



# Western Quarterly News

*of the Religious Society Of Friends*

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Western Quarterly Meeting Newsletter      Winter 2016-17

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Greetings Friends,

This fall my daughter-in-law, Lauren, and I traveled to Lourdes, France to visit the grotto where the Blessed Mother appeared to St. Bernadette. I think this place is so fascinating because for a long time I have felt called to act upon a religious leading (to travel here) and yet I ignored it (I always had other “things” to do). Before you start thinking, “Why is *this* in a Quaker newsletter?” I should explain that my faith has always been very tied to the mystics and religious symbolism. St. Bernadette was an uneducated teenager who had visions of the Blessed Mother Mary, and did what was asked while being doubted and questioned by a whole town. I love this conviction. Regardless of what you believe, St. Bernadette is credited with 69 documented miracles. She ended her short life in a convent in Nevers, France so as not to become an attraction in her town.

Before arriving in Lourdes, Lauren and I had visited Barcelona -- one of the world’s greatest art cities – and then hiked in the Pyrenes. After those experiences, Lourdes felt a little like going to the boardwalk at the beach – it is a town of souvenir shops, restaurants and people walking up and down the streets. We saw people of all ages, many in wheelchairs being pushed by family or volunteers. Many languages filled the air. People come to Lourdes for healing, to pay homage to St. Bernadette, to worship, and many hope for a sign of what to do with their life. I came to thank St. Bernadette in person and to try to get a feeling for this young woman’s life. And maybe I was hoping to get some guidance from God for myself.

Our first night in town the air was filled with singing from the outdoor mass. Six million people a year journey to Lourdes to drink and bathe in the Holy water and walk through the grotto. What is it that makes so many of us seek? Pray? Believe? Hope?

Early Sunday morning we went to the Basilica area for a Mass in English, and then to the Mass for healing, which was attended by 25,000 people. This Basilica is underground and the size of a football field.

Hundreds of people are in wheelchairs pushed by volunteers who come every year from all over the world; many are young men and woman. The edge of the Basilica is filled with banners of many Saints. I was struck by the honor Catholics bestow on these special people, and felt gratitude for the many Quaker “saints” there must be that we don’t even know about, since we don’t do such things.

We walked over to get our first look at the grotto. Lauren is also a Friend, and we sat a while in silent Worship, taking in the scene. We both did bathe in the Holy water, and drink it, too. Then we each lit a candle and said prayers for loved ones. Much of this was symbolic, but the prayers were earnest, and the God receiving our prayers is universal. Even though I had felt led to visit this place, it somehow didn’t feel quite like I thought it would. I was looking for a sign, but didn’t get one. Undaunted, I continue my search in Quaker Meeting, in the still of the woods, spending time with family and friends, doing chores, and lying awake at night. God is everywhere and miracles can happen any time, anywhere. Who knows? Maybe I’ll be off to see the Lady of Guadeloupe next year.

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*Care for Aging Friends—Proposal*

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Love to You All,  
Shelley Hastings, Co-Clerk

## LONDON GROVE FRIENDS MEETING

HOSTS

**January 15, 2017**

# COMING TOGETHER WITH LOVE AS ONE

### Schedule:

9:00 - 9:25 - Registration and coffee  
 9:30 - 10:30 - Worship  
 10:45 - 11:45 - Time to Wake Up & Stand Up  
 12:00 - 1:00 - Lunch  
 1:00 - 3:00 - WQM Business Meeting

Children will stay for first 15 minutes of Worship, then depart for their own program centered in our community & equality testimonies.

Childcare for the very young also available. Contact:  
[youth@westernquarterquakers.org](mailto:youth@westernquarterquakers.org)

**London Grove  
 Friends Meeting  
 500 W Street Road  
 Kennett Square, PA**



FEATURED SPEAKER:

**JERRY FRANKLIN POE**

TOPIC:

**TIME TO WAKE UP & STAND UP**

**FIGHTING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

*"In the end we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."*

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jerry Franklin Poe Jr. is the Vice President of the Martin Luther King Jr. CommUNITY of Greater Kennett Square and an active member of the MLK Advocates. He has been a leader in the struggle for social justice for many years. Jerry believes in confronting injustice by speaking the truth in love.

