



Western Quarterly News

of the Religious Society Of Friends

Western Quarterly Meeting Newsletter January 2016

FROM THE CO-CLERKS

Greetings Friends!

Quakerism is a beautiful, living religion. The simplicity of our Meeting Houses allow us to look for God within ourselves and fellow worshipers, ideally without external distraction. I am grateful that I found Quakerism, though it was quite by accident.

The hour of weekly worship provides me the luxury of time to focus on myself and engage my brain-heart-body system. I try to discern what is important and how I should proceed with guidance from the inner-light -- a Light that is sadly often buried under layers of activities in our daily lives. Ironically it would not work as well to worship alone, as I mentally bounce my thoughts off of the others in the room. Being surrounded by fellow seekers and open-hearted listeners helps me search for what is just and good - in myself, in others, in the world. This is when I feel God's hand holding mine.

Now if only I could radiate this feeling to others. But wait - I can! We all can: through a smile, a kind word, a needed hug. We share it on a larger scale, too, by working for peace, environmental protection, ending racism and classism, feeding the hungry, clothing and sheltering the homeless.... Whatever we are called to do it is likely Quakers have a group already working on it.

My hope is to see Western Quarterly Meeting come together as a multi-age group to do some of these things together and have fun doing it. Especially when there seems to be so much darkness in the word around us - it is even more important to share our Light.

I hope you are feeling the love this letter is trying to convey.

Shelley Hastings, WQM Co-Clerk

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January WQM details

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Quarterly Meeting Worship, January 17th

Hockessin Friends Meeting, 9:15 am

Children's program * potluck lunch* details pg.2

Undoing Racism: Where Are We, and Where Do We Go from Here?

Hockessin Meeting is located at 501 Old Wilmington Road in Hockessin, DE



Tenth Query - Stewardship of the Environment

For the Meeting:

Is the Meeting concerned that human interaction with nature be responsible, guided by a reverence for life and a sense of the splendor of God's continuing creation?

Are the decisions of the Meeting and its committees relating to the uses of property, goods, services, and energy made with sensitivity toward the environmental impact of those choices?

How does our Meeting learn about environmental concerns and then act in the community on its concerns?

For the Individual:

How am I helping to develop a social, economic, and political system which will nurture an environment which sustains and enriches life for all?

Am I aware of the place of water, air, and soil in my life? Do I consider with care the necessity of purchasing substances hazardous to the environment? Do I act as a faithful steward of the environment in the use and disposal of such hazardous substances?

Do I choose with care the use of technology and devices that truly simplify and add quality to my life without adding an undue burden to essential resources?

Western Quarterly Meeting § All-Quarter Meeting for Worship At Hockessin Friends Meeting Sunday, January 17th

Morning Schedule:

9:15 am	Sign-in
9:30 am	Morning programs begin
10:45 am	Meeting for Worship
11:45	Potluck lunch & fellowship
12:30 pm	Quarterly Meeting for Business

Adult Program:

Undoing Racism — Where are we, and where do we go from here?

After a short recap of the Beyond Diversity 101 presentation given at PYM's Continuing Session in November (see pg 5 of this newsletter for a snapshot) we will delve into a discussion of how we go beyond thinking and talking about our social concerns, and move into action.

Already involved in area groups working for cross-cultural education and change? Share your story and add to the Resource References we are compiling.

Children's Program:

Discerning Our Gifts - for us and for the community



Children will Join seasoned FDS teachers Rose Rupert & Greta Rech for a fantastic morning. Young and old kids alike will enjoy the program we have planned, which includes a story, activities, play-time and a snack!

Robin Moves On; New Youth Activity Coordinator Needed

In February of 2015 I stepped into the role of Youth Activities Coordinator for Western Quarter. I was excited to engage with the youth of Western Quarter, and hoped to provide meaningful activities while fostering friendships among our young Friends. It is my hope that I progressed toward those goals. What I did not anticipate was how much I would benefit as a member of Western Quarter from my position. I met many wonderful people and learned the potential that the Quarterly (and Yearly) Meeting has for all of us and the larger community.

In September, I accepted a teaching position at my children's preschool. Unfortunately, I can no longer give the time necessary to the Youth Activities Coordinator position. While I am ending my time in the position, I am excited for my children

and myself to continue our involvement with Western Quarter. I thank you all for your support over the past 10 months, and I look forward to seeing many of you at Quarterly Meeting at Hockessin this month!

