



Western Quarterly News

of the Religious Society Of Friends

Western Quarterly Meeting Newsletter July 2016

Warm Summer Greetings Friends!

*"How does Light shine in your life today?"... "What is in your heart?"... The queries on two cards I picked up at PYM events encourage me to reach a little deeper in my connection to others. In case you have not seen them, the text on the reverse of the cards reads: "Instead of asking 'How are you' Quakers traditionally asked one another about their spiritual lives when they met. **We love this practice.** Try this query. Ask someone to tell you their story. Listen. Share your journey."*

I **love** this idea - and these cards!

"Listen," the cards say. People have often told me I am a good listener, but I feel compelled to improve this skill. This is partly due to a career change which is teaching me to hear the deep pain of others. The yearning for improvement also comes from the stories I have heard this past year from Friends who have sought meaning in darkness, and who have been strong enough to reach out for support in life's struggles.

In May, I met an elderly Friend who shared the pain of losing her brother to suicide. She spoke of the nagging question, "If I had used different language when I asked him how he was, when we last spoke, would it have made a difference?" This Friend talked of the mental illness that ran through her family, how her parents never spoke of the father's diagnosis, how it was apparently present in her lost brother, of receiving the same diagnosis only after her adult daughter had been diagnosed. I was struck by her sense of loss, and her regret of secrets and shame in her family. As I sat with this Friend, I knew that while my role with her was to listen, the time was coming for me to speak.



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"Share your journey," advises the PYM cards. Must I? I have my own shame, resulting from a label that was used to silence me when I was young: *Crazy. If they think you are crazy no one will listen to your Truth.* This message is deeply ingrained, and thus it is difficult to admit my own experience with depression. Parker Palmer has eloquently shared his struggles with this disease. Palmer is a weighty Friend and a gifted writer. What can I possibly add to what he and others have said to bring Light to dark places? Spirit gently answers, encouraging me forward. Friends are more direct, providing an emphatic, "Yes, tell your story!"

So I will share a small piece of my journey, a postcard from the scrapbook of my own meandering. When I was twenty-five years old, the great liar that is depression had me beat. Repeated attempts at counseling had failed, and efforts to numb the pain were no longer effective. No one knew of the deep and lasting pain I had endured for years.

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One December night, I jumped off a bridge in Philadelphia with the intent of ending a struggle that I believed could not be won. At one point a police officer had a hold on my arm, and was trying to prevent me from going over the edge. I had to think fast to get away from him, but I did it.

When they got me to the trauma center and cut off my clothes, they found the gun. It only had one bullet in it, and it wasn't chambered. (I would never want to hurt anyone else.) I went off the bridge that night because I hadn't been able to pull the trigger an hour earlier when that gun was in my mouth. Imagine my despair when I realized I had survived the fall and likely broken my back.

One of the emergency doctors said, "I'm a doctor, and it's not my job to talk about God. But I'm telling you, God must have some plan for you to have kept you alive."

"Yes," I thought bitterly, "Clearly He's not done punishing me yet."

Oh, yes, Friends, I know a thing or two about the dark nights of the soul.

Why am I sharing this story with you now?

Surely, we as lay people, as Friends, and as Monthly Meeting communities cannot be expected to meet all of the needs of the mentally ill, the deeply depressed, the suicidal. No, of course not.

I share this story because I would not wish the amount of pain I experienced upon anyone. And I would not want anyone to feel as isolated in their pain as I have felt. So when I hear Friends share experiences of not feeling supported by a faith that provides no clear direction for navigating dark nights, I am reminded of my own experience of feeling forsaken.

So what CAN we do? How are we called to support each other through the rough spots? Do our words provide comfort, or platitudes? At July Quarterly Meeting we will explore how we might "**listen** each other into wholeness," as a recent QuakerSpeak episode suggested. As human beings, we tend to avoid pain; we avoid asking about it, hearing about it, or sharing it. We don't know what to do with it. This is an invitation to Friends, as individuals, and in community, to deepen, to lift up, and to make space. Oh, and we're going to have some fun, do some singing, and share the joy each other's company as well!

I invite you, each and every one of you, to join us for Quarterly Meeting. I pray that we may reach out and reach within; that we may listen and share; that we may find Light in darkness.

Won't you join us?

Until then, may your days be filled with Light!

Your fellow traveler,
Ariana Langford
Co-Clerk, Western Quarterly Meeting

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To listen to the video Ariana mentions in her letter, click on the picture to the left, or follow the link below. You can also search "QuakerSpeak Listening Each Other into Wholeness" and find the link in your search results.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2gL99allqI>

QuakerSpeak is a weekly video series, with new videos released on Thursdays. It is a project of *Friends Journal* and is directed by Jon Watts.

