have rights. Yet there is a common tension throughout the region: the distance between the testimonies we proclaim—equality, justice, and peace—and the way people with disabilities are actually included in economic, educational, communal, and spiritual life. My story began in Chiquimula, Guatemala, but it does not belong only to this country; it is an embodied reflection of a shared social debt.

The Quaker tradition stems from a premise that is both simple and radical: Every person carries a divine spark. This conviction does not distinguish

Belén Hernández is a Guatemalan person with a disability, an entrepreneur, and a writer. She is a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Guatemala and participates in a local Quaker meeting. Her work focuses on disability, faith, and social inclusion in Latin America.

This piece was translated from the Spanish by Renzo Mejía Carranza.

Friends communities in Latin America live within diverse social realities that treat disability as a situation calling for charity rather than as a condition of people who have rights. Yet there is a common tension throughout the region: the distance between the testimonies we proclaim—equality, justice, and peace—and the way people with disabilities are actually included.

between “functional” and “deficient” bodies, nor does it measure dignity by productivity. Yet, in Guatemalan society, as in many societies across the region, this truth continues to be denied. Disability is still treated as an exception, a burden, or a personal tragedy rather than being recognized as a legitimate part of human diversity.

In 2019, I founded B'Shine Chiquimula, a jewelry business born from the margins. For the Quaker tradition, the testimony of integrity calls us to ensure that our outward life reflects our inward truth. Becoming an entrepreneur as a person with a disability was not a romantic endeavor; it was a concrete way of claiming space. Existing as an economic agent is an assertion of justice and equality, which are fundamental principles of our faith and call us to see others not as objects of charity but as equals before the Creator.

That same year, I participated in Miss Wheelchair Guatemala. Beyond the event itself, I experienced the recognition of my own peers, who chose me as “Miss Friendship.” That gesture broke the narrative that the

person with a disability is a passive object. There I understood that leadership does not emerge from privilege or visibility but from community and mutual support, where one person's Light helps illuminate another's path.

The Light manifested itself in unexpected ways: just one day after the pageant, I was contacted by Casa Médica to record a Christmas commercial. The fact that a company dedicated to mobility products chose my voice for a message of hope reaffirmed that to become visible is also an act of integrity.

In 2020, Cooperativa Chiquimuljá es MICOPE included me in the campaign “I Am Proud to Be from Chiquimula.” My voice was heard as a citizen. For a Quaker, this was the testimony of equality in action: the elimination of hierarchies that dictate who is “normal”



and who is an “exception.” It should not be news when a person with a disability participates fully in community life, but in a country marked by exclusion it still is.

The discomfort increases when we look at the data. In Guatemala, 80 percent of people with disabilities are unemployed. In the department of Chiquimula, the census records 10,901 people with disabilities, but the picture for the department as a whole is even broader: 40,583 people are counted as having at least one

Opposite page: The author at Casa Médica, recording a Christmas commercial, 2019.

Right: The author was part of the 2020 campaign, “I’m Proud to Be from Chiquimula.”



The author in front of her jewelry business, B'Shine Chiquimula.

From my testimony as part of the Friends community in Latin America, I have seen how faith can be translated into concrete actions of social inclusion.

disability, representing 10.83 percent of the department's total population.

The municipalities with the largest numbers of people with disabilities are Chiquimula and Esquipulas, while San José la Arada has the highest proportional prevalence (15.98 percent), and Jocotán the lowest (7.80 percent). Of all people with at least one disability in the department, 21,677 are women (53.41 percent), and 18,906 are men (46.59 percent). These numbers show that social inclusion is not merely a matter of abstract policy: they represent concrete lives with faces and needs, and demand visibility and real action. My story embodies these numbers; I'm a body that insists on being present where the system would prefer silence.

In 2021, I joined GEU Guatemala, an interdenominational evangelical student movement present in different regions of the country. Students from public universities such as the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala and private institutions such as Universidad Mariano Gálvez come together there. In

this space, faith is discussed through dialogue. For Friends, the search for truth is always communal, and the principle of the priesthood of all believers finds an echo in these spaces, where spirituality encounters the social, academic, and human realities of Guatemala and the region.

In 2024, I faced two major surgeries that tested the spaces that claimed to support inclusion. It was then that I understood real inclusion is not measured in declarations but in concrete presence. Crisis clearly reveals who accompanies processes and who merely accompanies rhetoric.

At the beginning of 2025, as part of International Women's Day, I received recognition from Universidad Regional as an entrepreneur and leading woman. This academic honor came at a time of profound transformation. Shortly afterward, following the amputation of my legs, I put into practice one of the deepest practices of the Quaker tradition: discernment. Recognizing when a space ceases to sustain life and having the courage to leave is not abandonment; it is faithfulness to one's own Light. Choosing where to remain is also a form of justice.

From my testimony as part of the Friends community in Latin America, I have seen how faith can be translated into concrete actions of social inclusion, such as the collection of school supplies for children with disabilities and their families called "Chapines Útiles," carried out nationally in partnership with Fundación No Lucrativa Félix and Miss Wheelchair Guatemala.

It was not charity; it was recognition. Understanding that inclusion encompasses education, economics, healthcare, spirituality, and community life means recognizing that human dignity cannot be fragmented. Inclusion is not an abstract concept; it is either lived or denied every day. Inclusion shouldn't depend solely on goodwill.

This text is not written by me alone. It is written by the 1,599,999 people in Guatemala and by thousands more throughout Latin America who live with disabilities. And that one who completes the figure—that one who holds the number together—that one is me! □

Ending Outward Wars



The Quaker Influence on the United Nations

Sharlee DiMenichi

Since the 1600s, Friends have opposed fighting in wars, as well as other acts of physical violence. Refusing to participate in war is one side of Quaker pacifism; developing alternatives to address international conflict is another. In 1660, George Fox and other early Quakers wrote an early statement of the peace testimony, a declaration addressed to King Charles II of England. The declaration reads, in part:

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; and this is our testimony to

Sharlee DiMenichi is a staff writer for Friends Journal. She is a member of Lehigh Valley Meeting in Bethlehem, Pa. Contact: sharlee@friendsjournal.org.

the whole world. . . . That spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil and again to move unto it; and we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ, which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world.

By writing this statement, Quakers sought to differentiate themselves from Fifth Monarchy Men, a group of Puritans that Charles II prohibited—along with Quakers and Baptists—from gathering after a violent 1661 uprising in which approximately 40 people died. The Fifth Monarchy Men believed they were ushering in a thousand-year reign of Christ on earth that some believe the Bible foretells.

William Penn and John Bellers were wrestling with

Photo by Anne Czichos



how to implement the peace testimony, according to Jordan Landes, curator of Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College. William Penn was an English Quaker advocate of religious freedom who established Pennsylvania. John Bellers was a prominent Quaker merchant from London who wrote pamphlets opposing the death penalty and supporting the establishment of a public health service.

“They were looking at a Europe that had been through so many wars,” Landes said.

Penn proposed an international peacemaking entity with rotating leadership, secret voting, and an international common language, Landes explained. Bellers wrote that war wastes people, squanders resources, causes unemployment, and contributes to poor health.

Pacifism spread throughout early Friends meetings. In the 1700s, London Yearly Meeting urged Quaker merchants to refrain from putting guns on their ships or transporting cargo for the

navy, Landes explained.

Contemporary Quakers built upon the history of antiwar sentiment and promotion of internationalism. Quaker youth established the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU) during World War I, according to the Quakers in the World website. In World War II, Quakers and other pacifists staffed the FAU, caring for ill civilians and bombing victims, as well as testing water to prevent the spread of disease.

Japanese Quaker Inazo Nitobe (who died in 1933) was an under-secretary general of the League of Nations, according to Stephen Angell, a professor of Quaker studies at Earlham School of Religion. The League of Nations was an international organization intended to promote peaceful resolution of conflicts between countries. It began after the Treaty of Versailles ended World War I and existed from 1920 to 1946. Some historians argue that fascist aggression, as well as British and French efforts to appease Hitler, undercut the power of the League of Nations and led to its demise.

After World War I, Quakers opened centers in several European cities that helped Jewish people emigrate, according to Angell. The outbreak of World War II led to the closing of the centers around 1940.

During both World War I and World War II, many Quaker young men were conscientious objectors; others fought in the wars. Some soldiers who went to battle in the world wars became Quakers after they had recognized the futility of war, according to Angell.

Angell previously worked for Friends Committee on National Legislation with an executive director who had fought in World War II and had become a pacifist



Above: Inazo Nitobe, under-secretary of the League of Nations, December 21, 1922.

Right: Friends Ambulance Unit ambulance driver with his vehicle in Wolfsburg, Germany, 1945.

Opposite page: Sarah Clarke, director of QUNO New York.

Quaker as a result of his military experience.

Historic events that led to Quakers' interest in establishing the United Nations include the forming of the American Friends Service Committee by conscientious objectors to assist civilian victims of World War I and Friends' involvement in the Kindertransport in the United Kingdom in the months prior to the start of World War II, according to Andrew Tomlinson, former Quaker United Nations representative and former director of Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in New York.

Friends responded to the humanitarian crises caused by the two world wars by advocating for an intergovernmental entity to mediate disputes. "They appreciated more and more the urgency of having an effective international body," said Angell.

In March 1945, approximately two months before the conference in San Francisco, California, where the United Nations was established, British Quakers' Meeting for Sufferings drafted a statement of support for the new international body. In the UN Charter, the Economic and Social Council established links with national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), according to the 1993 Swarthmore Lecture "Peace Is a Process" by Sydney D. Bailey.

British Quaker Bertram Pickard was extensively involved in the Quaker Centre in Geneva—which later became the office for QUNO—before leaving in 1940, according to a 2001 article in the journal *Quaker Studies* titled "Quakers, Peace, and the League of Nations" by Maureen Waugh, professor of politics and international studies at the University of Birmingham, England.

"He also took an active part in the post-War planning for a new United Nations organization and in 1945 joined its Secretariat," Waugh wrote of Pickard. The Secretariat participates in the daily labor of the UN under the leadership of the secretary general, according to the United Nations website. Pickard returned to Geneva and served as a UN liaison officer with NGOs, Waugh states in the article.

Despite widespread Quaker support for the United Nations, some Friends have difficulty reconciling the peace testimony with the UN's use of armed peacekeeping forces.

"That hasn't always been easy because UN peacekeeping forces have to carry their arms," Angell said. The UN's peacekeepers serve as role models for others in their use of force only as a last resort, according to Angell.

QUNO was among the first set of NGOs to be

accredited by the United Nations in New York, Tomlinson explained.

QUNO has two offices: one in New York and one in Geneva, Switzerland. The organization seeks to influence international policies by engaging with diplomats and others involved in UN negotiations at informal gatherings for off-the-record conversations. QUNO staffers refer to the method as "quiet diplomacy."

"This issue of working methods is really essential to what the QUNOs have to offer," Tomlinson said.

QUNO discerns its priorities based on Quaker principles; it does not take sides, but it is also not indifferent, according to David Atwood, former representative for disarmament and peace, and former director of the QUNO office in Geneva.

QUNO does not do "naming and shaming" or traditional lobbying, according to Atwood. QUNO staffers provide negotiators with publications and



information related to QUNO priorities. Quiet diplomacy helps facilitate listening among diplomats, UN agencies, and civil society organizations.

There are not many peacebuilding experts who participate in high-level UN negotiations, so QUNO has a particular role to play in informing negotiators on establishing and implementing peace, according to Tomlinson. Diplomats can make choices on some issues but not on others; QUNO staffers consider where movement is possible.

It is helpful for diplomats to meet in a room where they can put aside their official instructions and relate to one another as people, according to Sarah Clarke, director and UN representative at QUNO New York, which holds

Continues on page 52

Photo by Jody Robinson



Some Solace

penning new poems
as old age approaches.

Like birds,
over sixty years
have flown.

In the end,
their nests are all we have—
our days like raveling string,
scraps of yesterday's news
woven around empty space,
silent center of launch and land.

Loss—
it's the same cordate leaf
falling in all our yards,
tears we rake up
after burying the cat,
felling the tree.

What I'm after?

Fewer words, gratitude.
Trails leading to where life
still needs me to go.
The contentment that comes
sitting alone, a book in my lap
as evening light wanes,
remembering people
and places.

Daniel Skach-Mills
Portland, Ore.

**Apply
now!**

**A Quaker job is
waiting for you at
fgcquaker.org!**

Familiarity with the Quaker Faith, Anti-Racism, Project Management, Technology Skills, Self-Management, and Writing are the core competencies of Friends General Conference employees. Could you see yourself working within your faith community?



FGC
FRIENDS
GENERAL CONFERENCE

Books. Experiences. Community.



Scan to learn more.



Budgets as a Tool for Liberation

DIANA YAÑEZ

The first time I built a budget was with the guidance of Pauline, a good friend from the Unitarian Church I was attending at the time. I had shared with Pauline that although I was able to pay off my credit card in full, I had only \$32 remaining in my checking account with two whole weeks until my next paycheck. Money was tight every month for my boyfriend and me.

Pauline, who was 50 years older, gave me paper budgets and helped me categorize my spending. She taught me that gaining awareness of the flow of your household's money is a crucial first step to having more peace with this area of life. Without judgement, she reviewed my transactions and pointed out areas for improvement, such as tweaking my student loan payments to get out of debt faster.

I felt so shocked by my financial situation. I had always been prudent with money and had grown up being teased for being “coda” (Mexican slang for cheap). My mom taught me to bargain hunt, and my dad taught me to be wary of debt. So why was I in this situation after completing a bachelor's with honors and earning a master's? Why was I so broke?

Some of the reasons were out of my control, like the fact that I graduated into a still recovering economy in 2010. Other reasons were strictly within my control, like how I used the money I did have and whether I could take advantage of every opportunity open to me.

It was during this “come-to-Jesus” moment of having only \$32 for two



weeks that I received a zero-percent balance transfer offer from a credit card company. I took the offer, built a budget around paying off the debt in 18 months, and felt an immediate sense of relief. From then on, my boyfriend and I went on strict austerity measures. We used a cash-envelope system for discretionary spending, and I met with Pauline every few months to share our slow but diligent progress.

Over time, our budget changed, and I settled on the budget that I still use today: the balanced money formula from *All Your Worth* by Elizabeth Warren and Amelia Warren Tyagi. The formula is simply 50 percent for must-haves like food and housing; 20 percent for the future, like retirement, paying off debt, charitable giving, and savings; and the remaining 30 percent for fun, like eating out and gifts. I consider charitable giving to be contributions toward the future since it is building the future I want to see.

This budget helped me make decisions about potential job changes, and it was while on this budget that I first began to imagine life on my own. I had begun to recognize the relationship I was in was unhealthy and codependent; understanding my budget helped me see I could live on just my income. With this budget, I later orchestrated a career change, a cross-country move, and becoming an entrepreneur.

I am now in such a different place. I carry no debt. I have a luxuriously full emergency fund of six months, a savings account for self-employment taxes, and a savings plan aimed at buying a home within five years.

One of the sweetest moments in my life was meeting with Pauline four years after the start of my budgeting journey. I showed her my color-coded budget, how I had adjusted it to my lower income as a single person, my multiple automated savings accounts

for travel and holiday gifts, and my debt pay-off plan for my student loans. I told her that I tracked my groceries manually by writing the running monthly total on each grocery receipt. I told her that I still used cash to give myself a weekly “fun allowance.” After all of this Pauline looked at me with genuine joy and said, “I’m so proud of you.” My heart still fills up with gratitude remembering this moment.

Pauline lived a generous and well-thought-out life. In her 80s she shared with me that she was now going for first-class flights because her body no longer tolerated the cramped spaces in economy seating. After her husband's unexpected death, she remodeled her bathroom and garden in a sudden and deep realization that her time was finite and that she wanted to love where she lived. Pauline was committed to tithing and loved sharing how her own entrepreneurial journey helped her secure her financial life as a child of immigrants.

Pauline passed in 2019, and a year later I began money coaching to share what she taught me: that a budget is an essential tool for liberation—a place where we can put our values into action, where we can let our life speak. Having a budget helped me take risks, and it helped me set priorities. Having a budget keeps me in touch with my community through my commitment to redistribution. Having a budget both gives me guidance and shines a light toward where I’m headed.

Coming up next month: Season six of *Quakers Today* is ending soon! The final episode in our Quakers and Money series will air on October 13. In next month's column, I'll be reflecting back on some of the topics my cohort Peterson and I have discussed the past six months.