-Robin Harper

Employment Opportunity

Western Quarter seeks a part-time **Youth Activities Coordinator**. The YAC is responsible for arranging and managing the children's programs during Quarterly Meeting (4 times a year) as well as working with others in the Quarter to plan and implement other youth activities several times a year. [Click here](#) for the full posting and job description. Please submit a resume and cover letter outlining interest and experience as soon as possible to:

coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org



Coming Together to House the Homeless

By Molly Wood

Last July Sarah shared on the Western Quarter Blog a [quiz about families, poverty and homelessness](#).

Consideration of these issues was a first step in our relationship with Family Promise of Southern Chester County. As more of us have come together to help implement this program we have learned that Family Promise is truly a team effort! There are currently 11 hosting and 15 supporting churches as well as many volunteers who support the Resource Center in West Grove. Family Promise has already had success with the first family that joined the program back on November 1st — they are currently in their own home!

Each week a hosting church and supporting church or churches provide a home and meals for the guest families in the Family Promise program. From December 20th-December 27th Kennett Meeting, in conjunction with West Grove Meeting and Church of the Open Door, shared a wonderful Christmas week with two families, totaling eight people. We had many wonderful dinners, including a special Christmas Eve meal, and surprises for our guests Christmas morning complete with a special breakfast and a Christmas cookout! Many played games with the

families, read stories to the children and did crafts together. None of this would have been possible without the phenomenal support of all the volunteers from Kennett Meeting, West Grove Meeting and Church of the Open Door. You all are amazing!

New Garden Meeting helped with financial support, and London Grove members offered assistance with food. Hockessin Friends already provides support for Family Promise of Northern New Castle County by helping with meals, and some Friends at Centre Meeting have been discussing getting involved. There is always a need for volunteers. Being a part of Family Promise and being able to support these families as they work to regain their independence is truly faith in practice.



From the Ether(net) - meaningful musings found on the internet



The Place Where We Are Right

From the place where we are right
flowers will never grow
in the Spring.

The place where we are right
is hard and trampled
like a yard.

But doubts and loves
dig up the world
like a mole, a plough.
And a whisper will be heard in the place
where the ruined
house once stood.

—Yehuda Amichai

By Parker Palmer, Facebook post on Dec. 18, 2015
(reprinted with permission)

Here's a poem I re-read frequently. It reminds me of a principle that applies to every part of my life, personal, professional and political: Nothing new can grow between us when we speak to one another from "the place where *we* are right."

It's no accident that "humus" and "humility" come from the same word root. Humus helps plants to grow and humility helps new thinking grow!

The poem also reminds me that things between us change for the better when we talk with each other, not from our certainties but from our doubts and loves. Many of us who differ politically love the same things — our children and grandchildren, our country, the natural world. Many of us who differ politically harbor the same doubts — that what's being done (or not done) to care for the things we love is either the best or the right thing to do.

Yes, we differ on what ought to be done. But what if instead of beginning by arguing about solutions — about "the place where *we* are right" — we began by sharing our loves and doubts? Our political conversations would be much more productive if they proceeded from that kind of rich and human common ground.

I know it's a long shot, but it's worth a try! One thing I'm certain about is that what's happening right now is not only failing to solve urgent problems — it's bringing us down. Each and every one of us can do our little bit to turn the tide...

P.S. Yehuda Amichai is widely regarded as Israel's greatest modern poet. If you read "The Place Where We Are Right"

while remembering the political context in which it was written, the poem's power multiplies.

Re-cycle your Bi-cycle

Any bike, any size can be donated through this program. Nearly any condition is acceptable, too — non-working bicycles will be repaired or used for parts.



February 14—17

Bring bikes to **Kennett Friends Meeting**
(drop off location will be marked)

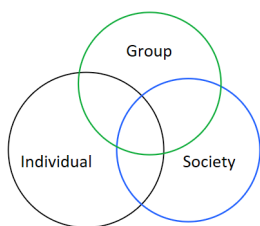
Questions? Contact Sarah (WQM Coordinator)
office: 610-444-1012 or [email her](#)

Donated bicycles go to: The Urban Bike Project of Wilmington. The UBP provides free or low-cost bicycles to youth and adults who need transportation, as well as safety & maintenance education.



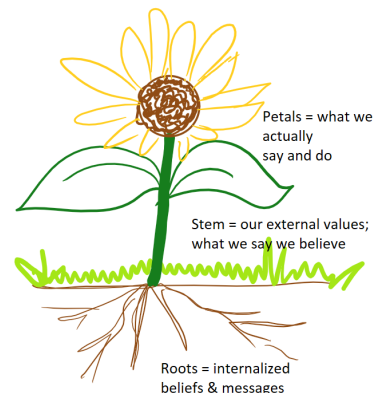
Beyond Diversity Frameworks—as presented at PYM Continuing Sessions in November

During the morning session on Nov. 7th, Michele Ewing, of Virginia Beach Friends Meeting, presented two of the frameworks taught in Niyonu Spann's Beyond Diversity 101 classes, and described these frameworks as, "foundational in the work of equity and social justice." The frameworks give us an idea of how and why we think or act in certain ways, and empower us with the knowledge and ability to make different choices from a place of increased awareness. We will be reviewing these frameworks at Quarterly Meeting on January 17th—so please join us for the morning discussion.