# Western Quarterly Meeting

## Listening Spirituality:

**Deepening Connections, Holding up Love, Light & Hope**  
**Sunday, July 17**

**9:00 am**

How many of us expect an honest answer when we ask “How are you?” How many would be prepared for an honest answer that wasn’t “fine”? In the Religious Society of Friends we rely on each other for pastoral care. This July QM program will allow us to better understand what that means, and lead us to explore ways in which we become stronger care-communities, and how we can “listen each other into wholeness.” We will be guided by WQM Co-clerk, Ariana Langford, and PYM’s Care & Aging Coordinator, George Schaefer. Worship and breaks will be integrated into the adult program; a children’s program will run concurrently, and we will all gather for singing and lunch (provided by our hosts).

### Schedule:

|               |                                              |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 9:00 am       | Check in                                     |
| 9:15-10:30 am | Program part 1                               |
| 10:30-11:30   | Worship & queries                            |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | Program part 2 & singing                     |
| 12:30-1:15 pm | Lunch & sharing from our<br>Monthly Meetings |
| 1:15-2:30     | Meeting for Business                         |

### Location:

Newark Friends Meeting shares space with a school, which is where we will meet:

NCCL (Newark Center for Creative Learning)

[401 Phillips Ave, Newark, Delaware](#)

(click for link to Google map)



### Children’s Program

Children ages K-8 will join the Quarter’s new Youth Activities Coordinator, Christian Garber, for a morning full of fun activities. (Read more about Christian on page 5.)

They will explore what their “inner Light” means to them, and get to create what it might look like. The children will have their own worship/sharing, and join their families for singing and lunch.

Childcare for the very young can also be provided — please rsvp to [youth@westernquarterquakers.org](mailto:youth@westernquarterquakers.org) to let us know!

## Fourth Query - Care for the Meeting Community

### For the Meeting

#### Care for one another

Are love and unity maintained among us? When conflicts exist, are they faced with patience, forbearance, and openness to healing? Are avenues for exploring differences kept open? To what extent does our Meeting ignore differences in order to avoid possible conflicts?

Is the Meeting a safe, loving place? When we become aware of someone's need, do we offer assistance? Are the meetinghouse and the Meeting property physically accessible to all?

Do all adults and children in our Meeting receive our loving care and encouragement to share in the life of our Meeting, and to live as Friends? Do we truly welcome newcomers and include them in our Meeting community?

When a member's conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?

How does our Meeting keep in touch with all its members?

### For the Individual

*Am I ready to offer assistance as part of my religious community serving its members? Am I equally willing to accept graciously the help of others?*

*Do I recognize and face disagreements and other situations that put me in conflict with others? Do I manifest a spirit ready to give or receive forgiveness?*

*Do I treat adults and children alike with respect and without condescension? Is my manner with visitors and attenders to my Meeting one of welcome?*

### Care in my home

(This set of personal queries may be helpful for the family to consider within the family setting. Families may also wish to explore other General Queries as part of regular family worship.)

*Is my home a place where all members of the family receive affection and understanding, and where visitors are welcome? Do I choose recreation and a manner of living that enriches the body, mind, and spirit; and shows a high regard for family, community, and creation?*

*Is our family prepared to discuss such sensitive topics as death, faith, money, even sex and drugs, in a manner that allows openness and honesty, and also direction?*

*How do I help to arrange life at home so that there is an opportunity for all to learn and absorb by example what it means to live a life of Spirit-led commitment?*

## Reflections on Equality, Oppression & The New Jim Crow

By Alyce Denver (West Grove MM)

The 6th Query is on equality, and the part of the query that asks, "Do I examine myself for aspects of prejudice that may be buried, including beliefs that seem to justify biases based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, class, and feeling of inferiority or superiority?" is perhaps the most significant question of any of the queries. Finding the clarity to see one's own prejudice for what it is, prejudice/bias, is very difficult because it means recognizing that what we/I think is the truth with a capital 'T' is merely an opinion held by me and the others in my group/tribe.

Such ingrained cultural bias is very difficult to see because it is quite literally the water in which we swim, and the water may be very cloudy indeed! Case in point: every white person in this country

should be required to read *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander. When Jenny recounted to the Eggers group what she learned at the conference on race she had attended in Philadelphia in April ([White Privilege Conference](#)) many kept saying, "It can't be true; that is against constitutional guarantees". Michelle Alexander's book spells out with supporting documentation how the constitutional guarantees on the rights of citizens and equal protections under the law in this country have been steadily eroded away over the last fifty years. It has been done in such a way as to largely affect the black and brown communities and 'to keep them in their place'. Read the book; it is astonishing and quite the most terrifying book I have ever read.