Diana Yañez is a certified financial planner; convinced Quaker; and cohort,

Diana Gisel Yañez is an Investment Advisor Representative of Natural Investments PBLLC. Natural Investments is an independent Registered Investment Advisor. Quakers Today and Friends Journal are not a registered entity and are not an affiliate or subsidiary of Natural Investments. Find the Disclosures and Disclaimers and Form CRS for Natural Investments at naturalinvestments.com/disclosures-disclaimers.

along with Peterson Toscano, of Season 6 of the Quakers Today podcast, in which they explore money not just as personal math but as a spiritual practice and communal responsibility. The limited-run Quakers and Money column shares essays by Diana and Peterson on themes related to the series.

Resources and Recommendations



For more on being intentional with your finances, check out the January 2025 issue of *Friends Journal* on How Meetings Use Money (available

at Friendsjournal.org/issue-archive), especially the article “Aligning Finances and Faith” in which Arlene Kelly and Pamela Haines share their monthly meeting’s journey toward responsible stewardship of its significant endowment. Diana also recommends the book *All Your Worth: The Ultimate Lifetime Money Plan* by mother-daughter duo Elizabeth Warren and Amelia Warren Tyagi.

Do you have a question about Quaker values and money? Or a resource to recommend from your own financial journey? Let us know and you might get featured on the show! Leave a voicemail by calling 317-QUAKERS (317-782-5377) or send an email to podcast@friendsjournal.org.

Quakers Today is a production of Friends Publishing Corporation. Listen at QuakersToday.org or your favorite podcast app, and watch extended video interviews on our YouTube channel at Youtube.com/friendsjournal.

Quakers Today Season 6 sponsors

Friends Fiduciary: Ethical investing through a Quaker lens.

American Friends Service Committee: Challenging injustice and building peace.

Uncommon Faculty-Staff-Student Relationships

Brilliant, creative, and passionate – faculty and staff choose to work at Guilford because small classes mean real connections.

UNIQUELY
Guilford
COLLEGE
GREENSBORO, NC
www.guilford.edu/uniquely



Extraordinary people. Everyday moments.

Seventy years later and she’s still playing. Ask what she values most at Foxdale: Neighbors who become friends and a shared sense of belonging.

What makes a community special isn’t what it has. It’s who it’s made of.

Welcome to Foxdale Village.



**Foxdale
Village**

*A Life Plan
Community Guided
by Quaker Values*

500 East Marylyn Ave. | State College, PA 16801 | foxdalevillage.org



"I Was in Prison, and You Visited Me"

Friends' Encounters with Detained Immigrants

JOSIH HOSTETLER AND
STAN JONES

Our Quaker faith has a long tradition of prison visitation. Early Friends were jailed unjustly for speaking the Truth of Jesus to anyone who would listen: that God is always with you and, in fact, there is that of God in every person. That is why visitation has been so important to Friends throughout history: when we meet with those who are in prison, we meet Christ there.

Over the past two years, Friends from Fairfield Meeting in Camby, Ind., have been involved with the work of Indiana Assistance to Immigrants in Detention (Indiana AID). Indiana AID is a volunteer group that supports individuals detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Indiana by bearing witness to their experiences through visits, offering information, and providing resources to them and their families. As ICE has increased their efforts across the country in detaining both documented and undocumented immigrants, many people have been wondering how they can best counter this tide of unjust detention. Being involved with detention visitations is one way that we have been called.

Indiana AID allows for in-person visits and online access to speak with those detained in the ICE detention facilities at Clay County Jail in Brazil, Ind., and Miami State Correctional in Bunker Hill, Ind. Volunteers go in and explain that they are not lawyers or connected with the detention facilities but are there as volunteers to provide Bible reading, prayer, and assistance with basic needs where they can. Volunteers also take down the names and identifying information of those who wish to speak with volunteers later online as well as get information to family, friends, or lawyers on the outside. They find out if there are books they would like to read and if

they need assistance with commissary or communication funds. The detention facilities allow Indiana AID to come in because of the religious nature of the assistance: a short Bible study and/or prayer time are offered for anyone who would like to participate; it is a time for them to draw close to God, no matter what their background is.

From Josih: I have been doing visitation since last year. I feel drawn to this work after my past experiences living in California during the 2010s, when communities there faced severe physical, economic, and social destruction—several catastrophic wildfires alongside an escalating affordable housing and homelessness crisis—spanning multiple state and federal administrations that failed to protect us. After the 2024 election I had to do something because I knew it was coming to Indiana. I was so thankful to find IN AID. I have truly seen the Spirit of God residing within all of us, those visiting and those detained, during my in-person visitations and weekly video visits. Driving someone in my car to be reunited with their family after they have been released after months of unjust detention has been the closest I have felt to God in my life. All of those conversations are sacred and communal. I have continued to visit with some immigrants who have been transferred to other facilities in the United States or deported to their “country of origin.”

From Stan: I have partners that I am able to communicate with in a voice call weekly, and email with as well. I also have been involved

in transporting someone who has been released to return home. I have only had the opportunity to do that once so far, but hope to do it more in the future. When detainees are arrested it's usually for simple infractions that would normally not call for arrest and detainment. I even know one person who was arrested where ICE did not verify his identity. He is in the detention center, and his bracelet has a name that is not his, and even shows him from a country that he has never been in. I just find that shocking—that he was not permitted to provide his ID that he had available that would have proved he was not the person they thought they had arrested. It is a difficult situation, and these people are desperate to return home to their families.

We must disabuse ourselves of the current narrative that immigrants are detained for a specific purpose. That is not true. We have a set of laws and a justice system in the United States that deal with the prosecution and correction of criminal and civil acts. Most of the immigrants in detention have not broken any criminal laws. Immigrant detention operates outside of the justice system and is prosecuted solely within the administrative legal framework. We are told that people who are detained do not have the “correct” documentation or did not follow the “correct” administrative



Artwork courtesy of Indiana AID, used with permission

Artwork by S*, made while in detention in Indiana. The top half represents the beauty and peace of his long sought-after freedom. The bottom half represents where he finds himself: stuck, mired in this detention system, with hazards and barriers in his way, yearning for the freedom that feels just out of reach.

process for entering the country. But it's nearly impossible to follow a "correct" path when the requirements and processes are frequently changed by the administration.

Conditions in detention facilities vary, but several patterns are common. Medical neglect is widespread; severe pain is often dismissed and treated only with basic over-the-counter medication, and those who are seriously ill may be placed in solitary confinement. Temperatures inside facilities are frequently extreme: either kept uncomfortably cold even in winter or, in some Southern facilities, left without air conditioning. Dietary needs based on allergies or religious

practice are often ignored, and food quality can be very poor or even rotten, forcing detainees to rely on commissary purchases. Many facilities offer no recreational opportunities, and some—like Clay County Jail—do not allow detainees to go outdoors at all. Access to television, books, and games may be removed from entire housing blocks for extended periods over minor misunderstandings, such as missing a meeting time or not responding to an officer speaking English when the detainee does not understand the language.

Detainees are frequently transferred from one block to another or moved across the country, making it difficult for lawyers and families to maintain contact. ICE pays detention facilities each time a detainee is transferred, creating a financial incentive for constant movement.

In February, Pendle Hill study center released a statement titled "Our Call to End and Reform Unjust Immigration Enforcement Practices and Laws."

Fairfield Meeting signed onto the statement and passed its own with the following query: Therefore, Friends, what does God require of us in response to rapidly deteriorating conditions and to serve immigrants with dignity?

Being involved with detention visitations is just one way Friends can respond. We encourage Friends to partner with local groups involved in immigration work or connect with national efforts, such as the North Star Network, a Quaker organization; Catholic Charities Immigration Services; and National Immigrant Justice Center. Wherever Friends are involved in this effort, it is truly a place in which we find the in-dwelling Spirit of Christ in our midst.

Josih Hostetler and Stan Jones are members of Fairfield Meeting in Camby, Ind. Josih is currently a student at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Ind. Contact Josih: josihthostetler@gmail.com. Contact Stan: stanandskip@gmail.com.



SENIOR LIVING
WORTHY OF LEGENDS

KENDAL
 on Hudson

1010 Kendal Way | Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591
 866-907-8181 | www.kohud.kendal.org

Grab the reins of your retirement at Sleepy Hollow's premier Life Plan Community, where you'll thrive physically, socially, and emotionally entirely on your terms.

Kendal on Hudson residents seize the freedom, opportunities, and care required to follow their passions alongside like-minded friends, feed their minds and spirits through lifelong learning and local culture, and even go horseback riding* in Rockwood Hall State Park!

**Not recommended after dark ... because, you know*

Older adults who choose Kendal definitely have a good head on their shoulders.

**Welcoming Community
 Respect for All Individuals
 Environmental Stewardship**

A Life Plan Community



Peace at the End

Relearning My Role as a Hospital Chaplain

CARL MAGRUDER

The little palliative care team at San Francisco General Hospital meets in an afterthought of a medical office: windowless and about the size of a walk-in closet on the sixth floor of the “new” hospital that was built 11 years ago. (A hospital was first built on this site in 1862, and then rebuilt in brick after the 1906 earthquake.) Nobody serves in palliative care by accident; we have all chosen this work. On a typical Wednesday, we are Diane, social worker; Lauren, a nurse; Freddie, the staff chaplain; Hedieh, our doctor; and me, the former palliative care chaplain who is now shadowing that position as I rebuild my memory of this work following a STBI (severe traumatic brain injury) caused by a bad motorcycle wreck two and half years ago.

We are gathered to go over our list of around eight palliative care patients. Time after time, to people for whom the word “palliative” carries no weight or meaning, my competent and caring colleagues describe palliative care obscurely as “an extra layer of support.” The word *palliative* comes from the Latin *pallium*, meaning “cloak.” We are here medically to *cloak* the pain, nausea, and physical suffering of those at the end of life. We are really there, however, to *uncloak* a conversation about death and dying.

The team spends most of its time and energy on medical minutia, but the truth is that if patients have made their way through the maze of haphazard medical referrals to our list of care recipients, they are most likely no longer very medically complex—they are dying.

At a bedside in the ICU, we meet our first patient of the day, and I begin to sink down as I have done in worship since I was a kid. I have to sink down under the storm. There

will be a maelstrom of words, some of which will have meaning that I should attend to. Most of them are medical, pharmacological, or relating to options for care.

Americans like to think that we have the best healthcare system on earth. It is certainly better than most, though that’s still a distressingly low bar in 2026. When it comes to palliative care, however, the real star of the show at a public hospital like San Francisco General isn’t medical care—it’s the social worker. Our social worker, Diane, is a competent, fashionable, graciously polite woman who speaks English, Mandarin, and Cantonese. When I watch her work, however, I imagine a little guy with a pencil-thin mustache, slicked back hair, shiny shoes, and a fancy pin-striped suit. Social worker Diane is what the mafia would call a “fixer.”

If you are sick unto death in the public hospital, there is a good chance that you need some serious medications, a hospital bed, a first-floor or elevator-served one-room apartment to live in, bedside care, etc. Diane leans into the patient—smooths the imagined mustache with dextrous fingers—and starts: “Well, shucks, I gotta tell ya, buddy; this one’s a doozy! Lucky for you, I know a guy who knows a guy, so I’ll make some calls, and I think I can get ya all set up. . . .”

As I sink down in the spiritual water that fills the room, I can see the light bouncing on the ripples and waves up at the surface. I settle on the sandy bottom, and breathe deeply. I’m listening. In the midst of medical options and placement possibilities, a little cat pads up next to my imagination on the sand. She rubs her head against my arm, and I scratch her under her chin. It is the third time that the care and lodging plan has been pushed off-course by the dying man’s



Photos courtesy of the author

The author.

Opposite page: The author’s 2026 ID badge for San Francisco General Hospital.

mention of “my cat.”

I test it. Am I supposed to bring it up? It’s hard to know, because it would be a bit out of place, and my old, practiced methods of discernment aren’t reliable post-TBI. I test it again. The cat makes a little purring sound and rubs against my knee. I take a deep breath, and kick up to the surface to lob Diane a soft pitch.

“What I’m hearing is that Clarence really wants to be with his cat, and to know that his cat will be okay,” I say with a smile at the man in the hospital bed. “Diane, I know that there are often companion dogs in the hospital, but what about a cat?”

There is a stillness in the space. I worry that I’m out of bounds—again. And then there are looks and nods. Diane hooks her thumbs behind her wide lapels. “I can’t promise ya anyt’ing, but I’ll see what I c’n do. . . .”

Two days later, my TBI brain has forgotten all about this episode. Chaplain Keisuke phones me as I’m riding the commuter train. He doesn’t call me socially, so I pick up, despite the noise. I agree to call back when I’ve disembarked and can hear. Keisuke, a Japanese American Buddhist chaplain, is at bedside with Clarence, and I’m on



video phone (in my grubby T-shirt and day-off overalls). There is a request for prayer with Chaplain Carl. Would I oblige? The camera pans from Keisuke's face to Clarence's exhausted one. But wait a minute—what was that black blob on the bed?

It's Clarence's cat, Smoke.

'bout that?"

Of course, he's offered his prayer already, but I'm honored to join in.

Spirit of Love and Light, God, we are grateful to be together today, Clarence, Smoke, Chaplains Keisuke and Carl. We remember

Undisturbed by the sounds and smells of the hospital, Smoke is just glad to be with his person, curled nose to tail, and apparently asleep. Clarence strokes the cat with a serene smile on his face.

"It's good to see you, Clarence," I say to the phone, "and an honor to meet Smoke. What should we pray about this afternoon?"

"I'm just so grateful," Clarence says. "God is good. I'm not afraid no more. Can we pray

that the word "heal" is related to the word "whole," and even as Clarence approaches his time, he is unafraid and made whole by your divine love and the love of his cat, Smoke. We trust in you, and we thank you for your love and grace. We ask that Clarence have an easy journey, knowing that his friend Tatum will look after his cat. Peace, peace, peace is our prayer. Amen.

Clarence went the next day, so that his housing puzzle never needed to be solved, though fixer Diane had it all in hand. Praise be.

Carl Magruder is a cradle Quaker who carries a deep concern for Earth. In his 30s, he went to seminary. In an internship, Carl discovered end-of-life spiritual care, became a board certified chaplain, and is now returning to that work after traumatic brain injury. He serves on the board of Friends Publishing Corporation, publisher of Friends Journal.

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Photo by Stephen Donahoe/FCNL

Your Vote Matters

Our democracy is stronger when we all vote.

Cast your ballot by November 3 to build the world we seek, with peace, justice, and equity for all.

FCNL.ORG/VOTE

Sandy Spring Friends School Saved from Closure: Students Excel After Alumni Fundraising Effort Secures Reopening

SHARLEE DIMENICHI



Counting financial problems, the Board of Trustees of Sandy Spring Friends School announced on April 14, 2025, that the school would close at the end of the 2024-2025 academic year, according to a written account provided by Margaret Rosser, director of marketing and communications for the school. Heather Jackson-Peña and Nick Shank, alumni of the 65-year-old Quaker school initiated a networking and fundraising campaign to save their alma mater. The school is about 18 miles from Washington, D.C., and 30 miles outside of Baltimore, Md.

An alum pledged \$5 million; 80 percent of donations were from individuals connected to the school contributing less than \$1,000 per person, according to the written account. Some pledges were part of donors' estate planning. The Ruppert Foundation also agreed to back the pledges in full. The Ruppert Foundation is a family philanthropy in the D.C. area that supports educational initiatives, according to the foundation's website.

The school's board of trustees announced that the school had to close because they wanted to avoid a situation in which they could not make

payroll and seniors would not graduate, according to Tom Gibian, retired head of school and current clerk of the board of trustees for the school. The decision was the least bad of all the undesirable options available, Gibian explained.

News of the school's closure shocked Jackson-Peña and Shank, both graduates in the class of 2000. Grief for the potential loss of their alma mater motivated them to advocate for saving the school, they explained in a recent interview.

"You'd regret for the rest of your life not trying, or at least I would," said Jackson-Peña.

Jackson-Peña posted about the closing in an alumni Facebook group and received an overwhelming number of direct messages from members wanting to help save the school. She was on a biking and camping trip with her family and stopped at an overlook to create a Google form to organize supporters. The previous year the area had no cell phone service but a cell tower had recently been installed, which she considered an example of way opening because it enabled her to promptly learn of the closing and organize a response.

Shank came to Sandy Spring Friends School after having attended a Catholic

school. He credits the Quaker education with forming him and has returned to the school annually since graduation.

"I really found myself there," Shank said.

Alumni and others organized and donated to save the school because they believe strongly in the importance of a Friends school's education, culture, and outcomes, Gibian explained. Gibian considered the widespread support an affirmation of community and spirituality.

"There are thousands of people who feel the same way I do. It felt like, 'Oh, the Spirit is real,'" Gibian said.