One framework Michelle covered was the three circles. They represent three levels of feedback we receive about ourselves that help shape our identities. We all get "pro" and "con" messages about ourselves that help form different parts of our identities: as individuals ("I'm the pretty one"), as part of various groups ("scientists are smart"; "teaching is noble"), and as part of society ("black people are more often criminals"). The greatest misunderstandings occur when we speak across these circles, like trying to compare a personal experience with a social reality.

The other framework was represented by a flower, symbolizing how the messages we internalize show themselves in our actions. Whether or not they match what we say we believe (or hold as values) is another matter, and using this model can be quite revealing. Digging deeper into the "dirt" to find the roots of our behavior is one way to expose the messages we have absorbed, and change the narrative in our heads.



As We Lift Each Other: A Reflection on a PYM Continuing Session

by tonya thames taylor,
Fallowfield Monthly Meeting

"I maintain that I have been a Negro three times – a Negro baby, a Negro girl, and a Negro woman. Still, if you have received no clear cut impression of what the Negro in America is like, then you are in the same place with me. There is no The Negro here. Our lives are so diversified, internal attitudes so varied, appearances and capabilities so different, that there is no possible classification so catholic that it will cover us all, except My people! My people!" — Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on the Road* (1942, reprint, New York: HarperPerennial, 1996, 192).

"We claim to be against discrimination in dealing with persons of any religious or racial group. We have never fully implemented this testimony, but we believe we are moving slowly toward making it more effective." — Jane P. Rushmore, *The Quaker Way* (npd, Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 27).

On January 15, 1979, during a speech about civil rights and identity author James Baldwin repeats what he once hears activist and social critic Malcolm X ask a young man, "If you are a citizen, why are you fighting for civil rights?" This earthy question intrigues me and serves as a query when I battle contrived conflicts that threaten to interfere with my centering and settling in The Spirit. I use this

query when I envision myself in a beloved community where love is paramount and humanity is regarded as sacred.

I appreciate the sweet fellowship found in the ministration of The Religious Society of Friends. For me, when Friends meet, it is another opportunity for business, clarity, renewal, instruction, sanctification, and growth. Therefore, I regard the seventh day, eleventh month Continuing Session at Westtown School in West Chester, PA as one of solemnity. The guiding query for the Continuing Session asks for intentional discernment in matters of race and equality. The specific query is, "What is God calling PYM Quakers to do next to end racism and white supremacy in the Religious Society of Friends and Beyond?"

At one segment of Continuing Sessions, I experience sadness when a nonwhite Friend says, "I don't see myself in that picture," while looking at a projected snapshot of a newly-formed committee composed of all whites. My interpretation of the convicting statement: Why is there a lack of phenotypical difference? At that moment, literally, my body quakes. Thoughts rush. First, it shifts to folklorist and author Zora Neale Hurston's recalling of a conversation among black men in

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Upcoming Events

Saturday, January 16th

Movie Night at Hockessin Meeting FREE - Double Feature
5 pm Iron Giant (PG)
6:30 pm Pizza and Salad
7:15 pm Mooz-lum (PG-13)
Save the date: March 12 - Inside Out/Selma (times TBA)

Saturday, January 16th at 7 pm

Sword of the Spirit with Magpie Music
Kennett Friends Meeting
The music from this concert is based upon the life and letters of Mary and John Brown, abolitionists, portrayed by Terry Leonino and Greg Artzner.

Sunday, January 17th at 2 pm

Sword of the Spirit with Magpie Music
Kennett Friends Meeting
This one-act play is based upon the life and letters of Mary and John Brown, abolitionists, portrayed by Terry Leonino and Greg Artzner.

Saturday, January 30th at 7 pm

Family Fun Night concert with the *Dukes of Destiny*
West Grove Friends Meeting

February 14-17th

WQM bicycle donation drive; details pg. 4
Collection site: Kennett Friends Meeting

Saturday, February 20th at 7 pm

Square Dancing at Willistown Monthly Meeting
Music: Thornbury Ramblers (snow date 2/27)

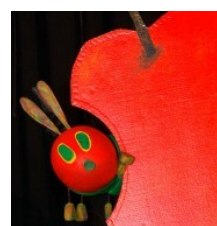
Sunday, February 28th

Intergenerational Roller Skating Party!
All are welcome to worship & lunch at Kennett MM (11 am), then go to the nearby Christiana Skating Rink (in DE) for the afternoon.