Jerry will speak to us about the MLK CommUNITY of GKA's function in Southern Chester County. Their work and mission are directly aligned with Friends' testimonies of community, equality and peace, and many Friends in our Quarter have been (and continue to be) involved.



# January Quarterly Meeting Gathering Western Quarter Friends Meetings

## Proposed Minute for Consideration by Western Quarterly Meeting

London Grove Monthly Meeting recently approved a *Minute of Appreciation for the life among us of Jane P. Rushmore*. This minute took life as the result of a leading that arose from research conducted by Friend Susanna Davison in preparation for a First Day program (part of our yearlong *Quaker Women* series). The minute has now been forwarded to Western Quarterly Meeting for consideration during our 1st Month 15 gathering. We have also reached out to Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting and Westfield Monthly Meeting (NJ) since both meetings were also directly touched by Jane Rushmore.

London Grove Members and Attenders ask that all monthly meetings in Western Quarter take some time to consider this remarkable woman whose accomplishments had a truly profound impact on the Religious Society of Friends, successfully moving it into the modern era.

### Minute of Appreciation for the life among us of Jane P. Rushmore

Friends gathered as London Grove Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends have considered the life and times of Jane Palen Rushmore and her effect on our meeting, on Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and on the wider Society through Friends General Conference.

Jane Rushmore, a contemporary and colleague of Rufus Jones, was instrumental in shaping the transformation of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in the modern era; and, through her tireless efforts, she set the stage for the reunification of the Orthodox and Hicksite movements.

Through the 1884 visit of a London Grove Friend, Lavinia Yeatman, to Jane Rushmore's New York Yearly Meeting, Jane was offered and accepted the invitation to teach at the school under London Grove's care. For the next 16 years, Jane Rushmore lived among us. As a result of her work, the school expanded. Through Jane's efforts, it became racially integrated and our monthly meeting initiated its First Day School program of religious education for the meeting's children and adults.

Through examining her biography and other documents, we learned that, in 1911, Jane Rush-

more became the first paid staff member of Race Street Meeting. She established the Friends Central Bureau to support the Philanthropic, First Day School and Education Committees of the yearly meeting.

Over the next several decades, above and beyond responsibilities for which she was paid, Jane Rushmore clerked the Women's Meeting and, after Men's and Women's Meetings united, became the first woman Clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite). She also clerked its Interim Meeting and the Faith & Practice Revision Committee. She was a co-founder of Friends General Conference and served as clerk of many of its committees. Jane also authored a number of books that were standard curriculum in Friends schools for generations.

We are aware that a conference room at Friends Center is named for Rufus Jones, Jane's colleague in modernizing the Religious Society of Friends. We unite in minuting the modest suggestion that Jane Rushmore's name might be attached, in similar manner, to conference space in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting as a remembrance of this pioneering woman.

London Grove Friends feel it rightly ordered to forward this minute to Western Quarterly Meeting for consideration by its constituent monthly meetings, which (weather permitting) we will host on first month, fifteenth day of 2017.

## Eleventh Query - Stewardship of Resources

For the Meeting:

How does our Meeting engage its members in the support of the Meeting's work, its ministry, and the upkeep of its property?

How does our Meeting engage its members in the support of the quarterly and yearly meetings and other Quaker organizations?

To what extent does our Meeting rely on current members for financial support, and what role does endowment income serve? Does the Meeting consider carefully the appropriate role of invested funds?

For the Individual:

*Am I clear that I am the steward, not the owner, of property in my care?*

*Do I simplify my needs, making choices that balance self-sufficiency (to avoid unnecessary dependence on others) and fair sharing of resources? Do I make choices as a consumer that support the equitable distribution of income?*

*Do my employment and other activities allow for use of time and energy in spiritual growth and in service to the Religious Society of Friends?*

*Do I contribute generously within my means to the funding of the work of Friends in my Meeting, in the yearly meeting, and in the wider world of Friends?*



## Holiday Events .....

**December 18 at 10:30 AM** (following 9:30 worship), London Grove MM—Traditional Family Christmas Celebration including joyous songs with our Christmas Choir and a children's Christmas story

**December 18 at 9:00 - 10:45 AM**, Hockessin MM—Pancake Breakfast, a FDS fundraiser for the shed classrooms renovation. Gluten free pancakes and other delicious choices will be available.