For those of us who make up the

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## New Youth Activities Coordinator— Welcome!

Christian Garber has joined the staff at Western Quarterly Meeting as the part-time Youth Activities Coordinator. A recent graduate of Avon Grove Charter High School, Christian has grown up participating in Quaker youth activities. He and his family are members at Hockessin MM, where he has been an assistant FDS teacher. Christian has also been active in the Western Quarter youth programs for most of his life, enjoying a natural progression from participating as a student, then as a volunteer leader for youth during QM programs, and now as the overall Youth Coordinator. Christian will work closely with coordinators from both Western and Concord Quarters to develop programs that are interesting and engaging for our youth. Come to July Quarterly Meeting & say, “hello”!



## tonya thames taylor — PYM Annual Sessions Keynote Speaker



tonya thames taylor is the founding director of the African American Studies Program at West Chester University, where she is also an Associate Professor of History.

A scholar of abolitionist Frederick Douglass and black women's blues music, adherent to the messages of pacifist Howard Thurman and mystic Rufus Jones, and student of the black southern women who visited her maternal grandmother's porch in Gulfport, Mississippi, dr. thames taylor's message of “be ye ever ready” empowers all to speak forthrightly and become comfortable with heresy.

tonya is an active member of Fallowfield Monthly Meeting, the Recording Clerk of the Western Quarterly Meeting, and she serves on PYM's Implementation Committee. She regularly gives tours at People's Hall, a stop on the Underground Railroad, and she presents workshops in her quarter. Last summer, she presented a workshop about imagery and race at Annual Sessions. This year, her keynote, “Liberty, Ministry, and Love,” connects Quakerism, the idea of a Beloved Community, and activism. To learn more about how her mind works, visit her twitter @tonyathames.

Annual Sessions Keynote Address

tonya thames taylor  
Saturday, July 30, 2016  
7:00 p.m.  
Muhlenberg College

## Upcoming Events .....

**July 23 Family Movie Night at Hockessin Friends Meeting.**

- ♦ 5:00 pm - Despicable Me 2 (PG) ♦ 6:45 pm - Pizza
- ♦ 7:30 pm - Philomena (PG-13)

**July 27-31 PYM Annual Sessions**, Muhlenberg College,  
Allentown, PA. <http://www.pym.org/annual-sessions/>

**September 17 Bonfire & Singing - Hockessin Friends Meeting.**  
Times TBA

**October 2 Western & Concord Quarter's 3rd annual Hayride & Campfire pot luck.**

**October 8 YARD SALE at Kennett Friends Meeting.** 8:00 am  
to noon. Proceeds benefit Social Services & FDS.

**October 15 Quarterly Meeting at Kendal MM.** 9:00 am  
Speaker: Robin Harper, War tax resister and EQAT activist

### Historic Meetings

#### Summer Worship Schedule 2016

**London Britain Meeting** 10:30 am  
Each First Day, 5/29 thru 9/4

**Old Kennett Meeting** 9 am 7/31 & 8/28

**Pennsgrove Meeting** 10 am 7/24 & 8/28

**Homeville Meeting** 2 pm 8/28

**Parkersville Meeting** 2 pm 9/11

Locations and directions on the [WQM website](http://www.wqm.org).

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white part of culture in this country — that is you and I — our daily life for the most part is concerned with our families, our jobs, our vacations . . . . We do not give a second thought about whether or not we use our turn signals when changing lanes of traffic; we are not concerned if we appear to walk hurriedly down a street or appear to be quite controlled in our mannerisms in the public sphere; we enjoy our new cars and do not expect to be pulled over because it looks like we might not be the sort of person who can (legally) afford such a vehicle. We do not expect to be pulled over by a police officer for anything other than a minor traffic violation, and then we just wait patiently (or pretty impatiently) for the officer to write our ticket so we can be on our way.

Any of these inconsequential actions in the black/brown community can get you stopped by the police, made to stand spread-eagle by your car or to lie down on the ground, be interrogated — and if you object or act in any way which the police deem to be indicative that you have something to hide, you can be hauled off to jail. And today, it is all legal.