An audit, which had not happened in the previous two years, revealed inadequate financial reserves as well as "translucence"—a lack of transparency—in bookkeeping, according to Gibian. Audits of a school's finances should happen annually.

Some donors offered seven-figure contributions that they had intended to be part of their estates, according to Gibian. They needed assurance that the school would pull out of its financial straits.

The board was reformulated to include ten trustees, rather than its previous 23 members, Gibian explained.

The school's fiscal woes were widespread. In addition to accounting problems, the HVAC systems in three buildings required costly repairs, according to Gibian.

Members of the development staff lost touch with donors during the COVID-19 pandemic; alumni giving declined by half, according to Savannah Renehan, director of institutional advancement at the school.

Thirty percent of parents of students at the school are government employees, many of whom lost their jobs,



Photos by Margaret Rosser

Renehan explained.

The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), an entity President Donald Trump created by executive order after taking office in January 2025, cut approximately 271,000 federal jobs during the first ten months of that year, according to the Cato

in Quiz Bowl, students learn to collaborate, practice selflessness, nurture togetherness, and act as ambassadors for their schools, according to Polon. They learn to win humbly and lose gracefully. The team practices Quaker values by not vilifying the teams they are competing against. Quiz Bowl



Left: SSFS boys basketball team at the all-school Winter Pep Rally, January 2026.

Opposite page: SSFS Quiz Bowl Team 2025-2026 with coach Eduardo Polon on the right (top). Presentation of the MABL trophy to the Quiz Bowl Team champions at a school gathering (bottom).

Institute, a Libertarian think tank.

Stock market volatility, due to Trump-administration tariffs also impacted the finances of students' households, according to the written account.

The school's boarding program had fewer than 30 students and was operating at a loss as federal immigration policies led to visa problems for international students, according to the written account provided by Rosser.

When the school announced that it would reopen for the 2025-2026 academic year, approximately 368 students were enrolled, Renehan noted.

Student achievements in the 2025-2026 school year highlight the school's resurgence, faculty members observed.

The Quiz Bowl team won the championship in the Montgomery Academic Beltway League (MABL), Quiz Bowl coach Eduardo Polon noted. "We are by far the smallest school in the MABL," Polon said. Polon is also the global languages department chair, Spanish teacher, and senior passion projects coordinator.

In addition to the excitement of being champions, regular involvement in Quiz Bowl develops students' character. Through participating

team members practice courage when competing with other teams.

"It hurts to lose and it's wonderful to win," Polon said.

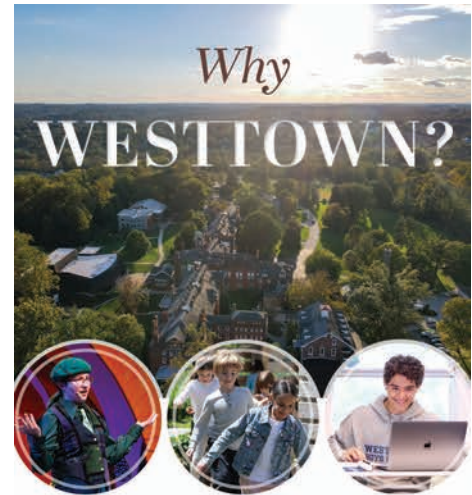
Student athletes also captured championship titles in the 2025-2026 school year, according to athletic director Sal Benitez. The girls middle school volleyball team, the boys varsity basketball team, and the boys varsity soccer team won championships this year.

When the school closure was announced, students and staff experienced a lot of anxiety about students losing the experience of participating on sports teams, according to Benitez.

Student achievements reflect the school's resilience.

"What was accomplished became symbolic. It felt like a metaphor for the school itself," Polon said.

Sharlee DiMenichi is a staff writer for Friends Journal. The Spotlight column highlights notable small-scale works or ministry being carried out by individual Friends and meetings. Learn more and submit ideas at Friendsjournal.org/spotlight.



Because at Westtown, students are deeply known, challenged, and encouraged to discover what matters to them. We are steadfast in our commitment to developing intelligent, reflective, extraordinarily prepared, and deeply ethical human beings with an expansive and inclusive worldview.

Come visit and experience a community where students explore their passions, develop their purpose, and grow into the fullest version of themselves.

OPEN HOUSES

LOWER SCHOOL

Pre-K–Grade 5

October 21, 2026

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grades 6–8

October 22, 2026

UPPER SCHOOL

Grades 9–12

October 24, 2026



WESTTOWN SCHOOL

A Quaker Pre-K-12 Day School with Boarding Options in Grades 9-12

Scan the QR code to register for an Open House or request a private tour.



The Gospel in the Anthropocene: Letters from a Quaker Naturalist

By Brian Drayton, illustrations by Darcy Drayton. Inner Light Books, 2026. 368 pages. \$32/paperback.

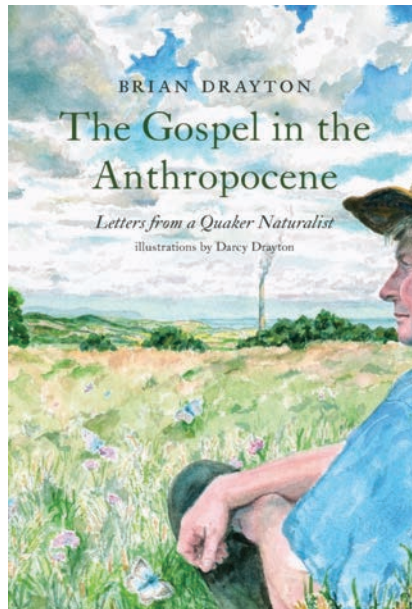
Reviewed by Patricia Barber

How then shall we live as people of faith in this era of accelerating ecological, social, and political crises? This is the urgent question that author Brian Drayton seeks to answer in *The Gospel in the Anthropocene*, a beautifully written, profoundly thoughtful, and prophetic book.

A recorded minister in New England Yearly Meeting and a plant ecologist and environmental educator of more than 40 years, Drayton invites us into wholeness through what he calls “the three great modes of revelation: nature, Spirit, and Scripture,” to enable us to meet the daunting challenges of the Anthropocene, defined as an epoch when human activity has become the dominant influence on our planet’s environment. He writes, “I am concerned to understand how recognizing our calling and taking action are inseparable today from becoming a more faithful follower and companion of Christ, who is alive and teaching among us.”

It will take, he asserts, nothing less than a Spirit-led journey towards *metanoia*, a transformative change of heart enabling us to live and serve in the world in an entirely new way. While Drayton is a Christ-centered Friend deeply inspired by the Bible, he recognizes that for each person this journey “must grow authentically out of your situation, your worship, your love, your learning, and according to your measure of preparation and of faithfulness.”

The book unfolds in a series of 38 deeply personal letters, each addressed to “Dear friend.” They follow an arc from foundational principles through modes of spiritual formation and end



with praxis and proclamation for a time of climate crisis. Each letter concludes with a reflection consisting of queries that can be used for individual discernment, journaling, or group discussion.

No less important, between each letter is a short nature meditation drawn from Drayton’s own experience. In reading these, I felt as if I were being invited onto holy ground where contemplative prayer meets wordless encounter with the natural world. Nature, Drayton asserts, reveals God’s truth in ways that words alone cannot. It is by meditating on the natural world that we learn reverence for all of God’s creation and remove ourselves from the center of importance.

Drayton acknowledges that some readers might be put off by the word “gospel” in the book’s title. He invites them to see beyond what they think the word means. The gospel, he writes, “is not a thing but a living process, a workshop, a place.”

[It is] God working within us for our liberation so that we are more and more available to that Spirit whose effects are joy, courage, peace, truth, and the heart and works of compassion. It is the

continuing work of creation and, therefore, before and beyond any expression in words.

The gospel life, he says, helps us to “understand that our own wholeness is not separate from the wholeness of the world.”

Like the prophets of old, Drayton does not flinch from the consequences of humanity’s failure to faithfully steward the creation. The path out of despair, he asserts, is to undertake the journey into wholeness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is within this soul work that we can rediscover and remain rooted in joy. This is not a superficial emotion or a groping for a panacea but a fundamental assurance that there is a path forward, that we will be sustained through suffering, and that we will be shown right action as we live as participants in God’s love for all of creation.

I first read this book cover to cover over a couple of days, but even as I pressed on to the end, I was aware that I was sailing over very deep water. Through Drayton’s words, I could feel Spirit calling me to a deeper engagement with nature, and I was aware of a growing recognition of way opening: a path away from hopelessness and desolation toward compassion, resilience, freedom from fear, a willingness to serve, and a profound delight and reverence for the world of which I am a part.

I am now deep into my second reading of this remarkable book. This time it will take me months to complete as I pause to pay closer attention to the miraculous creation of which I am a part and absorb the new Light slowly being revealed to me. I am grateful to Friend Drayton for opening the way.

Patricia Barber is a member of Goose Creek Meeting in Lincoln, Va., and is a trustee of Friends Publishing Corporation, publisher of Friends Journal.



A Senior Living Community Rooted in Values



At Kendal-Crosslands Communities, retirement isn't about slowing down—it's about creating space for what matters most.

Set on a beautiful 500-acre campus, our community is shaped by the values of inclusivity, respect, curiosity, and connection. People from all backgrounds, beliefs, and identities are welcomed and celebrated here. It's a place where you can live authentically, build meaningful relationships, and continue growing.

Life at Kendal Crosslands is enriched by opportunities to learn, create, serve, and engage. Residents help shape the culture of the community through volunteerism, lifelong learning, artistic expression, spiritual exploration, outdoor recreation, and shared experiences.

Equally important, residents enjoy the peace of mind that comes with a full continuum of care. As needs change over time, support is available with compassion, dignity, and respect.

Choose a future that reflects your values. At Kendal Crosslands, you'll find more than a community—you'll find the freedom to flourish.



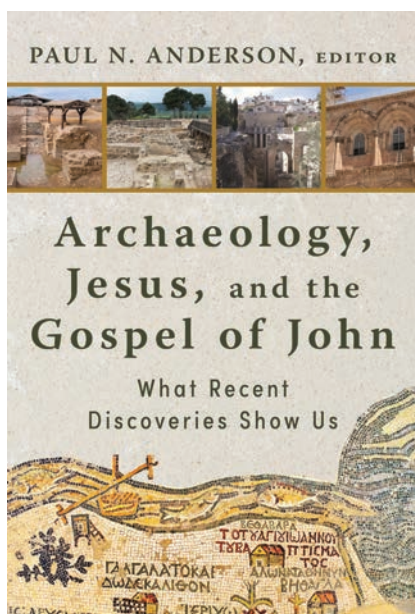
It's never too late to join the Wait List. Contact us to start planning for your future living needs. info.kendal-crosslands.org/friendsjournal | 844.907.1800

**KENDAL  CROSSLANDS
COMMUNITIES®**

Nestled on 500 acres, adjacent to Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania

Not-for-Profit Life Plan Communities Serving Older Adults in the Quaker Tradition





Archaeology, Jesus, and the Gospel of John: What Recent Discoveries Show Us

Edited by Paul N. Anderson. Eerdmans, 2026. 650 pages. \$99.99/hardcover or eBook.

Reviewed by Brian Drayton

One important element of “the quest for the historical Jesus” lies in the search for independent evidence about the places and events recounted in the gospels. In the many instances where no such evidence exists, whether in documents or in archaeological data, doubt is cast on the reliability of the gospels’ narratives. In cases where history or archaeology provide concrete support, we feel that we can approach a little closer to a realistic view of the gospel stories—and to “Jesus’ awesome and mysterious personality,” to quote Hugh Barbour.

The first three gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) have been regarded as more reliable as factual narratives than the Fourth Gospel. John’s difference in tone, incident, and detail have been interpreted as more highly “theological,” and more removed in time of composition from the events described. Yet this point of view has

been challenged by recent scholarship that contends that John’s Gospel is probably not as late in its composition as once was thought, and that it draws on an authentic, independent tradition of story and incident about Jesus’s life and teaching. It can be argued (as Paul Anderson has done in his own scholarship on the Fourth Gospel) that John was composed to complement and enrich the testimony of the other three testimonies. Furthermore, it is a surprising fact that John’s Gospel includes more concrete and verifiable details about the times and the landscape of Jesus’s life than the other gospels. The “spiritual gospel” is notably well-grounded. As Anderson writes in the first chapter, John “features more links with archaeological discoveries and grounded realities than all the other gospels combined—canonical and otherwise.”

Archaeology, Jesus, and the Gospel of John reports on a range of recent archaeological research on various specific details in John’s narrative. Its 25 chapters are grouped in four thematic parts. Part 1 includes an overview of the “mundane” elements of John’s narrative: the place names, description of lifeways and customs, and the political setting. Then it describes what is known about the Galilee region around the time of Christ: who lived there, the evidence for Jewish community life there, and the major towns. The final chapter in the section includes a detailed reconstruction of the roadways (Roman and other) that are known from the time of Jesus, which provides a basis to evaluate the realism of John’s reports of Jesus’s movements from Galilee to Jerusalem, and points in between.

Part 2 continues a focus on archaeological investigations of various points north of Jerusalem mentioned in the gospel, including Bethsaida; Cana; Capernaum; and Samaria, including the setting for the incident in John 4 in which Jesus talks with the “woman

at the well,” and recent discoveries of Samaritan worship sites on Mount Gerizim. The nature of the fishing industry around the Sea of Galilee is described, and the growing evidence of active Jewish life in Galilee (where historians for a long time considered gentiles of various types to be the dominant element in the population) is recounted, including discoveries of ritual baths and of stone jars (and associated ritual customs) of the sort mentioned in the story of the marriage feast at Cana in John 2.

Part 3 moves the focus toward Jerusalem, with articles on a variety of topics anchoring the gospel story in demonstrable facts on the ground: the construction of tombs with stone doors that can be rolled away (as in the story of Lazarus); food and clothing; and the pools of Bethesda and Siloam (both part of a complex system developed in Jerusalem to provide access to ritual baths for the crowds of visitors coming for major festivals). Several chapters focus on details in the passion story, including recent archaeology corroborating the details of Jesus’s crucifixion, the most probable location being Golgotha (Calvary), and the tomb of Jesus, with the area embraced by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre apparently the best candidate.

Part 4 contains two concluding chapters reviewing the state of archaeological research related to John’s narrative, nicely encapsulated by Anderson: “this book calls for a more inclusive quest—a *Fourth Quest*—in the new millennium. And, in the light of archaeological and material soundings, that quest has only just begun.”

This is a big book, and not always easily accessible, as some of the chapters are quite technical. This, plus its cost, means that most Friends and most meeting libraries will not want to purchase it. But Friends should be aware of it and seek it out (perhaps from interlibrary loans) when they come to study John’s Gospel.



GEORGE
SCHOOL

All-gender • Grades 9–12 • Quaker
Boarding and Day • Newtown, PA

Our academic experience is a collective effort to cultivate each student's highest ambitions.

Our community leads with kindness and proceeds with hope.

Our Quaker values—centuries old—are a force for good.

The result: an education that gives students the freedom and the support to become their most authentic selves.



Scan to learn how we cultivate graduates with sharp minds, big hearts and a global consciousness.



If you have an IRA,
**you have a
powerful tool
to support the
work of FCNL**

You can use your **IRA's tax-deferred earnings**—through a charitable distribution, beneficiary designation, or gift annuity—to help the Friends Committee on National Legislation **build the world we seek.**

 **FCNL**
Education Fund

To get started, contact Kendall Cockrell
at 202-903-2539 or kendall@fcnl.org

It provides a welcome, grounding complement to the text-focused scholarship on the “Quaker gospel.”

Brian Drayton worships with Wellesley (Mass.) Meeting. His most recent book, The Gospel in the Anthropocene: Letters from a Quaker Naturalist, appeared earlier this year. He blogs at Amovincat.wordpress.com.

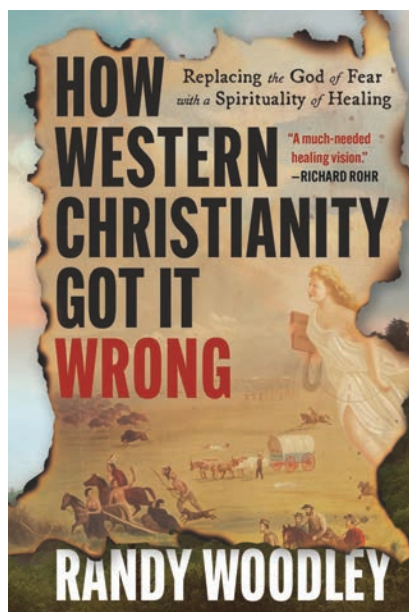
How Western Christianity Got It Wrong: Replacing the God of Fear with a Spirituality of Healing

By Randy Woodley. Broadleaf Books, 2026. 262 pages. \$28.99/hardcover; \$18.99/eBook.