**December 18 at 9:30 AM**, Kennett MM—Potluck Breakfast, followed by Christmas Program (10:30 AM) and Worship

**December 18 at 7:00 PM**, London Grove MM—Nativity Pageant followed by refreshments and a visit by Santa.

**December 19 at 7:00 PM**, New West Grove Meeting House—Worship and Carol Sing.

**December 24 at 7:00 PM**, Hockessin MM—Christmas Eve program of readings and music followed by silent Worship by fire and candlelight. The evening will conclude with refreshments in the social room.

**December 24 at 7:00 PM**, Centre Friends MM—Candlelight Meeting for Worship. Refreshments following.

**December 24 at 7:00 PM**, Kennett MM—Candlelight Meeting for Worship.



## Upcoming Events .....

**December 18 at 12:00 PM**, West Grove MM—[Dining for Women](#)

**January 14, 10 am-3:30 pm**, Buckingham Friends Meetinghouse—*SAY THE WRONG THING: Racial Justice and Authentic Community* workshop lead by Dr. Amanda Kemp. [More details here](#), or contact Holly Olson ([hollybqc@verizon.net](mailto:hollybqc@verizon.net))

**January 15 at 9 AM**—*Quarterly Meeting* hosted by London Grove MM. See pg 2 for details.

**January 28 at 9:15 am-3:15 pm**, Hockessin MM— Extended Meeting For Worship. Attend just a portion of the day or the full day, and remember to bring your lunch. Details: Lola Georg, [lolageorg@gmail.com](mailto:lolageorg@gmail.com)

**January 28** (times TBA) Hockessin MM—Movie Night Double Feature: *Finding Dory* and *Belle*

**February 10-12**—Kennett MM hosts PYM's *Middle School Friends Gathering*. Food, Friends, ice skating & overnight antics. Join in! [Details here](#), or email Tara Rubinstein ([trubinstein@pym.org](mailto:trubinstein@pym.org))

**February 11 at 7 PM**, West Grove MM—Musical event: Dew Bye Drifters... a Valentine Dance & Dessert

## Update on Colora Meeting

At October's Quarterly Meeting we heard about the need to demolish a residential building on Colora Meeting's property. At West Grove's November Monthly Meeting we learned more about the progress, as reflected in their draft Minutes:

"Mary Sproat gave an update showing the following funds in Colora Meeting's local accounts in Howard Bank, according to Steve Balderston, Treasurer: checking approx. \$10,000; savings, \$17,000. In addition, there is still \$16,000 invested in Friends Fiduciary Corp. Therefore, there are funds to take care of the demolition costs without West Grove Meeting's having to provide financial help. Demolition of the residence is scheduled for next week and is expected to be finished by Thanksgiving."

Since then we have learned that the demolition has been completed. Many thanks to Steve Balderston for his time and management of this project, and to Mary, for keeping us all informed.



## Bringing Christmas Back Down to Earth

By Parker J. Palmer

Published in [OnBeing](#). Used with permission.

For a lot of folks I know who celebrate Christmas — not the store-bought version, but the holy day itself — this year is proving to be a challenge. How do we celebrate the Good News at a time when the news is so relentlessly bad, celebrate the light at a time of deepening darkness? A friend of mine thinks he's found the upside. He says that Christmas, 2016 can give us a taste of what the first Christmas was like, when [King Herod the Great](#)[sic] hovered in the background, commanding what legend calls "[The Massacre of the Innocents](#)." That may not qualify as encouragement to you, but it's a bracing point. The discouraged people I'm talking about, including me, aren't Christian naïfs shocked by the fact that bad news keeps dragging us down at "this festive time of year." They are folks who've long been involved in trying to shed light in the darkness — people working for racial justice and against all forms of violence, for the wellbeing of children and against the ruination of the earth, for civil dialogue and against xenophobia. This ain't their first rodeo. And it ain't the first time they've seen the darkness they're resisting emanate directly from Washington, D.C. But in a way I haven't felt since the late 1960s and Vietnam, they and I are feeling like strangers in a strange land. Their question, my question, is simple:

how do we celebrate Christmas at a time when it's hard to believe that its core message of love and peace is anything more than pious prattling that will not reach or touch the Powers that Be — and may in fact provide cover for their growing compendium of crimes against decency, sanity, and humanity? After all, many of them claim to be [acting under God's guidance](#), though some of us believe they're listening to the Other Guy.

My friend and colleague Carrie Newcomer — singer, songwriter, and poet — has a line that's [helping some of us find our way](#) through these dark days:

*"The things that have saved us are still here to save us."*

I love that line because it invites me to look back on times when I've needed to be saved from despair — and recall what it was that helped me find a way forward.

Turns out that the list of things that have helped me is simple, down-to-earth, and well within my reach. As [Wendell Berry says in his poem "The Wild Geese,"](#) "what we need is here." For me, this includes:

- Trusted friends with whom I can explore my feelings, no matter how dark.
- Getting out into nature and being reminded by the life around me that this, too, is part of our world right now.
- Sitting in silence for significant periods of time, allowing the roiled waters within me to settle and clarify.

## Caring for Aging Friends

Thanks to the initiative of Pam Leland (London Grove MM, ED of The Hickman), representatives from Monthly Meetings within Western and Concord Quarters met in October to hear about New York Yearly Meeting's approach to caring for the aging Friends population within their Monthly Meetings. Callie Janoff, director of [NYYM's ARCH](#) program, discussed with us the many reasons to support our aging Friends, and shared the model they have developed. Many present were interested in organizing a way to support aging Friends in our area as well. We are asked to bring this concern to each Monthly Meeting in our quarter. Below is a proposed minute for consideration, which may help the conversations.

### Proposed Minute Indicating Support and Participation

As a religious body without professional clergy, we are each invited to care for one another in our Meetings. Indeed, many Meetings have a committee whose purpose is to provide pastoral care and/or assistance to needs that might arise among Friends.

Many of our Meetings have an increasing number of elderly members and attenders. As Friends age, there may be issues that impact meeting attendance and participation, e.g., transportation, hearing loss, mobility issues, etc. There may also be older members who do not have family in the area, thus leading to risks of isolation and/or situations where older Friends may need increased care and support. Meetings may feel unprepared to respond to the needs and concerns that come from our older members.

New York Yearly Meeting's ARCH program grew out of this concern. Established in 2007, the ARCH Program seeks to build the capacity within Monthly Meetings to assist elderly members in finding the resources they need to effectively navigate situations that might arise as they age. Through training and support of Meeting volunteers, older members in Monthly Meetings have access to a system of care within the Meeting community.

We recognize these needs in our own Meeting community and are interested in joining with other Meetings in the area to create a similar program here. In indicating our support, we have secured the participation of at least one Meeting member on a Working Group. This Working Group, composed of Friends with a concern for both the elderly and our Meeting communities, will seek to move forward on establishing a program similarly to NYYM's ARCH Program here in our area.

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- Listening to good music, from classical to folk.
- Doing my best to tell and face the truth, the truth about myself and the world around me.

A few weeks ago, I came across a mix of music and truth that helped me find an approach to this Christmas that gives me a way forward — not only toward Christmas but toward the political and social tasks to which I feel called. The song is titled "Where Did Jesus Go?," written by a singer-songwriter named [Sara Thomsen](#) whose work I deeply admire.