Saturday, March 12th at 7:30 pm

Celtic Celebration
with Two Pipers Piping & Friends
Unionville Elementary School

Saturday, March 19th at 2 pm



The Very Hungry Caterpillar and Other Eric Carle Favorites
Unionville High School
presented by the Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia
Mermaid Theatre is best known for unique stage adaptations of children's

beloved literary classics. Five million spectators in fifteen countries have applauded the innovative puppetry, striking scenic effects, evocative original music and gentle storytelling. The gifted artists and whimsical puppets of Mermaid Theatre have delighted family audiences on four continents and earned them international acclaim. In this performance, three beloved stories by Eric Carle, award-winning children's book author and illustrator, are retold on stage through the magic of black light and fanciful puppets.

Save the date: April 17th Western Quarterly Meeting at Centre MM — Fun! Fellowship! Food!

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the essay "My People, My People," when they say "My skin-folks, but not kinfolks..." Next, still quivering, I think of tokenism and its implicit logic that nonwhite friends mainly live the same historical and political narrative, devoid of any substantial difference. It boxes an identity. Then, a flashback overtakes my reasoning. I am a child on a summer day in Gulfport, Mississippi. I literally see and feel the rays of the sun in my eyes and go to turn away. Yet, my grandmother gently uses her fingers to keep my face pointed at the sun and says, "Surely as the sun shines, God loves you. You are of God." Just as it enters, the flashback leaves, but not without my remembering where my sense of profound dignity emerges.

My spirituality is off limits to the machinations of twisted trajectories of contestable, contrived, and conflicted concepts of race. Even considering the engagement of participating in the endlessly laborious exer-

cise of having a binary — contrived identity of blackness and a prescribed religious experience of Friends — spiritually is debilitating. To entertain the thought is to allow earthly concepts to succeed to penetrate the most sacred core of my being. I shake at the thought of my volunteering my body and essence to serve as terrains for earthly saviors, who even with the most noblest of purposes — have done what inequality aims to do: objectify and ascribe character and experience. In the earthly realm, I am wearied by the constant struggle with implied judgments and expectations of oppression that aims to dwarf my spirit. I am familiar with a bitterness that can have me at a tiring state of high anxiety and perplexing agitation. Yet, in *The Spirit*, my copper-colored body is never captured by the snare of the roots of bitterness. I like to think that I possess an energy congruent with the actions of Grace Douglass, a nineteenth-century

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Quaker attendee who sits in a marginalized space to accommodate the bigotry of some Quakers because her skin is not white. Douglass, refusing the reductive prescriptions of the actions of others, exemplifies what her continual attendance to Quaker meeting, despite marginalization, articulates: in worship, divinity resides within us all.

"Friends," as Quaker Jane P. Rushmore writes, "regard their religion as a way of life." (Quaker Way, 25). We recognized that God speaks to us. We are living Epistles to one another and for the review of the world. In meditation and conversations with God, my hope is that we strive to reject the earthly fascination with phenotype and the precipices that accompany such. Needed conversations about structural inequality are welcomed, but we must acknowledge that, the depth of inequality has fractured the identities of all, so no one has full authority or authorship on the issue or can be said to suffer more. Human

rights advocate Martin Luther King Jr, at the conclusion of the voter-initiative March from Selma to Montgomery on March 25, 1965, captures the duplicity of oppressor deferring to one group over the other because of an alleged more authentic voice reimagines the model allegedly being deconstructed, creates a Potemkin village in conversations about equality and assuages any sentiment of guilt of oppression.

I am fully persuaded that the work in the vineyards of equality and peace need as many laborers. Like Hurston notes, we are too diverse to fit into the catholic of any prescriptions based on appearance. I am a citizen and a Friend in The Religious Society of Friends, so my fight is not for membership among Friends, God takes care of that. My goal it to create a beloved community that addresses issues without crushing The Spirit and creating hierarchy.

Report of Parkersville Meeting Property Trustees to Western Quarterly Meeting in 2015

The Annual Meeting for Worship was held Ninth mo. 13, 2015 with about 25 members of Western Quarter and descendants of the founding families present. Friends agreed that the grounds and building are in good order. The grounds are regularly mowed, and the burying ground is trimmed. The tree that fell during a storm in Sixth month was cleared away; it did not do any damage to the fence or Meetinghouse. Further, the undergrowth along the road has been cleared, improving the view of the property from the road. Ruts in the ground in front of the Meetinghouse were filled and seeded. There were no burials during the past year. We continue to be concerned about vandalism to the property. The neighbor across the road has chased children away on various occasions.