Reviewed by John Andrew Gallery

At the start of his new book, Randy Woodley writes the following: “Over the years, [Western Christianity] has told (and shown with its actions) lies about who God is and why Jesus came.” And: “The values adopted by Western Christianity are, foundationally, the opposite of the teachings of Jesus.” These are strong statements. However, by the time I finished reading his book I was convinced that Woodley was right, and I think many Quaker readers will feel the same way.

Woodley is the author of numerous books, a lecturer, an activist, and a farmer, among other things. He is of mixed White and Native American (Cherokee) heritage whose spirituality combines both the teachings of Jesus and Native American wisdom. Throughout the 12 chapters of the book, Woodley shows how Western Christianity’s values and practices are in stark contrast to those two traditions. He is interested in the process that led to such dramatic differences, not just the results. The first step in that process was Christianity’s merger with the Roman



Empire under Constantine, followed by placing itself in the service of other empires in order to position itself as the “one true religion.” Along the way, it adopted beliefs and practices designed to enhance its own position and power, unrelated to or often in conflict with the teachings of Jesus. Woodley gives many persuasive examples of this: two of which are the issues of inclusion and the attitudes toward land and nonhuman creation.

The first of these, inclusion, tells of the many beliefs and practices of Western Christianity having an us-vs.-them character—or, as the Woodley chapter describes it, “How Platonic Dualism Ruined Everything,” which delves into the philosophical concept developed by Plato that “separated reality into two parts by privileging the ethereal (unseen, metaphysical) world over the material (seen, physical) world.” A significant and influential example of this was the Doctrine of Discovery that gave moral sanction to the empire-building activities of European nations by declaring the inhabitants of the lands they conquered to be less than human, thereby promoting forced conversion, displacement, and death. Woodley points out that

there continues to be an us-vs.-them mentality to Western Christianity in the United States today.

By contrast, Jesus’s approach was much more inclusive. He ate with, taught, and healed people of all backgrounds; he believed God had no favorites; that God was a loving God, not one to be feared, and one that extended mercy and compassion equally to all individuals and nations. Similarly, there is ample evidence that Native American tribes had a welcoming, inclusive attitude toward European settlers, even believing that it was possible to share the use of land with them.

The second topic, attitudes toward land and nonhuman creation, is discussed in terms of Western Christianity’s—and consequently Western civilization’s—understanding that the earth and its resources are there to be exploited for the economic benefit of humans. Native Americans believe—to paraphrase George Fox—that there is something of God in all creation. Human beings are just one part of the web of life and not necessarily the dominant one. The challenge for humans is to live in harmony with the rest of creation which creates an attitude of respect for the land and its nonhuman inhabitants. Woodley’s view is that Jesus’s frequent references to the natural environment suggests he too believed that there was something of God in all creation.

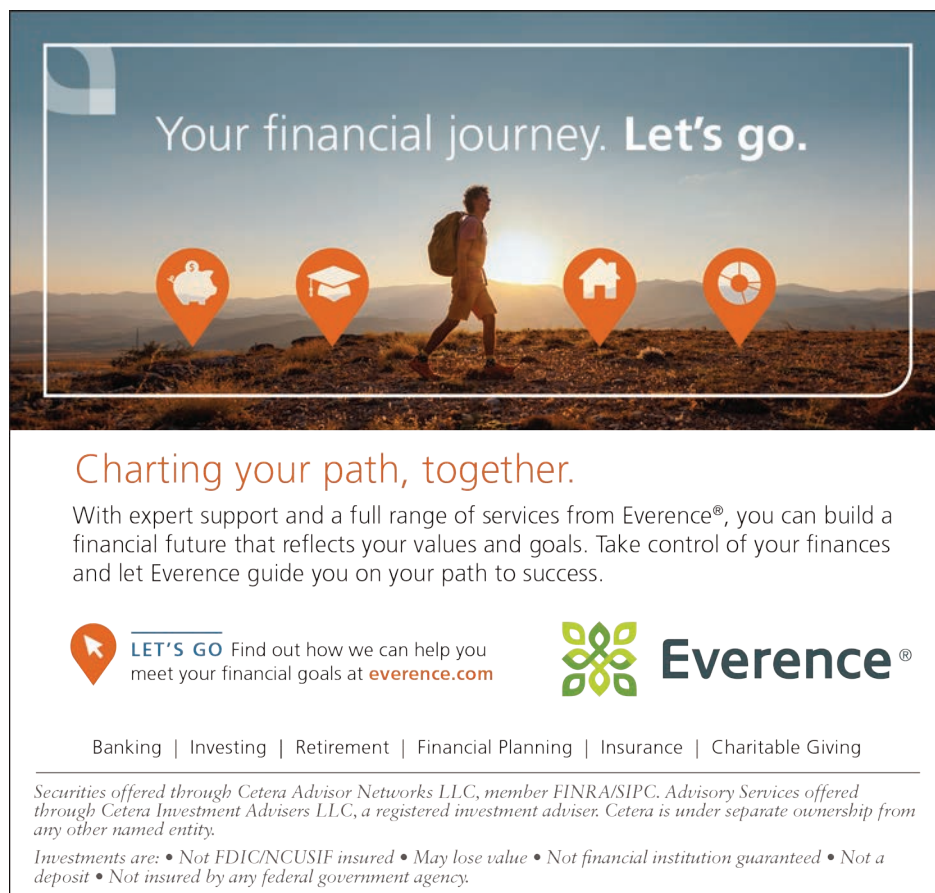
In contrasting the differences between Native American views and Western Christianity, Woodley reminded me of the power of Native American wisdom. The belief in the sacredness of all creation led to practices of respect and gratitude from which we can still learn today, and this doctrine is much more inspiring than the simple notion of stewardship. He also provides interesting insights about Jesus. He points out that if original sin was simply a human invention—that there was no original transgression

by Adam that gets passed on to everyone ever born—then there is no need for a savior to reconcile humanity with God. What is important about Jesus is not his death but his message. Woodley also suggests that the debate about whether Jesus was divine or human is both irrelevant and distracting: irrelevant because it can't be proven either way and distracting because it draws attention away from Jesus's practical and concrete teachings. That is the challenge Woodley sees for Western Christianity today: to rid itself of the accretions that have distorted Jesus's teachings over the centuries and return to a focus on his actual message. "The time for Jesus to be emulated is now," writes Woodley.

Woodley's critique of Western Christianity made me consider whether the Liberal unprogrammed meetings that I attend in Philadelphia exhibit any of the same characteristics. It made me wonder if even such things as participation in current protest marches over our government's policies is speaking spiritual truth to power or just aligning ourselves with one side versus another in the secular power struggle. It also made me wonder if Friends' focus on the often abstract idea of an Inner Light has led us too far away from the challenges provided by the insights and specificity of Jesus's teachings.

How Western Christianity Got It Wrong is both an informative and provocative book. It helped me clarify some of my own spiritual values, and it may do the same for you.

John Andrew Gallery attends Chestnut Hill Meeting in Philadelphia, Pa., and Middletown Meeting in Lima, Pa. He is a frequent contributor to Friends Journal. Website: johnandrewgallery.com.



Your financial journey. Let's go.

Charting your path, together.

With expert support and a full range of services from Everence®, you can build a financial future that reflects your values and goals. Take control of your finances and let Everence guide you on your path to success.

LET'S GO Find out how we can help you meet your financial goals at [everence.com](https://www.everence.com)

Everence®

Banking | Investing | Retirement | Financial Planning | Insurance | Charitable Giving

Securities offered through Cetera Advisor Networks LLC, member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory Services offered through Cetera Investment Advisers LLC, a registered investment adviser. Cetera is under separate ownership from any other named entity.

Investments are: • Not FDIC/NCUSIF insured • May lose value • Not financial institution guaranteed • Not a deposit • Not insured by any federal government agency.



**Community Begins With You,
at Pennswood Village**

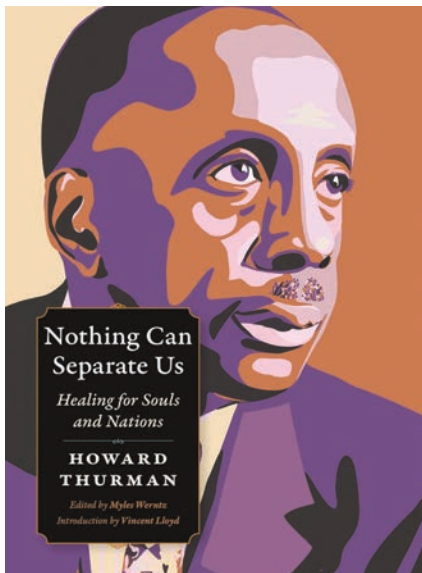
**PENNSWOOD
VILLAGE**
Life Plan Community

*Guided by Quaker principles
for over 45 Years*

Experience Pennswood | Learn More, Call Today!
www.pennswood.org | 866-603-6799

1382 Newtown-Langhorne Road | Newtown, PA 18940

ACOOD Pet Friendly Campus



Nothing Can Separate Us: Healing for Souls and Nations

By Howard Thurman, edited by Myles Werntz. Plough Publishing House, 2026. 144 pages. \$12.95/paperback; \$9.99/eBook.

Reviewed by Stephen W. Angell

Howard Thurman, an African American theologian and pastor of the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples, was perhaps the leading spiritual mentor and sensitive guide for notable twentieth-century persons, including many Quakers and leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, such as Martin Luther King Jr. Coming from a universalist perspective (“universalist” meaning drawing from all religious traditions, Christian and non-Christian), Thurman aimed in his sermons and writings to explore in depth spiritual situations that could confront all people, and ways the situations might be addressed and overcome. A “special student” in 1929 of Quaker theologian and Haverford College professor Rufus Jones (at a time when Haverford had a practice of not accepting African American students), Thurman drew on Jones’s mysticism for inspiration, and adapted his insights in the most compelling

way of any of Jones’s students.

While Thurman once stated that he was a part of “the Wider Quaker Fellowship,” Thurman’s Quaker connections go unmentioned in this book. What it does instead is very valuable. It provides an excellent assortment of highlights from Thurman’s books and papers to inspire anew twenty-first-century readers with Thurman’s wise insights and guidance.

Its nine chapters (all a compilation of Thurman’s excerpts) start with the human condition, with the first chapter title recalling Socrates with his imperative to “Know Thyself.” Thurman asks, “When have you last had a good session with yourself? Or have you ever had it out with *you*?” Thurman urges his readers to cut through superficiality and triviality to arrive at their own “very nerve center.” He goes on to profound meditations about not postponing living, avoiding the temptations of pride, revitalizing one’s existence so that one is fully awake, meeting unfulfilled hungers. Much of the power of this work is provided by the editor’s (Myles Werntz) inspired juxtapositions, drawing on 15 of Thurman’s published works and his papers.

The following eight chapters offer similarly rich selections from Thurman’s thought. Chapters 2 and 3 are “Love Your Neighbor” and “Love Your Enemies.” The third chapter draws especially from Thurman’s most loved and most widely known work, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, offering an incisive exploration of the condition of those whose “backs [are] against the wall,” such as the Jews under Roman occupation during Jesus’s lifetime, and African Americans living under Jim Crow rule during Thurman’s boyhood in Florida. This was the book that Martin Luther King Jr. carried with him often, including on the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery. Thurman was a leading advocate of nonviolence, as this

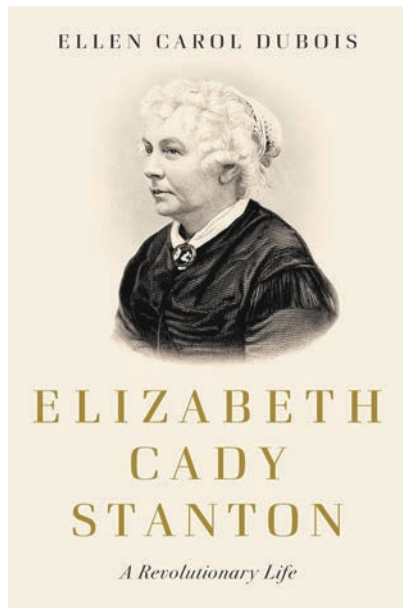
chapter makes clear.

The middle section of the book contains Thurman’s reflections on God, focusing on such matters as prayer and surrendering to God. The book closes with Thurman’s thoughts on living in community, something that Thurman viewed with great hopefulness. This theme was at the core of Thurman’s late summarizing work, *The Search for Common Ground*, one that was reprinted in 1986 by Friends United Press, which, as a Quaker publisher, has done much to keep Thurman’s spirituality before a broader public through its reprinting of many of Thurman’s works.

Werntz, as editor, provides the reader with a concise and eloquent introduction to Thurman’s life to open this volume, ably drawing together many of the intellectual and social themes that animated his life’s witness. In a second introductory essay, African American theologian and philosopher Vincent W. Lloyd offers moving personal reflections on Thurman, drawing, in part, on Lloyd’s own life.

Rarely does one find so much wisdom packed into a book of about 130 pages in length. This is one to read slowly and savor. Thurman himself was a much-prized speaker before all branches of Friends during his lifetime, including Conservative Friends, Friends United Meeting, and Friends General Conference. And now—more than four decades after Thurman’s death in 1981—may he continue to speak to the conditions of a wide variety of spiritual seekers, as we confront our own divided, violent, and contentious age.

Stephen W. Angell is a member of Oxford (Ohio) Meeting in Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. His latest book, coedited with Ben Pink Dandelion and David Harrington Watt, is Global Quakerism, 1938–2018, from Penn State University Press. He teaches Quaker studies at Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Ind.



Elizabeth Cady Stanton: A Revolutionary Life

By Ellen Carol DuBois. Basic Books, 2026. 496 pages. \$35/hardcover; \$19.99/eBook.

Reviewed by Abigail E. Adams

Forty-five years ago in a Haverford College women's studies course, I learned about Elizabeth Cady Stanton's racism, anti-immigrant nativism, and commitment to eugenics. Up until then I idolized the women of the nineteenth-century women's suffragist movement, many of them Friends: Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, the Grimké sisters, Martha Coffin Wright, and Alice Paul. I've since gained a more complex understanding of Quaker history and of the women's movement, thanks to powerful scholarship such as historian Ellen Carol DuBois's new biography, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton: A Revolutionary Life*. In its examination of the complicated Cady Stanton, the book addresses the difficult "balance between her most forward-looking and her most backward ideas."

Friends will appreciate DuBois's integrity, as well as her complex,

contextualized narration of the (very complex) 1800s, made possible by "the sheer length of [Cady Stanton's] career." The 19 chapters unfold chronologically, exploring each stage of Cady Stanton's life from her birth family and childhood to the years following her death. DuBois focuses on Cady Stanton's relationships as well as their socio-historical settings, with close readings of her correspondence and other writings.

Friends do figure prominently in this biography, as they did in many nineteenth-century progressive movements and conflicts. Neither Quakers nor Cady Stanton avoided any of the frays: women's participation in abolitionist leadership; Black men's suffrage vs. universal and women's suffrage; women's full civil and marital rights vs. a singular campaign for women's suffrage; the National Woman Suffrage Association vs. American Woman Suffrage Association; and support for Republican candidates vs. calling out the party's repeated betrayal of women's suffrage.

I hoped DuBois's granular biography would reveal the influence of Quakerism on this pioneer of women's rights. In addition to her husband, abolitionist Henry Brewster Stanton, Elizabeth's most influential relationships were with Quaker women, notably Lucretia Mott; Susan B. Anthony; and Amelia Willard, the housekeeper and family's seven children's "second mother" who made possible Cady Stanton's early achievements.

Cady Stanton first met her long-standing mentor Lucretia Mott while on her honeymoon with Henry to London to attend the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention, where women were barred from participating. Cady Stanton, Mott, and three other prominent Quaker women went on to organize the 1848 Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention. Three years later, Cady Stanton met her lifelong

Voted BEST Retirement Community by the Baltimore Sun Seven Years in a row!

FOCUS
on what you enjoy.

BROADMEAD
A Dynamic Lifestyle Community

Broadmead.org

Request your free Broadmead Planning Kit!
information@broadmead.org

Lansdowne Friends School

An independent Quaker elementary school offering progressive education, caring teachers, and green play spaces, serving students from Pre-Kindergarten to 6th grade.

Learn about 2026-2027 admissions, contact us at:
610-623-2548
admissions@lansdownefriendsschool.org
lansdownefriendsschool.org

f/Friend Susan B. Anthony. The book is almost a dual biography of the two women, given how intertwined their histories and accomplishments were.