Here are a few verses:

*Tell me where, where did Jesus go?/ That brown-skinned man walkin' the road to Jericho/ Tell me where, where did Jesus go?/ He's up and been deported to Mexico, allelu*  
*Tell me where, where is Jesus now?/ That Middle-Eastern man who could feed a hungry crowd/ Tell me where, where is Jesus now?/ He's on a list of terrorists and they tossed him out of town, allelu*  
*Tell me where, oh if you know, do tell/ That wise guy*

*wasting time with the woman at the well/ Tell me where, oh if you know, do tell/ They say he's queer and outta here and going straight to hell, allelu*

If you wonder how verses like that could lift me up, I have a couple answers. One is that they speak truthfully of the fact that Jesus — who was brown, Middle Eastern, hung out with "disreputable types," and was given a name most often found in Mexico these days — would not be well-accepted in an America shaped by some of the forces that drove the recent general election.

If I'm going to celebrate Christmas with a good conscience, I have to embrace the reality that the person whose birth Christians celebrate on December 25 would not be able to get into this country to attend his own birthday party. And if he did get in, there are many Americans who would not welcome him. These are hard truths, but [as the birthday boy him-](#)

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[self said](#), “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”

My second answer to where I find the “lift” in this song is in its chorus:

*Allelu! What you gonna do? Allelu! I’m gonna stand by you/ Love is all you got. Love is all you do/ It’s bigger than me, and it’s bigger than you, allelu!*

I believe in the power of love, even against great odds. But with Sara Thomsen, I also believe that love without truth – the chorus without the verses – is no love at all, just a pious, powerless self-deception.

Jesus [said](#), “...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” “The least” in the U.S.A. these days surely includes many people who share Jesus’s “person of interest” traits. My Christmas this year includes [taking first steps toward volunteering with a local organization](#) whose mission is to welcome, encourage, and materially support Syrian refugees, accompanying them as they experience being strangers in a strange land.

I wish a lot of churches would sing “Where Did Jesus Go?” during their Christmas services this year, proclaiming that Jesus calls us to “stand by” all the people in this country who now feel at risk in the

place they want to call home. But since most Christmas services are already planned, here’s another possibility.

In many churches, [“Oh Little Town of Bethlehem”](#) will be sung. How about singing the first verse, then pausing to reflect on its last two lines – and on what may be the most pressing questions of our day:

*O little town of Bethlehem/ How still we see thee lie/ Above thy deep and dreamless sleep/ The silent stars go by/ Yet in thy dark streets shineth/ The everlasting Light/ The hopes and fears of all the years/ Are met in thee tonight*

That meeting is now taking place in the streets of every town in this nation – the meeting between hope and fear. Which one will prevail? Our collective fate depends on how we answer that question in the years ahead.

May this Christmas be a day when we Christians [resolve to “be not afraid”](#) as we stand by those who have been marginalized and even brutalized. *That* would be a Christmas worth celebrating and a birthday party worth attending – one where I hope Jesus himself would feel welcome and at home.



**The Minutes of Western Quarterly Meeting— 15 October, 2016 at Kendal Monthly Meeting (draft)**

Western Quarterly Meeting with attention to Business began with silence at 1:30 pm with 17 members in attendance, representing Center, Kendal, Kennett, London Grove, Newark and New Garden Monthly Meetings.

**19.97 Monthly Meeting reflections & updates**

Friends were invited to share reflections from their Monthly Meetings.

One Friends spoke of her concern for the operation of “killer drones” out of near-by Horsham Drone Base. A good number of Mennonites have been maintaining a protest at the site since it began operating in 2016. This Friend has participated in the vigi , sometimes with other Friends, but often not. She is concerned that not many Friends are present or involved in anti-war efforts these days. Here is an opportunity to live into our Peace Testimony.

**19.98 Minutes** from September 18 WQM Support Committee meeting were read and approved.

**19.99 Treasurer’s Report – Stan Glowiak**

First quarter FY (July-Sept 2016) was very slow. We only received two covenant checks by the end of September, then three more in the first days of October. Expenses are in line with the budget, with the exception of newsletter costs, which may need to be revised. Our balance sheet actually balances now, which is in part thanks to a thorough review with our new bookkeeper, and in part because the Pennsgrove property committee made some very large withdrawals (\$48,000) from the fund principle last year, which showed in our general balance sheet and threw the regular accounting off. WQM closed out last FY with \$8000 in surplus of budget, mostly due to reduced office/ staff expenditures. In response to a question Friends were assured that someone from the quarter – the Clerk of WQM’s Finance Committee, currently Richard Logan – does contact treasurers from each of the MMs to discuss annual covenant amounts and answer any questions. This is particularly important when a new treasurer begins.