What I have found to be so terrifying is that the constitutional protections I thought were ‘just there forever’ are no longer in place. While I was busy swimming in my part of the pond, these guarantees were stripped away by the legislatures and the courts, and because the effects were to a community with which I have minimal (read: no) contact, I did not notice what was going on. I did not know the extent to which those who are supposed to be the

‘watch keepers’ would betray us. What is terrifying is that what has been largely applied to one of our minority communities can now be applied to any group which becomes labeled undesirable/un-American/not morally fit. I do not say this to mean that when the effect happened mostly to the black/brown community it was okay and because now that it can be applied to anyone it is not okay, but rather because it makes glaringly clear that it is too easy to swim around in ignorance, seeing only what we want to see and ignoring the rest.

Being part of the majority culture that is white, straight, and Christian provides one with a very false sense of what life is all about. What we take for granted is not universally true if you happen to be of a different color, LGBTQ, have a name that is not ‘recognizable’ as American... i.e. a name like Ahmad, Fareed, Nazeer or Barack Hussein Obama, or wear a head scarf or a turban. Display any of these variations from traditional American tribalism and you are immediately recognized as not “one of us” and thus suspect in some way. . . and your life will be almost unrecognizable from my life. What I can take for granted and which provides the illusion of security is not found in your part of the pond. I think the information in the book that so terrifies me is that the security I thought was there is really an illusion.

We are all vulnerable in ways I did not realize and the continuing increase in the militarization of local police departments across the country portends troubles ahead. Please take the time to read *The New Jim Crow*. It is a hugely important book.

## Revival for Unity and Justice: July 25 at Friends Center

In March, Rev. William Barber, II, the founder of the Forward Together Moral Mondays movement, preached to the gathered body of Quakers and guests at the AFSC Corporation meeting in March. He spoke of bringing people together for a moral movement to address the many forms of oppression in this country (and beyond). He provided a deeply moving articulation of the situation, and a pathway to forge together toward liberation.

**On July 25 he will be offering a revival in Philadelphia from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Friends Center hosted by AFSC and other community organizations and organizers. [You can watch Rev. Barber's talk from this past March on AFSC's Acting in Faith](#) blog.**



Rev. William Barber, II offering a message in the worship room of Friends Center.

## Draft Budget Proposal for WQM FY 2016-17

|                             | Budget<br>2016 | YTD<br>3/31/2016 | Preliminary<br>FY17<br>(4/30/2016) |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Income Sources</b>       |                |                  |                                    |
| Monthly Mtgs - PYM covenant | \$135,100      | \$108,000        | \$129,700                          |
| Monthly Mtgs - WQM covenant | 38,300         | 29,000           | 35,600                             |
| Interest                    | 500            | 700              | 700                                |
| Other Income                |                | 40               |                                    |
| <b>Gross Revenues</b>       | <b>173,900</b> | <b>137,740</b>   | 166,000                            |

These numbers represent the draft budget for FY 2016-17, as it was proposed at the meeting of the Western Quarter Support Committee on May 22, 2016. The final budget proposal will be presented at July Quarterly Meeting for approval.

To see the details of this draft, visit the Business Resources section of the WQM website, or click here: [FY2016-17 Budget Proposal](#)

|                           |                  | Budget        | YTD              | Draft Proposal |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
|                           |                  | <u>2016</u>   | <u>3/31/2016</u> | <u>FY17</u>    |
| <b>Expenses</b>           |                  |               |                  |                |
| Staff                     | Staff expenses   | \$27,350      | \$19,120         | \$26,560       |
| Office                    | office expenses  | 10,075        | 6,170            | 10,375         |
| Quarterly Meetings        | WQM Sessions     | 950           | 230              | 650            |
| Newsletter                | Newsletter       | 1,000         | 190              | 300            |
| Programs                  | Youth Activities | 1,200         |                  | 1,200          |
|                           | Programs, other  | 150           | 20               | 100            |
|                           | Expenses Other   | 900           | 400              | 700            |
| <b>Total WQM Expenses</b> |                  | <b>41,625</b> | <b>26,320</b>    | <b>39,885</b>  |
| PYM                       |                  | 135,100       | 91,700           | 129,700        |
|                           | Total Expenses   | 176,725       | 118,020          | 169,585        |
|                           | Net Revenue      | (2,825)       | 19,720           | (3,585)        |
| Applied Reserves Required |                  | 2,825         | -19,720          | 3,585          |

### Approved Minutes: Western Quarterly Meeting with attention to Business – Fourth Month 17, 2016

Shelley Hastings, Co-Clerk

Quarterly Meeting was held at Centre Friends Monthly Meeting, with great appreciation to our hosts. Friends from Centre, Kennett, London Grove, Hockessin, New Garden, Newark, and Wilmington Monthly Meetings were in attendance. We began at 1:12 with silent worship, and the reading of responses to the First Query on Meeting for Worship were shared.