Concern was raised that we need to interest younger generations in the care of the property, as most of the Trustees are over the age of 70. Any Friends interested in joining the Trustees are urged to step forward, especially those who may have ancestors buried at Parkersville. You may visit our website parkersvillemeeting.org to learn more about the property.

Friends are encouraged to attend the weekly Meeting for Worship on First Days at 9:30 AM.

Trustees:	John Beer	William B. Parker	Dale Frens
	Joan Hadik	Mary Sproat	

Parkersville Meeting Property Finances as of 12/31/2014

Income		Expenses	
Friends Fiduciary Corp.	\$2,223.49	Mowing and Trimming	\$ 884.13
Donations	1,675.00	Gutters and shingles	1,904.00
Total income	\$3,898.49	Painting	1,951.78
		Miscellaneous carpenter work	2,802.25
		Exterminator contract	200.00
		Total expenses	\$7,742.16
Checking account balance a/o 9/30/2014	\$2,044.35		
Money Market account balance a/o 9/30/2014	\$30,902.13		

SUMMARY of The Minutes of the Business Meeting Session of Western Quarterly Meeting held on 18 October 2015 at Kennett Monthly Meeting, 1-3 PM

Western Quarterly Business Meeting was held at Kennett Monthly Meeting. Friends from Centre, Fallowfield, Hockessin, Kennett, Newark, New Garden, and London Grove Meetings were present.

15.62—Our time began with worship. Responses to the 7th Query on Social Responsibility and Witness were shared.

15.63- Reporting on the Life in our Monthly Meetings. Friends from Centre & Newark MMs shared recent activities.

15.64— Friends approved the minutes of the Western Quarterly Meeting (WQM)'s Support Committee held on 13 September, 2015 at Kennett Monthly Meeting.

15.65—Annual Reports

Records Committee— last gave a report in 2012. This committee is vital in maintaining an accurate record of the life of the quarter. Friends agreed that the Records Committee should continue with support of the Coordinator.

Friends Support Committee (John Woodman Traveling Ministers Fund and Wm Jackson Education Fund): No report. *Parkersville Meeting Property Trustees' (Report)* Friends discussed the need to populate and support the committee.

15.66— Friends approved the schedule of the Western Quarterly Meeting Scheduling, 2016-2019 (Read Attached). Friends agreed to offer flexibility in hosting meals or potluck lunches.

2016 Quarterly Meeting Scheduling:

January 2016—*Hockessin* April 2016—*Centre* July 2016—*Newark* October 2016—*Kendal MM*

15.67— Continuation of WQM Committee List & Restructuring

Friends continued their discussion of WQM committees. The updated list is available online (here).

15.68—Property Committee- Update on Surveys

Four meetings have submitted their property surveys. A reminder should be sent to the other Monthly Meetings.

15.69— Friends approved the Western Quarterly's Nominating Committee's Recommendations for WQM Treasurer (Stan Glowiak of Centre) & Assistant Treasurer (Richard Logan of Hockessin). Friends expressed sincere thanks to Stan and Richard for their willingness to serve the WQM. Friends extended a hearty appreciation to former Treasurer Ariana Langford for her dedication and thorough work. **Friends agreed that the Co-clerks, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer will have the ability to sign checks. There is only one signature required on the checks.**

15.70- Budget & Finance Report— **Read Attached.** WQM is aligned with what we budgeted.

15.71— Coordinators' Report & Updates on Recent and Future Gatherings

Saturday, October 31— Centre MM, with other community partners, is hosting a yard sale benefit to assist Syrian Refugees.

Saturday, November 7th, 9-5:30 PM— PYM Continuing Sessions at Westtown School in West Chester PA.

Saturday, December 12th- Parents' Morning Off (with Concord QM) at Westtown School in West Chester, PA, 9 AM-1 PM for children 3 and over.

Monday, December 14th- Submissions due for the 'holiday' editions of the news & notes flyer, and for the January WQM Newsletter

Sunday, November 15th—Next Western Quarterly Support Meeting— Kennett Monthly Meeting— 3 PM.

15.72— Our time was concluded with a time of brief worship, with the intention of gathering together again for business at our next Support Committee Meeting on November 15, 2015.

Respectfully Submitted,
tonya thames taylor, Recording Clerk
Tenth Month 18, 2015

To read the complete Minutes, and the Minutes from the WQM Support Committee Meetings, please visit our Business Resources page online: <http://westernquarterquakers.org/business-meeting-info/>