While DuBois documents these friendships in detail, I did not learn much about how their “Quakerliness”—their testimonies and practices—shaped Cady Stanton’s life, projects, and ideals. Instead, it seems that she was a like-minded fellow traveler of the century that itself shaped her and Friends. For example, her lifelong opposition to capital punishment arose from visiting the prisoners held in her father’s courthouse cells when she was an adolescent. Another example was her fierce championing of women’s marital equality, which played out in her own companionable, supportive, and egalitarian marriage to Henry and stood in contrast to unions endured by other suffragists.

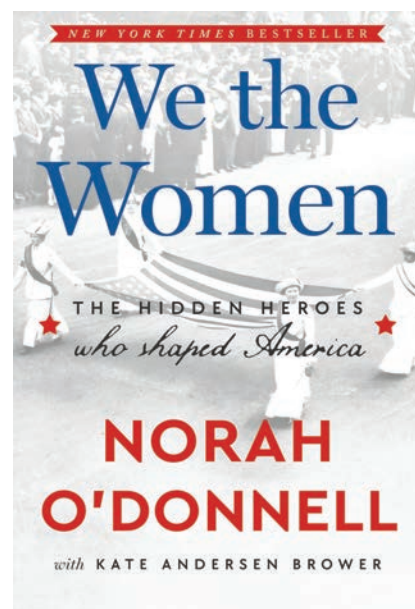
The example of Quaker meeting and theology, however, did not soften Cady Stanton’s lifelong opposition to organized Christianity, which intensified in her later years when she created *The Woman’s Bible*, “her last as well as her loneliest and most frustrating battle.” She decried religious dogma as the root of women’s discrimination for teaching that “woman was an afterthought in creation, her sex a misfortune, marriage a condition of subordination . . . and maternity a curse.” And 1800s Quietist Quakers may have reinforced Cady Stanton’s aversion with their contradictory behavior. The majority of the leaders of the 1848 Seneca Falls conference were Quaker women, and yet Angelina Grimké was read out of meeting for marrying a non-Quaker, and Sarah Grimké was blocked from recognition of her ministry by male Quakers. Cady Stanton’s dear friend Susan B. Anthony moved from devout Quaker observance to humanist agnosticism.

And what of Friends influence on

Cady Stanton’s very public eugenicist, racist, and anti-immigrant positions? We know from careful and revealing revisionist Quaker histories that many white Friends and meetings, perhaps more quietly, shared Cady Stanton’s white supremacist sense of superiority. Cady Stanton was enraged that “unworthy” men of the “lower orders” held power over her, “making laws for Lucretia Mott,” as she wrote in the multi-volume *History of Woman Suffrage*. Cady Stanton’s nativism lasted longer than her racist attacks and had more impact. DuBois observes aptly that while Cady Stanton vilified Black and immigrant men (excepting her longstanding friend Frederick Douglass, whom she considered a worthy opponent), the suffragist cause was really betrayed by men of her own class and race.

DuBois writes, in this her last book of her own “eighty years and more” (echoing Cady Stanton’s memoir title), “I have certainly grown less forgiving of her over time, but I am still in the category of those who do not find the lessons of her entire legacy tainted by her prejudices.” DuBois’s careful review of the difficult polarizing choices and alliances facing Cady Stanton and nineteenth-century activists helped me understand better how the 1800s informed the Friends testimonies I hold high and turn to in the twenty-first century.

Abigail E. Adams worships with New Haven (Conn.) Friends and serves on FCNL’s General Committee and Woolman Hill Retreat Center’s board. A recently retired anthropology professor, she continues work in urban forestry, in Central America, and on immigrant concerns. Although she was unexpectedly elected to town office, she dreams of serving as a Connecticut tree warden.



We the Women: The Hidden Heroes Who Shaped America

By Norah O'Donnell, with Kate Andersen Brower. Ballantine Books, 2026. 416 pages. \$35/hardcover; \$14.99/eBook.

Reviewed by Alicia McBride

In this book, journalist and former CBS *Evening News* anchor Norah O'Donnell sets out to celebrate the women who helped shape the United States over its 250-year history. She is especially interested in lifting up the contributions of women who are less well-known. I was previously unfamiliar with many of these women's stories, including Mary Katherine Goddard (the first printer of the newly signed Declaration of Independence), Maggie Lena Walker (who in 1903 opened a bank to support Black economic opportunity), and Patsy Mink (the first Asian American woman to serve in Congress and a champion of legislating equal opportunities for women).

Written with support from author and fellow journalist Kate Andersen Brower, the book is divided into five sections that each cover 50 years of U.S. history. The first four parts include a high-level overview of

historical and cultural shifts in the time period, followed by chapters that give biographical sketches of particular women. About two-thirds of the profiles feature White women, with the remaining third focused on Black, Native American, Latina, and Asian American subjects. In the final section, O'Donnell reflects at more length on the impact of women during her lifetime in areas such as medicine, law, business, sports, and education.

O'Donnell's passion and personal drive to share these women's stories comes through in her writing. She frames the book with stories of her Irish grandmother, who immigrated to the United States in 1930, and with her own discovery of how much was omitted from the history she learned in school. The individual narratives are peppered with asides about the research that led to the story's inclusion in this volume.

This approach makes for accessible writing: no dry history here. The book is based in research and draws on primary source documents—more than 10 percent of the book is devoted to citations and references—but O'Donnell's journalistic background is evident throughout in her desire to tell a compelling story. She is clear from the introduction that she does not want to write biographies but instead to “paint a picture of [women's] grit and determination to be treated equally.”

As someone interested in the nuances, struggles, and contradictions of history, I was sometimes frustrated by the flattening of these women's stories to support that goal. These women “don't take no for an answer,” are “uniquely equipped for any challenge,” and “set the standard for women who followed.” The details of each woman's story run together, as they all become tales of plucky perseverance and determination to overcome the obstacles in their path on the way to become role models for those who come after.

Still, I appreciate O'Donnell's project to elevate women's contributions,

*Look
to the
Light*

*“In the light
of God's promise, we see
the light of hope.”*

Ron Hogan, *In Your Light We See Light*

Many folks have found hope and spiritual grounding through the *Look to the Light* newsletter and its adaptation into the Bible Study column in *Friends Journal*. As one of the outreach programs of Friends Publishing, it is a ministry meeting seekers and Quakers where they are.

This fall, your gift is matched up to \$2,500 by our board.

**Give today and see your gift doubled.
friendsjournal.org/donate**



**“For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.”
Psalm 36:7–10 (NRSVUE)**

**FRIENDS
JOURNAL**

QUAKER.ORG

**Quaker
SPEAK**

**QUAKERS
TODAY**



**SIMPLE
SUSTAINABLE
SOCIALY RESPONSIBLE**

The de Burlo Group
Principled Investing for Quakers since 1987

www.deburlogroup.com
617.482.0275



Enjoy the Spirit of **Adventure**
at Medford Leas

Guided by Quaker principles, and nestled within the serenity and tranquility of the beautiful 250+ acre Barton Arboretum and Nature Preserve, Medford Leas offers a vibrant, active and fulfilling Senior Independent Living lifestyle, with a continuum of onsite healthcare choices.

MEDFORD LEAS Visit Medford Leas
www.medfordleas.org
866-670-1817

Logos: AQORD, Pet Friendly Campus, and others.



Principled Investing. Professional Returns.



Learn more about the trusted investment manager of choice for Yearly, Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of Friends at www.friendsfiduciary.org.

Display Ad Deadlines

Reservations are required for display ads in *Friends Journal*.

December 2026: *Nontheist Friends*. Reservation due October 15. Copy due October 21.

January 2026: *Quakers and Social Class*. Reservation due November 15. Copy due November 21.

FRIENDS JOURNAL

Contact Margaret Wood with your reservation or questions: margaret@friendsjournal.org

as the United States' 250th birthday prompts renewed interest in this country's history. Amid the heroic narratives of success against the odds, O'Donnell also highlights the ways that "a more perfect union is still a work in progress." The impact of racial identity and class, along with gender, are undercurrents in these stories. Although framed in the language of individual achievement and patriotism, the book also recognizes the shortcomings of the American experiment's first two-and-a-half centuries and the need for ongoing work.

The stories in *We the Women* can serve as a jumping-off point for Friends and others to delve more deeply into the experiences of people who have shaped the United States. Friends may be especially interested in exploring further the stories that touch on Quaker history. For example, the profile of the Native American writer Zitkala-Ša opens at Earlham College, where during her freshman year there in 1896 she gave a speech arguing for equal rights for Indigenous people.

In addition to the further learning these stories might invite, O'Donnell's premise and motivating questions could prompt Friends to reflect on our own communities. When we tell our story, whose contributions might we be missing? What ideals are we still working to live up to? O'Donnell wonders about how learning this history at an earlier age might have affected her sense of possibility and courage; in our meetings, do we help children see themselves reflected in Quaker and community history? As a journalist, O'Donnell knows how to ask good questions. Along with the new information this book might offer to readers, it provides openings to consider how the stories we tell shape our understanding, not only of the past but also of future possibilities.

Alicia McBride is a member of Sandy Spring (Md.) Meeting in Baltimore Yearly Meeting and lives in Takoma Park, Md. She is the senior director for Quaker leadership at Friends Committee on National Legislation.

Like Dew on the Tender Plants

continued from page 11

crime has been committed), and coaching for the development of local activism networks. We have partnered with a local United Methodist Church to bring these training sessions to our community, and Nate has also hosted these training sessions in his rural county.

By joining with other organizations, our small meeting has been able to amplify our work. As we face the prospect of going out with these partners into action, the words of Woolman speak to us:

Traveling up and down of late, I have had renewed evidences that to be faithful to the Lord, and content with his will concerning me, is a most necessary and useful lesson for me to be learning; looking less at the effects of my labor than at the pure motions and reality of the concern, as it arises from heavenly love.

Woolman was frequently reluctant to follow the call to speak out, and he struggled with this feeling of fear. Sometimes it takes a deep breath and a leap of faith to be obedient to our calling. Willingness to publicly proclaim our beliefs may strike fear in some of our hearts, but we are reminded that Woolman states,

I saw at this time that if I was honest in declaring that which truth opened in me, I could not please all men; and I labored to be content in the way of my duty, however disagreeable to my own inclination.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement presence in North Carolina has steadily increased in 2025 and 2026, with larger

operations centering around Charlotte and the Triangle area. In 2025, over 3,000 arrests occurred, rates that doubled from 2024. We may feel waves of great discouragement at these reports and a weariness at the enormity of the task laid before us: our energy to do the work coming in and out like the tide, ebbing at times and flowing at others.

It is in these moments of physical, spiritual, and emotional exhaustion that we must not only practice self-care and ensure periods of rest but also periods of spiritual nourishment and restoration. Woolman writes:

In this journey, I may say in general, we were sometimes in much weakness, and labored under discouragements, and at other times, through the renewed manifestations of Divine love, we had seasons of refreshment wherein the power of truth prevailed.

As we face the fears of our community and the feeling of the unknown, be encouraged that our service can take many forms, and that each one of us has a role to play. Here is a final word from John Woolman:

From the steady opposition which faithful Friends in early times made to wrong things when approved, they were hated and persecuted by men living in the spirit of this world, and suffering with firmness, they were made a blessing to the church, and the work prospered.

By opening our hearts to Divine Guidance, we may end up following a path that we did not anticipate. May our work prosper. □

An Extremist for Love

continued from page 15

spaces. He does this by proposing to take down many of the interior walls (non-supporting) to open up space for gatherings, and to bring the outside natural spaces into the design. The result each time is quite amazing, as the new spaces seem to not only bring new light and life into the homes but lift the spirits of the people as well. This has been my experience when I call in the Master Architect to renovate my house: my heart. God's work—as I can best describe it—is to bring in the Light and open the spaces up, not build more walls! We need our hearts opened and renovated in our meetings and communities of faith so that we can learn God's way of love and find the strength to walk in it and live in it together, here and now.

This is the “resurrection and the life” he calls us to: not some fake pie-in-the-sky man-made belief system that claims it can get us into heaven but the real call toward transformation of our hearts in the present moment and time. He calls us to abandon the fake news that is driving us to destruction by building walls between us, separating us from seeing and experiencing God's love for ourselves and our neighbors. Jesus calls us to come away from the powers that seek to control, distort, and suppress our love for humanity, and to find the Living Guide to show us how we might walk in the way he walked. The resurrection message is primarily about coming out of hatred and into this power. □



ACT LOCALLY. ACT TOGETHER. ACT NOW.

Join the **Quaker Action for Migration Justice Network.**

The Quaker Action for Migration Justice Network (QAMJN) supports community, collaboration, and action to affirm the human dignity of immigrants and refugees.

SCAN TO JOIN TODAY



afsc.org/QAMJN

Ending Outward Wars

continued from page 29

such meetings at Quaker House near the UN Headquarters.

Clarke explained that because such meetings are off-the-record, she could not share details or mention any specific negotiators who participated. “When you work on things quietly, you don’t want to say publicly what they are,” she said.

Clarke offered an overview of QUNO New York’s recent work. Over the past two decades, QUNO New York has focused attention on ongoing conflicts and instability in Northern Uganda, the Horn of Africa, and the Middle East. Staff has also looked at the tensions in the Korean peninsula as well as the civil war in Myanmar.

The threat of climate change is an example of a global problem the United Nations can respond to. “It’s a threat and a challenge that no one nation-state can address on its own,” said Clarke.

Clarke is a member of Ottawa (Ont.) Meeting. She lives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and finds spiritual sustenance in walking her dog in the park.

There are some parallels between the way UN meetings function and what happens in Quaker meetings. Clarke believes that there is that of the Divine working through gathered Quakers as well as through gathered United Nations members. Members of the UN General Assembly commit to using dialogue to solve disagreements. Clarke considers QUNO’s work to be divinely inspired.

“There is a real emphasis on the idea that we are being led by Spirit,” Clarke said. □




Wilmington College
WWW.WILMINGTON.EDU
WILMINGTON, OHIO

- Founded by Quakers in 1870
- Longtime connection with FCNL’s Spring Lobby Weekend
- Prominent program in Sustainable Agriculture
- Environmental Ethics program
- WC’s president is a Quaker
- Sponsors student trips reflecting Friends’ mission to Costa Rica, Palestine, Japan, Native territories
- Longtime advocate for & practitioner of prison education
- Online opportunities
- Quaker Heritage Center on campus

Can We Escape the Cycle of Cruelty and Revenge? A 9/11 Reflection

On the afternoon of September 11, 2002, the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, I was tapped by Robert C. Messina, president of what was then Burlington County College in Southern New Jersey, to deliver an address to the college community. I was one of several faculty speakers that day.

The other addresses were all focused on national security and military challenges facing the country in response to terrorism. Mine was different. That day I quoted and drew upon, at length, the work of Simone Weil.

My address was greeted by dead silence and gasps. Messina did not speak to me for three years. There were many others who did not publicly support me, until one day when I took one of my environmental ethics classes to Whitesbog Historic Village, an educational center located at the heart of our county's cranberry and blueberry farms. The director of its ecology program, in a response to a student question about the earlier 9/11 anniversary program, said that she agreed with only one of the speakers: me. This opened the door for others to say they agreed with me too.

Simone Weil's insights were that the response to massive cruelty should just be suffering: tending the wounded and nothing more. She said that the cycle of violence—war, retaliation, war,

retaliation—can only be interrupted by the extraordinary spiritual strength of not responding.

That made sense to me.

It makes further sense that the Abrahamic religions, of which Weil embodied two, are particularly susceptible to not getting this right. Their scriptures include ones that are full of hate and revenge. This is true even of the Psalms, dear to both Jews and Christians, but especially parts of Genesis, Exodus, Revelations, and the Qur'an.

Mass killings and stealing of land were justified as God's will, with much quoting of scripture, by such diverse leaders as John Winthrop in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and monarchs Phillip of Spain and Elizabeth of England regarding Latin America and Ireland respectively. It continues with Netanyahu in Palestine.

The secular philosophers have been almost as bad. John Locke, Adam Smith, and David Hume thought up convoluted justifications as to why certain groups of humans are subhuman—this time not to “please God,” as in the Abrahamic religions, but to please logic.

To find a spiritual understanding like Weil's, one may need to go outside Western religions. Laurent Evrard recently observed from Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in “A Tale of Two

Genocides” that, unlike the situation in Israel–Palestine, the Buddhist response in Cambodia has not become trapped in the cycle of cruelty and revenge. I don't know how true that is; but I can see the potential in Tibetan Buddhism, which I have long studied. Weil, Jewish but drawn to Catholic mysticism, and widely known as “the outsider's saint,” stands out in the West in her expressing such views so boldly.