**19.20 Friends Home of Kennett Square** - Annual Report for July 2015-2016 was read and accepted with thanks.

**19.21 Friends Support Committee – resolution**

Following recommendations from July QM, the Friends Support Committee was laid down. It was agreed that at this time, any grant applications received (for William Jackson Education or John Woolman Traveling Ministers funds) will be reviewed by a few (2-3) Friends from the Support Committee, who will then recommend awards for approval. Care will be taken to ensure confidentiality of any sensitive information. Three current applications to the William Jackson Education Fund were reviewed by WQM Co-clerks, Friends Shelley and Ariana. Two applicants are members of Centre Meeting, and are students at Wilmington Friends School. One applicant is an attender at Kennett Friends Meeting, and is a student at London Grove Friends Kindergarten. The recommendation is to grant \$300 to each applicant. This recommendation was approved.

**19.22 Colora Property update**

Cecil County has issued the permit to have the house on the property razed. Stephen Balderston has contacted two approved contractors for bids to take it down. We are currently waiting for the health department's inspection and approval that there is no asbestos present in the house, then they can proceed. The plot plans for the property have been located, and we are now trying to determine if the house is on its own one-acre plot.

**19.23 Property Surveys**

Property Surveys were initially sent to Monthly Meetings in the spring of 2015. The issue with the Colora property highlights our need to collect pertinent information about the properties within and related to Western Quarterly Meeting. The survey will be sent again to MMs who have not yet responded, asking about details such as property responsibilities, location of deeds, relevant funds, etcetera.

**19.24 Bylaws Review Committee (ad hoc)**

Reflections on the current Bylaws were shared in a report written by Dick Logan (attached). Some updates are needed to reflect our recent restructuring and current practices. The ad hoc committee will continue its review work and bring its recommendations to the Quarterly Meeting in January. Copies of the current Bylaws will be made available.

**19.25 April Quarterly Meeting – proposal for consideration**

The WQM Coordinator has been planning youth activities jointly with Concord Quarter for a few years now. Another such joint youth program is planned for April 23, 2016, at Westtown School. Concord will be holding QM that day, as will Western Quarter. We propose Concord and Western Quarters also plan and hold our adult program & Worship jointly on that day. Meeting for Business would be conducted separately. Approval was given at Concord Quarter, and Westtown MM has embraced the idea, and agreed to host. Western Quarter Friends approved.

WQM Coordinator also reflected on New Garden MM's request to be released from hosting QM in the future, and asked Friends to consider what it would mean for a MM to no longer host QM in rotation, and how that might affect their sense of being part of the Quarter. She also asked how we might continue to keep these Friends embraced in our WQM community.

**19.26 New Business & Reminders**

One Friend voiced his appreciation for Quarterly Meeting Programming, and great thanks to Kendal for bringing Robin Mohr and her message. He was also thankful we had George Schaeffer with us in July for our program on listening spirituality, and for a long string of good programs "all in a row" back to last January. He reflected that sometimes the Quarterly Meeting can do things that Monthly Meetings can't do.

Friends asked for an update on WQM Recording Clerk, Tony Thames Taylor, after her recent surgery. She is healing well, and is starting to become active again. Friends were thanked for their earlier offers of assistance.

WQM's winter newsletter will be sent before the holidays this year, so please submit articles and events by Dec 1.

WQM will co-sponsor our second "parent's morning off" youth event on Dec. 3, with Concord Q, to be held at The Cabin at Westtown School. Contact Christian for details or to register.

January QM will be hosted by London Grove MM on Sunday, January 15, 2017.

The next WQM Support Committee meeting will be in December (12/4 or 12/11) – a notice will be sent with the date and time. Meeting ended at 2:08 with silence.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Kastriner, WQM Coordinator

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/>