Friends were also invited to share reflections on recent activity in their Monthly Meetings. Centre Friends are under the consideration of how they spend their budget, and how to discern how to spend their money. They have formed an ad hoc committee, and would welcome input from other Meetings.

Hockessin Meeting is continuing with their renovation projects, moving on to redoing the “stables” into better FDS classrooms. They are kicking off a \$400,000 capital campaign to raise the funds. Consideration of how a Meeting budgets and allocates its money is very relevant to them. Hockessin Friends depends on distribution payments from invested income for about half of its budget, so when those funds are cut (as happened to them this year) it can create a problem for the Meeting.

Newark Meeting members were supporting Birmingham MM in their recent sponsorship of two refugee families to be relocated to the area. Unfortunately, the managing organization, Luther Family Services, abruptly closed their PA office, and the two families were placed elsewhere in the US at the last minute. Newark Friends also held a yard sale to benefit Dawn's Place, as part of their ministry against human trafficking.

London Grove Friends are preparing for their annual Plant Sale in May.

**16.86 Minutes** from February 21 Support Committee meeting were considered and approved as corrected.

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### **16.87 Treasurer's Report-Stan Glowiak**

While we had initially predicted a deficit in our budget by this time of the fiscal year, we are currently running a small surplus, thanks to a lower payroll (no Youth Activities Coordinator since December), less than expected bookkeeping expenses, and less spending in the office. We seem to be short on WQM covenant income, which may sort itself out by the end of the FY. We also owe thanks to our last WQM Treasurer, Ariana Langford, for her wise investment of funds in a Citadel 31-month CD, which is generating good interest.

### **16.88 Annual Reports**

Pennsgrove Annual Report was read (attached)

London Britain Annual Report was read (attached). Added to the written report: there was one report of vandalism at London Britain last year, when a Meeting House window was broken.

### **16.89 Friends Home Update – Debby Brumbaugh**

We realize Friends Home has not given an Annual Report to the Quarter in a while. The Trustees have been working since November 2015 to find a new Executive Director. There have been two Interim Directors in that time, and the Trustees have continued to oversee operations at the Home. Friends Home is operating at “status quo” with regards to finances and occupancy. Trustees also continue work on planning for the future, including development of a Strategic Planning Committee.

### **16.90 Finance Committee Update- Dick Logan**

WQM has received covenant pledges from 6 Monthly Meetings in the quarter for the next FY, amounting to \$170,590 (total PYM & WQM). Hockessin MM has reported that their covenants to both PYM and WQM will be lower than usual this year, and even lower next year, as reflects the sudden cut in income from one of their funding sources. The reduction will affect the PYM covenant the greatest, but will also reduce their contribution to WQM by about \$1500. Western Quarter should expect a reduction in expendable income next FY, unless other Monthly Meetings can make up the difference with increased contributions.

The discussion of WQM budget for the next FY16-17 will take place at the May Support Committee Meeting, and be presented for approval at July QM.

The quarter officers are considering proposals for a new bookkeeper. The request for proposal is available online and in print. The need is for a “minor league”, part-time player who can be present in helping us in the office on a regular basis.

### **16.70 Youth Activities Coordinator**

One person has expressed interest in helping Western Quarter with youth activities and programming. (Christian Garber introduced himself.) Friends approved moving forward with his meeting with the Co-clerks and coordinator to explore the position, review expectations and to see if this is a good match. Today's youth program was very good – both the Labyrinth and Tai Chi were well received.

### **19.71 Coordinator's Report- Sarah Kastriner**

Since January Quarterly Meeting's directive to seek out ways Friends can work towards “undoing racism” locally, the coordinator has been exploring and networking with interested and active groups in and around the Kennett Square area. There are a number of Western Quarter Friends who have been regular participants in these meetings and conversations, and the energy and good will we've experienced makes us hopeful. At the same time, plans continue for a Quarter-wide retreat/workshop in the fall. Friends were not yet ready to decide if the fall workshop (a day-long event) should be on October 17, “replacing” the traditional Quarterly Meeting, or not. This suggestion needs seasoning.

**Next WQM Support Committee Meeting:** May 22, 3:00 pm at Kennett Friends Meeting

**Next Quarterly Meeting:** July 17, hosted by Newark Friends Meeting at NCCL

The Meeting closed with silence at 2:15

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Kastriner, WQM Coordinator  
temporary recorder

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