In the 25 years since 9/11, America's actions in its “war on terror” in Afghanistan and Iraq, much like Israel's and like the Islamic world's, have largely poured fuel on the destructive cycles. And yet, within each of these religions are seeds of the opposite view: seeds of knowing the mystery and power of not killing back. Some say this is impractical on a nationwide scale. But, with a lesser degree of purity, what about Norway in World War II, India in the time of Mohandas Gandhi, and the United States with the tradition of Martin Luther King Jr.?

I remain convinced that the best form of “national defense” is to become a civil, empathetic country united enough to go into nonviolent resistance if anyone tries to occupy us. What do you think?

Rusty Conroy
Riverton, N.J.

FORUM

Continues from page 5

The waves of outside noises

Martin Kelley's “The Noises of Our Silences” (*FJ* Aug.) prompted me to think of the various forms of silence that have accompanied my meeting for worship experience since starting attending meeting for worship almost 20 years ago.

I was fortunate to start my Quaker adventure at Abington Meeting in Jenkintown, Pa., where we have a large, circa 1700 stone meetinghouse for

worship when it's cold or inclement, as well as a huge, beautiful maple tree in our meeting graveyard under which we hold meeting for worship in the warmer seasons. The silence in those worshipful moments are very different and wonderful each.

In the summers recently, I've had the chance to attend worship at Yarmouth (Mass.) Meeting. This is a smaller, wooden meetinghouse from 1809 and it has been wonderfully maintained. The Yarmouth meetinghouse is literally on the town's Main Street so even on Sunday mornings, cars, trucks, and motorcycles drive right by

the meetinghouse. It was initially an annoying distraction to me, making my worship difficult. But then I started to hear the noise of the various vehicles and their tires washing up the street as if they were waves from the nearby Atlantic Ocean. And with that, the distraction of the cars and trucks driving by instead became a natural flow to help with my worship.

For me, these were lessons that I can have a meaningful worship, regardless of the kind of silence or a lack of it.

Jeffrey Plaut
Elkins Park, Pa.

Deaths

Bruce—*Sandra Paschall Bruce*, 82, on December 20, 2025, in the loving presence of her family, in Lancaster, Pa. Sandy was born on August 16, 1943, to Quaker parents Edwin H. Paschall Sr. and Dorothy Haines Kirk Paschall in Wilmington, Del. The Paschall family lived on a farm in Chester County, Pa., and worshiped at London Grove Meeting in Kennett Square. Sandy was a steadfast Quaker her entire life.

Sandy was a person who stayed the course, quietly persisting in her endeavors without fuss or fanfare. When the family home burned to the ground, Sandy persevered in spite of losing all her possessions. When her teacher at Unionville High School told Sandy she was not qualified to go to college, Sandy quietly persisted. “Can’t” was not part of her lexicon. She received her high school diploma in 1961 and earned a bachelor’s degree in home economics education from Mansfield State College (now Commonwealth University–Mansfield) in 1965.

Sandy met Jerry Bruce in college at orchestra practice. Sandy played violin, and Jerry, double bass. After graduation Sandy worked for a federal agency that provided early childhood education, while Jerry worked as aquatic director at a Boy Scout camp. In August 1965, they married and moved to Binghamton, N.Y. Jerry entered graduate school at Syracuse University, and Sandy taught at Minoa Middle School in a suburb of Syracuse.

In July 1969, their first daughter, Beth, was born, and in August of that year, Jerry finished his graduate program in library science at Syracuse, while Sandy received her master’s in home economics education from the State University of New York at Oneonta. Jerry took a position as a branch manager for the Binghamton Public Library, while Sandy did part-time work in the adult evening school of the Binghamton School District.

Jerry was unhappy in his job, and Sandy wanted to be closer to her family. Jerry read an article about programming, planning, and budgeting in *Library Journal*. Its author was Harold Jenkins, director of the Lancaster County Library. The article impressed Jerry so he applied for a position at the library and was accepted. The family arrived in Lancaster in the fall of 1972 and began attending Lancaster Meeting. Sandy served on the Library Committee.

Sandy and Jerry had three more daughters, Heather and twins Catherine (Cathy) and Rebecca (Becky). Sandy was always quietly getting things done, including bringing up her daughters to be strong women, something that Sandy had learned from her mother and from her home economics professors.

Among the things that kept Sandy busy, in addition to her family, was working for R.R. Donnelley for 24 years typing text and proofreading. She also worked as a clerk/

receptionist for the Pennsylvania State Police for five years. Sandy was often quietly helping other employees solve problems.

Sandy enjoyed knitting, sewing, and playing Canasta and pinocle with friends. She was active in Mothers of Twins, home economics associations, a sewing group, and an investment club.

Sandy was predeceased by her parents, Edwin and Dorothy Paschall; two brothers, John Paschall and Edwin Paschall Jr.; a sister, Judith Paschall Montague (James); and a daughter, Elizabeth Elfner (Bryan).

She is survived by her husband, Gerald Bruce; three children, Heather Kline (Michael), Catherine McCartan, and Rebecca Knapp (James); eleven grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Dahl—*Deborah A. Dahl*, 72, on December 16, 2025, peacefully in her sleep, in New York City after suffering for five years with endometrial cancer. Deborah was born on June 22, 1953, to Harold E. Dahl and Carol (Keller) Dahl in Long Beach, N.Y.

After Deborah graduated from Case Western Reserve University, she cofounded and led a small community theater group to national prominence as America’s first resident, professional Theater of the Deaf. She was briefly managing director of the NYC Ensemble Studio Theatre, then served for five years as the foundation officer for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. The Ford Foundation, along with leaders in the field of social justice, credit client outcomes of Deborah’s visionary work with reinventing nonprofits. Her work at Arcadia Associates, a nonprofit Quaker network that she founded, built twenty-first-century careers for social change. She delivered transformational results in leadership and coaching programs.

Deborah was married twice, first to Chuck Rosenow and then to Paul Lustgarten.

She became a member of Fifteenth Street Meeting in New York City during the summer of 2018. Friendships—old, new, and intergenerational—were an integral part of Deborah’s life and legacy. Her ability to proclaim, “All is well,” left a lasting impression. Deborah’s brilliance and laughter will be deeply missed by her many friends, particularly those at Fifteenth Street Meeting.

Robert Renwick, fellow Quaker, gave Deborah a home for the last five years of her life.

Deborah is survived by an older brother and two younger sisters.

Deys—*Carol Elaine Deys*, 90, on October 17, 2025, in Macedon, N.Y. Carol was born on June 5, 1935, to David and Belle Johns in Utica, N.Y., but she lived most of her childhood in Rochester, N.Y. She lived in Germany and France for several years and many places in between, before settling and raising her family in Wayne County, N.Y.

She and her husband, Richard W. Deys, operated a small engine repair service for 30 years, Para-Deys Tools. Carol and Richard

established many great relationships and connections through their business.

Carol served her community in many ways, such as president of the Church Women United group and Macedon Library Board. She and Richard started a Tasha Tudor Society group and built the Tasha Tudor Storybook Trail as part of the Butterfly Trail in Macedon Canal Park.

As members of Farmington (N.Y.) Meeting, she and Richard had the privilege of leading a group called Corner Class that met monthly. This group helped Carol spiritually and physically to be present in the formation of the 1816 Farmington Quaker Meetinghouse Museum. This brought much joy to Carol. Her son, David Bruinix, carries on the tradition as president of the board.

Carol was once asked, “What is the meaning of life?” Her response was: “It is. . . . It just is. How you live life is up to you, and I certainly believe that my faith has held me in good stead for all my life. Profoundly influenced by all that I have experienced, I say, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant,’ to all who are doing their best to live in the most amazing world.”

Carol was predeceased by her parents, David and Belle Johns; three sons, Ronald, Todd, and John; and two siblings, Bobby and David Johns.

Carol is survived by her husband, Richard W. Deys; four children, Glenn (Cheryl), Paul (Sandy), David (Laurel), and Richard Jr. (Kylie); daughter-in-law, Shannon Deys; seven grandchildren; and many great-grandchildren.

Payton—*John Payton*, 82, on October 28, 2025, in Milwaukee, Wis. John was born on January 15, 1943, to Willis Payton and Helen Jackson Payton in Kansas City, Mo. He lived in Missouri, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Idaho, and the state of Washington while growing up, as a result of his father transferring positions with an oil company. He attended the University of Washington, majoring in history and graduating in 1965. Subsequently, he moved to Chicago, Ill., where he received a master of divinity degree from the University of Chicago Divinity School.

John remained in Chicago for 30 years, with the exception of two years in Urbana, Ill., where he obtained a master’s in social work. Later he received a doctorate in public health from the University of Illinois Chicago. John worked in public health in a variety of organizations, including the Red Cross, the American Hospital Association, Chicago public schools, and with a collaborative to promote children’s social and emotional learning. He also started a small massage practice.

In 1998, John met Roger Hansen. They quickly grew into a committed relationship, and in 1999, moved together to Evanston, Ill. John and Roger married under the care of Evanston Meeting in 2002, and legally married in Wisconsin in 2016. In 2005, they moved to Milwaukee. In 2023, John and Roger moved to Eastcastle Place retirement community.

John had been raised primarily as a Presbyterian but became an Episcopalian as an adult. Later, while on a search for a spiritual home, he became Quaker after meeting Roger, who had been a longtime Quaker. John became involved in the life and committee work of Milwaukee Meeting. He participated in several national Quaker groups, including Quaker Earthcare Witness, where he served as secretary, and Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), where he served on the Nominating Committee. John helped to found the Milwaukee FCNL Advocacy Team.

John developed Parkinson's disease in 2018. He continued his journey as a spiritual seeker and finder. In recent years, he began attending Episcopal services again as well as Quaker meeting. He found spiritual deepening in his practice of centering prayer. He saw a new opportunity as an advocate for peace and justice toward the end of his life by participating in a weekly rally across the street from Eastcastle, with his sign "Restore Our Constitution." John was a continuous learner, attending classes for older adults at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

John was a devoted friend to many. He was described as a gentle person and a good listener. He enjoyed theatre, music, especially classical, travel, long walks, gardening, running, and even ran a marathon. He especially loved trains, and had a T-shirt saying "I'd rather be on a train."

John was predeceased by his parents; and a brother, Steve Payton.

He is survived by his husband, Roger Hansen; a brother, Marc Payton (Darla); two sisters-in-law, Ellen Benes and Mary Ann Mathieu; and a cousin, Jane Jackson.

Sa'adah—*David Mounir Sa'adah*, 86, on October 29, 2025, in Gwynedd, Pa. David was born on November 6, 1938, to Marjorie (Abrahamian) and Mounir Sa'adah in Beirut, Lebanon. David and his parents emigrated to the United States following World War II, settling in Woodstock, Vt. The family returned to the Middle East briefly in 1949, when David's parents worked for American Friends Service Committee to organize and lead one of the Palestinian refugee camps in Gaza.

David earned a bachelor's degree from Harvard University. After completing his medical degree at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, he began an internal medicine internship until he was drafted by the U.S. Army. There he focused on issues of women's health for service members and their families. He also helped to develop mobile hospitals for military and civilian disaster relief. Always studying, he discovered significant under-reporting of U.S. military friendly fire deaths and insisted on more accurate criteria for the way those deaths are counted.

In addition to several locations in the United States, David served with the army in Vietnam, France, and Italy. While in Italy,

he was an advisor to the women preparing the Italian edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*.

By the mid-1980s, David had a new assignment; a new home in Alexandria, Va.; and most important, a new wife, Gretchen Tenny Hall. Decades had passed since their teenage romance; when they married, they had five adult children: Raf, Sarah, and Marjorie Sa'adah, and Sarah and Rachel Tucker. Over time they welcomed eight grandchildren.

David was actively engaged in Alexandria (Va.) Meeting for years before he became a member. Endlessly curious, he researched the history of the meeting, poring through archives in search of images and records that would bring that history to life. While engaged in this research, he found a printed card of the sort that once had been used by people wanting to join a meeting. "Dear Friends," it read, "Feeling myself in unity with the Principles and Testimonies of Friends, I hereby request membership in your religious organization." The simplicity and directness of this request appealed to him. On November 19, 2011, he signed the card and sent it to the clerk of the meeting. He was welcomed warmly into the community he already loved.

David served on the meeting's Property Committee, supporting plans to preserve the building and grounds, raking leaves, and caring for the birds who considered the place their home. Before he and Gretchen moved to Foulkeways at Gwynedd senior living community in 2012, he made sure someone knew where the towhees came to nest each spring in an azalea thicket. This Friend agreed the thicket must be preserved and became the Towhee Mentor in David's place.

Once at Foulkeways, David attended Gwynedd (Pa.) Meeting where he worked to improve the sound system in the worship room and served as a greeter, warmly welcoming all who arrived for worship on Sundays.

David's life was characterized by service to others: in his profession as a physician, in his involvements at Alexandria and Gwynedd Meetings, and in his friendships. At Foulkeways, he helped establish the End of Life Concerns Committee, and led the Residents Helping Residents project. He actively hammered and sawed at Habitat for Humanity projects in Romania and Madagascar. The latter activity led to his historical study of Quaker missions in Madagascar.

David is survived by his wife, Gretchen Tenny Hall; his former wife, Gay Gellhorn; five children, Rafael Sa'adah, Sarah Sa'adah, Marjorie Sa'adah, Rachel Tucker, and Sarah Tucker; two siblings, Jonathan Sa'adah and Anne Sa'adah; plus a large extended family.



WOODBROOKE
WORSHIP | LEARN | RESEARCH

WWW.WOODBROOKE.ORG.UK



www.HFreemanKnives.com



THE SCHOOL OF THE SPIRIT
A treasury of peace and learning

Your source for contemplative practices.

www.schoolofthespirit.org



FRIENDS PEACE TEAMS friendspeaceteams.org
JOIN THE TEAM!

Join us to work for peace and justice,
and to support Friends who are.

Africa • Asia • Europe • Latin America • North America

CLASSIFIEDS HAVE MOVED ONLINE!

Find housing, travel, book,
music, and custom
Quaker marriage certificates
all in one place.

Visit for the latest Quaker
classifieds or place your own at
friendsjournal.org/classified

This semiannual column highlights the recent works of Quaker organizations. Categories include:

- Advocacy
- Consultation, Support, and Resources
- Development
- Education
- Environmental and Ecojustice
- Investment Management
- Retreat, Conference, and Study Centers
- Service and Peace Work

ADVOCACY

Friends Committee on National Legislation

fcnl.org

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) lobbies to advance peace, justice, and environmental stewardship in Washington, D.C. Its nonpartisan work combines prophetic witness with strategic action as it invites Friends and others into the practice of Quaker advocacy.

In April, the inaugural Friends Changemaker Weekend engaged more than 300 people to lobby against Iran war funding. People connected across generations on stopping U.S. militarism abroad and at home. FCNL has built on this momentum, celebrating congressional passage of war powers resolutions that could halt hostilities. Advocacy Teams working across all 50 states continue to urge Congress to end the war and create new avenues for peace.

In the spring and summer, 18 staff members took part in 21 yearly meetings and other Quaker gatherings. It was a rich time of hearing Friends' concerns, sharing opportunities, and strengthening connections.

One of many challenges ahead is ensuring free and fair elections in November, especially following the Supreme Court decision further undermining the Voting Rights Act. Through coalition work and advocacy, FCNL is focused on meeting

this challenge.

In July, FCNL welcomed a new cohort of young adults into its Advocacy Corps, which will organize this year on economic justice. They join a community committed to building relationships and finding openings for change.

Quaker Council for European Affairs

qcea.org

Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) is a Brussels-based non-governmental organization founded in 1979 that advocates for peace, justice, and equality within European institutions.

QCEA's work centers on three main areas: the intersections of climate, migration, and peace; rethinking Europe's approach to security; and speaking truth to power in a crisis of democracy.

In May, QCEA launched a publication, *Voices of Peace: Stories of Conscientious Objectors from Europe and Beyond*, which shares personal stories from people in eight countries who, in different ways, decided to reject military service and violence. Their stories show the human side of saying "no" to war, while also celebrating the courage of those who chose peace instead. The project was a joint effort with Connection e.V.; War Resisters' International; and Agir pour la Paix. It was first launched at Maison de la paix in Brussels on May 15, International Conscientious Objection Day. Thanks to Friends in the Netherlands, the publication is also available in Dutch.

In February, together with eight organizations and research institutions, QCEA launched a coalition titled Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change. Through it, the partners are exchanging knowledge on climate and migration, and building a collaborative space that connects civil society and academia. The network hopes to grow and, over time, to strengthen EU-level advocacy for people affected by climate displacement.

Quaker United Nations Office

quno.org

Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) promotes justice, peace, and sustainability at the United Nations.

Through areas of work in Geneva and New York, QUNO seeks to ensure the UN system and community of nations support and uphold the dignity of all.

Amidst increasing global polarization, QUNO plays a crucial role in elevating diverse voices and bringing them closer to the UN and its member states. Over the last year, QUNO built on its long history of strengthening the UN's work to promote dialogue in the area of peacebuilding.

In March, at the seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)—the UN's largest annual meeting on gender equality and women's rights—QUNO convened diverse stakeholders on the margins of CSW. The session took place at the UN Headquarters in New York. Together with the UN's New York Peacebuilding Group and Permanent Mission of Canada, QUNO hosted members of civil society, NGOs, and UN Member States for a closing dinner at Quaker House titled "Reflecting on Peacebuilding during CSW70: What did we learn and where do we go from here?" The inclusion of local peacebuilders helped highlight reflections grounded in lived experience and community-based approaches to peacebuilding. The gathering exemplified the unique work of QUNO in opening spaces for dialogue between diplomats, UN staff, and civil society.

CONSULTATION, SUPPORT, AND RESOURCES

Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts

fqaquaker.org

The Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts (FQA) is a loosely organized international group of Quaker artists, including musicians, writers, poets, visual artists, and those interested in supporting artistic work among Friends.

A writers' group meets virtually once a month, and a group of mostly visual artists and musicians meets quarterly to share work. A similar group for poets is expected to begin in the fall of 2026.

FQA also offers virtual workshops to members based on interest. In June,

it sponsored a virtual workshop on independent publishing. This workshop has led to plans for additional sessions organized around specific publishing criteria. FQA also plans to premiere a YouTube channel in the fall.

In early May, FQA sponsored an art exhibit at the annual gathering of Caln Quarter (part of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting) at Camp Swartara in Bethel, Pa. Several Quaker artists participated in the show. Another art show is scheduled for late September as part of the annual TriQuarter gathering of Friends in South Jersey.

FQA cooperates with several local art organizations throughout the United States, assisting with mounting exhibitions and performances. It occasionally provides small grants of less than \$100 to support local art events of particular interest to Friends.

Friends Career Center

friendscareercenter.com

Friends Career Center (FCC) is a youth-led organization working in Rwanda and Canada to help underserved youth overcome barriers through mentorship, mental wellness, career development, and entrepreneurship. Rooted in Quaker values and open to all, FCC believes every young person deserves the chance to reach their full potential.

FCC launched the SheCreates Fellowship in November 2025 to help young Rwandan women turn business ideas and existing businesses into sustainable enterprises. Twenty participants completed training in business development, including marketing, financial literacy, ethical entrepreneurship, storytelling, and innovation. Each developed a business plan, budget, branding materials, and pitch components. Together, the fellows were awarded more than \$20,000 in seed funding and are now building their businesses with continuing individualized mentorship.

In July 2026, FCC brought its community-rooted mental health work to the twenty-sixth International AIDS Conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Agape Ishimwe, who leads Ubugeni Bwomora (Art that Heals) and was recognized as a 2025 International AIDS Society Change Maker, presented the

program in the Global Village and screened a documentary about its work. Ubugeni Bwomora uses art, storytelling, and peer support to help youth living with HIV in rural Rwanda address stigma, isolation, and emotional distress while strengthening self-acceptance, resilience, and belonging.

FCC remains committed to breaking cycles of poverty by empowering underserved youth to build livelihoods, strengthen well-being, and create lasting community change.

Friends General Conference

fgcquaker.org

Friends General Conference (FGC) is a volunteer-led association of 16 yearly meetings and 12 directly affiliated monthly meetings in the United States and Canada. With divine guidance, FGC nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Society of Friends by providing programs and services for Friends and seekers.

In July, the week-long 2026 Gathering drew over 700 Friends to the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vt. Junior Gathering and the high school program provided vibrant activities for youth and young people. Bryan Stevenson and Kazu Haga were the plenary speakers, each speaking to a packed room.

Friends who attended throughout the week appreciated the spiritual deepening and the opportunity to connect. One Friend shared: “It all came together holistically for me—just a wonderful, spiritually enriching time.”

In September, FGC held a weekend Outreach Conference with plenary speakers Geniro Dingle, Khalila Lomax, and Shannon Isaacs. Workshops focused on welcoming families with children, building strong community partnerships with non-Quaker organizations, and exploring the findings from Friends World Committee for Consultation’s Quaker Connect program.

The month-long “Weaving a Wider Welcome” eRetreat begins October 4, and is designed to help meetings shift their culture to become more newcomer-friendly.

FGC’s Ministry on Racism program continues to offer online worship programs for Friends of Color on a weekly basis.

Friends Incubator for Public Ministry

friendsincubator.org

The Friends Incubator for Public Ministry is a ministry support project under the care of Sandy Spring (Md.) Meeting (part of Baltimore Yearly Meeting), walking alongside Friends carrying public ministries and the elders who support them.

In June, along with Quakers in Pastoral Care and Counseling, Friends Incubator cohosted an online panel on support structures for Quaker ministry; smaller circles gathered to hear testimonies from public ministers, and a panel spoke on the vocation of spiritual direction. A growing library of recordings of public presentations is available on Friends Incubator’s YouTube channel.

In early September, a Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow joined: Bec Cormack, who will also be serving part-time with *Western Friend*.

A seven-part monthly online series called “Simple Contemplation: Supporting Ministry through Scripture and Imagination” launched September 27; it pairs guided meditation with worship sharing in small groups.

Friends Incubator’s first ministry fellowship cohort (made up of East Coast meetings, ministers, and elders) continues to shape wider conversations about public ministry, connecting the practical work of accompaniment with a question many Friends everywhere are asking: how is ministry recognized and sustained today?

For a week next spring, Friends Incubator will be in residence at Woolman Hill Retreat Center in Deerfield, Mass., with the current cohort of fellows. Friends Incubator is planning to expand future fellowship to other regions in the United States.

Friends United Meeting

friendsunitedmeeting.org

Friends United Meeting is an association of Christ-centered Quakers comprising 38 yearly meetings/associations and several ministry centers in North America, East Africa, the Caribbean, and Palestine. FUM’s four ministry priorities include leadership and resource development; evangelism; communication;

and global partnership.

FUM's work in Belize is changing. Historically, it has focused primarily on providing a second-chance education option for urban at-risk youth through its support of Belize Friends School (BFS), founded in 1994. BFS reintegrated students into the Belizean education system through remedial education so they could pass their primary school exam and advance to secondary school.

A recently passed education bill has shifted the Belizean government's strategy and funding away from examination results and toward an emphasis on attendance, equity, and access. This shift means there is no longer a class of students who need the second chance BFS offered. Friends in Belize are leading FUM to focus instead on first-chance education by serving preschool students: to lay a solid foundation for young learners at Belize Friends Preschool.

"As they learn in a respectful and loving environment, we pray that they will come to know the living God who leads our work," said BFS Principal Antoliana Budna.

Immediate concerns include purchasing culturally relevant, age-appropriate reading resources; hiring a teacher with early childhood experience; and installing safe playground equipment. The first cohort begins this fall.

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Asia–West Pacific Section)

fwccawps.org

Friends World Committee for Consultation, Asia–West Pacific Section (AWPS) is the collective body for Friends located in the Asia–West Pacific region.

In February, AWPS launched a "Month of Action on Myanmar," inviting Friends to reflect on the brutal 2021 military coup in Burma, learn more about nonviolent responses, and explore ways to witness meaningfully, in large or small ways, during the four weeks.

The invitation was modeled on a similar project undertaken by Australia Yearly Meeting in 2025 to draw attention to the situation in Palestine. Online groups, websites, and introductory webinars helped Friends grasp complex

issues and learn about a range of useful actions, including connecting locally with the affected diaspora. Participants pledged to support each other to take at least three actions of solidarity to stand with the people of Burma/Myanmar.

After four weeks, Friends were more aware of the current situation in Myanmar and attuned to future developments. Some Friends chose to stay connected via the online social media group or by worshiping with Yangon Recognized Meeting; all were strengthened by the month's collective insights, diverse actions, and stories of Burmese courage.

With the world as it is, participating in opportunities like this to experience Quaker witness serves as a reminder that Spirit is ever present, and that peace is possible.

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Section of the Americas)

fwccamericas.org

Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas fosters fellowship among the Society of Friends in the Americas, where the Quaker community extends from the Arctic to the Andes.

The first two cohorts of the Quaker Connect program include 20 unprogrammed and programmed meetings and churches from the United States, Jamaica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru. The two-year program encourages the meetings and churches to experiment with new ways to engage their communities.

Recent improvements to the Section's online Find Friends Map (available at fwccamericas.org/findfriends) has made it more user-friendly.

In April, the Section held a training for interpreters in Greensboro, N.C., in partnership with the Center for New North Carolinians. The 16-hour, professional standards-based curriculum welcomed equal numbers of native English and Spanish speakers, including two new interpreters from Philadelphia and Cuba Yearly Meetings.

FWCC staff and volunteers have also held consultations in Guatemala,

Bolivia, El Salvador, Peru, and the United States. Intervisitation has both inspired and strengthened community, and the Section has dedicated significant time toward establishing intercultural guidance on traveling in ministry.

October 4 is World Quaker Day, with the theme "Let Peace Be Among Us." A ninetieth anniversary celebration of FWCC is scheduled for October 9 in Philadelphia, Pa., honoring the organization's decades of work in bringing together Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences.

Public Friends

publicfriends.org

The mission of Public Friends is to ensure the future of Friends in North America by supporting and developing Quaker ministers to a professional standard.

In its first year of operations, Public Friends supported ministers by writing a comprehensive recording process and providing monthly professional meetings for members.

In its second year, Public Friends expanded to provide a professional association for ministers, and it began offering events that focus on practical skills and advice, such as workshops on making money in ministry and the practical aspects of traveling ministry, as well as a panel on the pros and cons of seminary, co-hosted by Earlham School of Religion's Quaker Leadership Center. This work was supported by grants from the Shoemaker Fund and the Tyson Memorial Fund.

Now in its third year, the organization continues to offer monthly online meetings for ministers and to expand its workshop series, with upcoming sessions on climate change ministry, conflict in meetings, and money management for ministers.

On April 16, 2027, Public Friends will host its first one-day conference, "Ensuring the Future of Friends in North America."

Quakers Uniting in Publications

quakerquip.com

Quakers Uniting in Publications (QUIP) is an international network of

Quaker authors, editors, publishers, and booksellers with a concern for the ministry of the written word. The group's goal is to share, in print and digitally, Quaker values. QUIP offers spring and autumn educational programs and shares members' recent publications more widely.

The virtual spring meeting, "Getting Published as a Quaker," was held in May and featured a moderated panel including Janaki Spickard Keeler, author and editor of Pendle Hill pamphlets and books; Audrey Greenhall, manager of FGC QuakerBooks bookstore; Eric Muhr, publisher of Barclay Press; Nancy Haines and David Haines, self-published authors; Jennifer Kavanagh, author and book editor based in London, England; and Sergei Grushko, a representative of Quaker publisher Friends House Moscow. The business meeting approved a \$1,000 Tacey Sowle grant (assisting those from underserved countries) to a Kenyan writer. The "Show and Tell" portion of the meeting gave space for authors and publishers to share brief descriptions of their new and recent publications.

The autumn QUIP meeting on "Quakers and Publishing" is scheduled for October 24, 2026. It will be a one-day, online-only meeting for writers, publishers, booksellers, and anyone else interested in the work and ministry of sharing words in the world.

DEVELOPMENT

Progresa: Guatemala Friends Scholarship Program

progresagt.org

Progresa is a Quaker-sponsored scholarship program for Indigenous Mayans to attend universities in Guatemala.

The current student body includes 91 women and 24 men; 81 percent speak a Mayan language. The most common majors are medicine, social work, nursing, agronomy, law, and engineering.

Four in-country staff members meet one-on-one monthly with the scholarship recipients. There are in-person quarterly workshops on topics such as organization, emotional health, and financial literacy.

Each student performs 40 hours of community service per year, providing help to their community while also building their resumes.

It is a great benefit to an Indigenous Mayan community to have a professional such as a doctor, a social worker, or an engineer who's fluent in the language living and working in the community. It is also a great benefit to the Progresa graduates to find ways to successfully live in their respective communities and avoid the perils of immigration.

Since many areas of study involve documents in English, Progresa also provides an annual week-long opportunity for the students to receive English language instruction from a native speaker. The lessons are provided by volunteers from the United States who come to Guatemala during the students' winter break. In January, the seventeenth year of this program ran and included a visit from Nobel Prize-winning astrophysicist John C. Mather, who shared about his experience working at NASA.

Quaker Service Australia

qsa.org.au

Quaker Service Australia (QSA) is the international development organization for Quakers in Australia, working alongside communities in Australia, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific to build a more peaceful, just, equitable, and compassionate world through community-led projects.

In India, a new partnership with Arogya Agam is supporting Dalit and Adivasi women to build sustainable livelihoods and economic resilience. In Uganda, farming families are using agroecological approaches to improve food security and adapt to climate change. And in Cambodia, women are building skills, livelihoods, and leadership through climate-smart agriculture and permaculture.

Through its Aubrey Bequest funding program, QSA supported five new initiatives working with refugees and displaced communities, from helping Afghan peace workers reach safety to strengthening refugee-led food security and education programs.

In May, QSA hosted a webinar

featuring guest speaker Joyce Ajlouny, general secretary of American Friends Service Committee, reflecting on the role of international non-governmental organizations in the current global climate.

Last November, during QSA's annual general meeting, members and supporters enjoyed a rare opportunity to hear from Josephine Kizza, executive director of St. Jude Family Projects in Uganda, one of QSA's longest-standing project partners.

QSA has also been preparing for rigorous re-accreditation under the Australian Government's NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). The process has challenged QSA to improve the ways it governs, manages risk, safeguards people, and demonstrates accountability.

Right Sharing of World Resources

rswr.org

Since 1967, Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR) has embodied Quaker concern for global inequity. RSWR recognizes that economic justice and spiritual growth are connected. In Guatemala, India, Kenya, and Sierra Leone, RSWR partners with women's groups that build savings and businesses. RSWR also offers activities and resources that explore the spiritual dimensions of money, simplicity, and consumption.

The organization's partnership model with the women's groups has evolved in recent years. RSWR country coordinators now work with groups for up to four years, a significant increase from the earlier timeframe of 12–18 months. Additionally, women's groups that have previously received a RSWR grant can now apply for additional funding. In April, RSWR offered its first round of these second grants. Both of these shifts were born from deep listening to RSWR country coordinators who felt the need for deepened relationships and more support for each group.

Spiritual education programs, predominantly offered in the United States and online, have also grown over the last year. Workshop offerings have expanded to include sessions such as "Money, Me, and Community," which

guides participants in reflecting on the practical and spiritual ways that money shapes our relationships.

In February, RSWR launched a new website designed to make it easier to find resources, read impact stories, explore upcoming events, and learn more about hosting or attending a Right Sharing workshop.

EDUCATION

Friends Council on Education

friendscouncil.org

Friends Council on Education nurtures the Quaker life of schools; strengthens the network of support; promotes Quaker-based learning and decision making through consultations, programs, and publications; and assists in the establishment of new Friends schools. The organization advances common ideals, expectations, and standards in alignment with the needs of students today. There are 73 member schools serving over 20,000 students.

Friends Council has started to amplify its support to schools via the Ravdin Fund by giving larger grants than in the past. Such grants directly affect a school's ability to engage professional advice and counsel to guide the school through a high-impact project around financial sustainability.

Friends Council is becoming an approved member of International Council Advancing Independent School Accreditation (ICAISA), which is a nonprofit organization that establishes and upholds standards for accrediting associations in order to ensure quality and accountability in independent and international schools across the globe. Work with ICAISA will enhance Friends Council's Membership Renewal Process (MRP).

This school year, the MRP will engage ten schools in a structured framework for evaluating their mission, governance, worship practices, equity and justice efforts, leadership, curriculum, and overall community life through the lens of Quaker principles and practice. Notably, several schools will be participating in this process for the first time.

Historic Fair Hill

historicfairhill.com

Historic Fair Hill (HFH) offers programming in early literacy, community building, advocacy-based history, and urban greening in the Fairhill neighborhood of North Philadelphia, Pa. It was founded in the 1990s by Quakers who came together to restore a neglected Quaker burial ground where abolitionists and activists had been laid to rest. Today, the group takes action for social justice in one of the highest poverty areas of Philadelphia.

This summer, HFH welcomed 12 teen neighbors as youth interns. They focused on community pride, engagement, and beautification. Over the past few years, two youth interns have moved into paid staff roles.

Throughout the school year, HFH operates four school libraries and provides literacy assistants and reading buddies. During the summer, a program called Wondrous Wednesdays runs weekly for children to read books, sing songs, and connect to nature. This year saw the highest attendance yet.

HFH has been working with the Philadelphia Land Bank to acquire and transform vacant lots. The Auburn Street garden is expanding to include a Food Forest that will allow HFH to provide more free produce to families. HFH is also planning to break ground on its first permanent home in early 2027. The new space and expanded garden will both enable more programming, connection with more neighbors, and greater year-round opportunities.

The School of the Spirit Ministry

schoolofthespirit.org

The School of the Spirit is a Quaker-founded ministry of prayer and learning that offers programs and contemplative retreats throughout the year. It is dedicated to helping all who wish to be more faithful listeners and responders to the Inward Teacher.

The school's newest spiritual formation program, God's Promise Fulfilled, is in its second of two years through February 2027. Participants are listening for the Spirit in community in order to grow into an understanding of their gifts and

ministries while living under our culture's damaging logic of domination and injustice.

Over the first weekend in September, the Streams of Living Water retreat gathered participants, core teachers, elders, and staff from past extended programs around their experiences of God's presence working through them in the world.

An online reflective retreat, Breathing the Beloved, was held in September. Participants sought to release resistance, rest in Spirit, and breathe in being beloved.

Two contemplative retreats are scheduled so far for 2027. Friends will gather at Powell House in Old Chatham, N.Y., in January, and at Siena Retreat Center in Racine, Wis., in April.

Participating in God's Power is a 16-month program designed to help participants open powerfully to the Source, work through internal resistance and connect this grounding to actions in the world. This program of six residencies will return in 2028–2029.

Woodbrooke

woodbrooke.org.uk

Woodbrooke, based in Britain, delivers a wide range of learning courses and research programs, rooted in the Quaker tradition and open to all. Courses are offered online and in-person, alongside online worship six days a week.

Woodbrooke recently announced its program of courses for November through April. The courses offer opportunities for Friends to deepen their understanding of Quaker history and theology, enrich their spirituality, develop their roles within their Quaker community, and explore peace and social justice.

Over the past year, Woodbrooke has worked with Britain Yearly Meeting's Reparation Working Group to research and deliver learning on reparation, including undertaking historical and theological research into the Quaker theology used to justify and support systems of enslavement and oppression, as well as the theology of abolition, reparations, and liberation. This research is presented in a report, launching at a conference in October, and will be explored in an online course in December.

In July, three students graduated from Woodbrooke's Centre for Research in Quaker Studies (CRQS): two with PhDs

and one with an MA.

Woodbrooke regularly hosts key lectures, including the George Richardson Lecture, given annually by a leading academic in Quaker studies. The 2026 George Richardson Lecture was delivered in September by Haverford College's David Harrington Watt; it was entitled "Quakers and Nazis: The Stories We Tell."

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECOJUSTICE

Quaker Earthcare Witness quakerearthcare.org

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) is a North America-based international community of Friends called to act with courage and spiritual depth in the face of the climate and biodiversity crisis. QEW works to inspire Spirit-led action for ecological justice, right-relationship, and an Earth restored.

This year QEW has expanded its impact through field campaigns, broad outreach, and earthcare advocacy.

In Philadelphia, Pa., new Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow Norwood Keaton is working on ground-level campaign partnerships with local Quakers to oppose exploitative data centers in the New Jersey Pinelands, halt proposed LNG export facilities along the Delaware River, and push for bold climate justice legislation. QEW launched parallel efforts in California, organizing a town hall and interfaith summit in August for climate justice and to demand fossil fuel companies pay for damages and the renewable energy transition.

This summer, QEW upgraded the Quaker Earth Action Map, connecting hundreds of Quaker meetings across North America and internationally. QEW leadership engaged Friends across the country through nationwide speaking tours, including keynote ministry at yearly meetings and workshops on resisting data center expansion.

In September, QEW organized its first biannual Earthcare Day of Action, engaging over 30 meetings across three continents. Friends from Kenya to Seattle, Wash., took hands-on action by planting native trees, building pollinator hotels, and advocating for regional environmental policy.

INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Friends Fiduciary Corporation friendsfiduciary.org

Friends Fiduciary Corporation (FFC) is a Quaker faith-based investment firm that manages the long-term financial assets of Quaker meetings, schools, and other organizations across the country and aligns its investments with broadly held Quaker values.

Through shareholder advocacy, Friends Fiduciary has continued to engage corporations with the goal of improving impacts on people and the planet. This proxy season FFC has engaged with over 45 companies on issues ranging from climate and sustainability to human rights and sound governance. It filed a total of 18 resolutions, serving as lead filer on seven of them. A highlight of the season was the strong investor support at corporate annual meetings, including on proposals requesting the separation of chair and CEO positions at two corporations: 23 percent support at one and 33 percent at the other. Additionally, a number of shareholder proposals led to reaching agreement with and subsequently withdrawing from several companies.

Friends Fiduciary has continued to speak with companies about sustainability concerns, the need to protect human rights—including tech company engagements and engagements around living wage, workers' rights, and the human right to health—and the importance of diversity and inclusion at the workforce and board level.

In the months ahead, Friends Fiduciary will be rolling out a new website and client portal and sharing updates about the progress of individual investing at Friends Fiduciary.

RETREAT, CONFERENCE, AND STUDY CENTERS

Pendle Hill pendlehill.org

Pendle Hill is a Quaker study, retreat, and conference center located outside of Philadelphia, Pa., that fosters Spirit-led learning and community.

Between March and August 2026, Pendle Hill welcomed approximately 401 sojourner reservations, 91 conference groups, 1,499 online and in-person program registrants, and 15,529 visits to hybrid meeting for worship.

Spring on campus was filled with resident students and scholars centering down for the Spring Term. This immersive program included time for participants to settle into daily rhythms of work, study, and worship, and culminated in this year's Quaker Institute in collaboration with Earlham School of Religion's Quaker Leadership Center.

In February, Pendle Hill published the statement "Our Call to End and Reform Unjust Immigration Enforcement Practices and Laws." Rooted in the testimony of equality and the belief in the Inner Light within every person, the statement is both a condemnation of current immigration practices and an invitation for other faith communities and individuals to "rise courageously alongside immigrants facing persecution."

Staff and volunteers continue to restore the campus after the devastating storm in early 2024, including planting several species of native trees.

Pendle Hill published four new pamphlets, with original pieces from Max Carter, Jennifer Kavanagh, Steven Dale Davison, and C. Wess Daniels, the last of which marked its 500th pamphlet. Pendle Hill has also expanded its presence on Bookshop.org.

Silver Wattle Quaker Centre silverwattle.org.au

Silver Wattle Quaker Centre is a place for contemplation, retreat, and study situated on the edge of Weereewa, a large inland lake in Nggunawal Country, 40 minutes from Australia's capital city, Canberra. Grounded in Quaker tradition, the center offers social and religious education in addition to support and preparation for witness and service.

In late June, Silver Wattle hosted four Pacific Peace Pilgrims from Oceania as they prepared to lobby politicians to ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This Pacific peace action was supported by Australian Quakers against nuclear

weapons and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

These pilgrims have experienced the devastating human and environmental impacts of nuclear testing in their homelands and Sea Country. This group included Australian First Nations representatives, including a second-generation nuclear test survivor from Maralinga, South Australia. The pilgrims advocate for a future that is “decolonized, demilitarized, denuclearised, and decarbonised.”

Although Silver Wattle has been closed for renovations to increase disability access and to create a library for early Quaker works, the center opened to support the important witness of these pilgrims, who seek peace through nuclear arms control.

Beginning in October 2026, Silver Wattle will again welcome individual sojourners and groups to its retreat center, set on 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres) of Australian bush land.

SERVICE AND PEACE WORK

American Friends Service Committee

afsc.org

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) works for a just, peaceful, and sustainable world free of violence, inequality, and oppression.

In June, AFSC launched the Quaker Action for Migration Justice Network (QAMJN, pronounced “Q-imagine”). QAMJN’s purpose is to connect Friends, meetings, and other stakeholders so they can build community, share ideas, and organize migration justice actions.

On July 4, as the United States marked its 250th anniversary, AFSC published its “Declaration of Resistance,” part of a larger National Day of Action. Across the country, over 30 Quaker communities hosted local vigils. The Declaration is part of AFSC’s new Commit to Resist campaign, calling on all to protect communities, resist authoritarianism, and build peace with justice.

In August, AFSC joined other

human rights organizations in a lawsuit challenging a February 2025 executive order by the Trump administration that authorized sanctions on individuals and organizations affiliated with the work of the International Criminal Court. The plaintiffs state that the sanctions are a blatantly illegal attack on international justice and should be struck down.

Since April, AFSC staff have offered presentations to over 50 Quaker communities around the world, including over 20 yearly meetings, where AFSC facilitated programs about immigration justice, Palestine activism, resisting authoritarianism, and more. From February through August, AFSC’s Quaker Engagement team also conducted a speaking tour of Quaker communities throughout the Northeastern United States.

Friends Peace Teams

friendspaceteams.org

Friends Peace Teams (FPT) is a Spirit-led organization working to develop long-term relationships with communities in conflict around the world to create programs for peace building, healing, and reconciliation.

In regional teams on five continents, volunteers of many different faiths, ethnicities, and cultures work together to create enduring cultures of peace. Every region engages in Quaker practices, Alternatives to Violence Project, and Power of Goodness.

The Europe and Middle East Team offers psycho-social support to people affected by war and builds skills among justice and peace workers in Ukraine, North Caucasus, Iraq, and Palestine.

Peacebuilding en las Américas supports children, families in crisis, incarcerated individuals, people with disabilities, and war survivors across El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, and Ecuador.

The African Great Lakes Team facilitates healing ethnic divisions and trauma among refugees from wars in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as offers economic empowerment, women’s health, and education for English literacy and agriculture.

The Asia–West Pacific Team supports displaced persons from Myanmar–Burma, eco-justice projects in the Philippines and Korea, and skills development among justice and peace workers in Nepal, Indonesia, and Papua.

The North America Team shares resources for economic justice, supports children’s peace libraries, and lifts up Indigenous voices to heal from the harms of genocide, colonization, and forced assimilation, including harms caused by Quaker Indian Boarding Schools.

Youth Service Opportunities Project

ysop.org

Youth Service Opportunities Project (YSOP), a nonprofit with Quaker roots founded in 1983, engages youth, college students, and adults in service experiences through a program that combines an orientation to the issues, hands-on volunteer work, and reflection. Through this process, YSOP inspires its participants to broaden their perspectives and become engaged citizens.

YSOP renewed its Washington, D.C. programming this spring after pausing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Five student groups joined YSOP for weeklong service immersion programs in the nation’s capital.

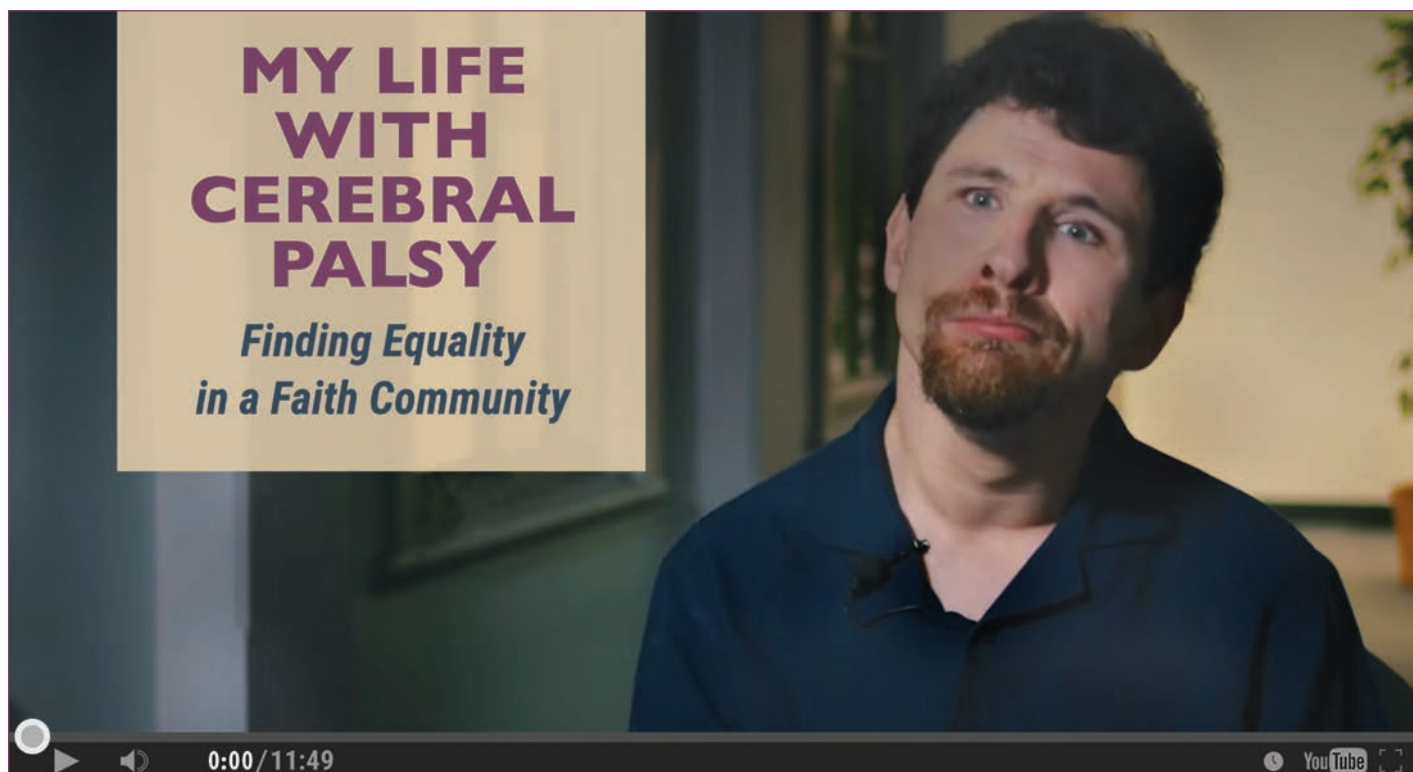
Throughout the spring and summer, YSOP youth volunteers served neighbors experiencing homelessness and food insecurity while learning through service and conversation. Groups worked with DC Central Kitchen, Martha’s Table, Charlie’s Place, Father McKenna Center, So Others Might Eat, Thrive DC, and the Capital Area Food Bank to address homelessness and poverty across the city. Students heard from guest speakers from Charlie’s Place and Community Family Life Services who shared personal stories and knowledge.

Each program included orientation and daily reflection led by YSOP facilitators. Luther Place Memorial Church hosted the groups overnight and provided space for these sessions, during which students processed their experiences, connected service to broader social and structural issues, and deepened their understanding of the communities they served.

When Carl Sigmond is with other Quakers, he tells us, he does not feel like his cerebral palsy sets him apart from others as much as it can in other settings. “When I meet someone for the first time,” he says, “they really want to know me, and to see me for who I am. I am a complete equal.”

Quaker SPEAK

Weekly Videos. Vital Ministries.

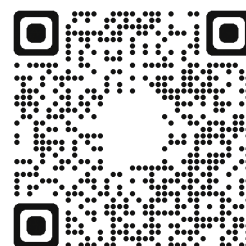


Carl and Whittier Mikkelsen (another Friend with cerebral palsy we spoke with for this video) both speak frankly about how much work remains to be done when it comes to full inclusion of people with disabilities, despite Friends’ best intentions. However, they remain optimistic. “Ask for what you want. Ask for what you need,” Carl advises. “And in asking, be open to receiving. Be open to co-creating something with your community that you never knew was possible.”

Watch this video at QuakerSpeak.com

A project of
**FRIENDS
JOURNAL** Produced by **Layla Cuthrell**

Support QuakerSpeak at
QuakerSpeak.com/donate





A Place to Truly Belong

At Friends House in Santa Rosa, community is built on kindness, respect and shared experience. Independent and assisted living support a welcoming environment where residents form lasting friendships and meaningful connections. Surrounded by supportive neighbors and natural beauty, residents discover a place where they can live fully, stay engaged and feel truly at home.

Explore your options.

(707) 573-4508 | friendshouse.org
684 Benicia Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95409



Friends House
A FRONT PORCH COMMUNITY

Independent Living - Assisted Living

     License 496801929, COA 353