



# Western Quarterly News

of the Religious Society Of Friends

Western Quarterly Meeting Newsletter

Winter 2017-18

## *Oh come, all ye Faithful, Joyful, and Triumphant...*

These powerful words from a Christmas carol written long ago describe well the feelings I have about life. If you are faithful to God and can maintain a joyful outlook on life you will be triumphant. Easier said than done, but a goal worth working to attain.

**Being faithful** can take many forms. You can be faithful to a person, an animal, the environment, an organization, a diet, a daily routine of exercise, and to God. This shouldn't mean we can't change but that we have a value system in place and work to maintain. This also should always come with questioning and seeking advice from others. Mostly, we need to listen to the inner voice.

**Joyfulness** is a way we can view and live life. I am again borrowing from two people far wiser than me.... Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama. I am reading their book, "The Book of JOY". A friend of the Dalai Lama, Paul Ekman, defined the feelings associated with joy as: pleasure, amusement, contentment, excitement, relief, wonder, ecstasy, exultation, radiant pride, elevation, gratitude and the unhealthy jubilation of relishing in someone else's suffering. The Buddhist scholar Matthieu Ricard added: rejoicing, delight or enchantment and spiritual radiance.

Both the Dalai Lama and the Archbishop Tutu believe true joy is attained by having a compassionate concern for others and less self-centered thinking. We need to take care of ourselves to survive, but also to use wise selfishness. Helping others is the way to discover your own joy and to have a happy life. According to psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky, fifty percent of our happiness is determined by factors like our genes or temperament and the other half is determined by a combination of our circumstances, over which we may have limited control, and our attitudes and actions, over which we have a great deal of control. The three factors that have the greatest influence on increasing happiness are our ability to reframe our situation more positively, our ability to experience gratitude and our choice to be kind and generous. Trying to be mindful of the selfless attitude when a troublesome situation arises is helpful to me.

**Triumphant** will take a little more time and may not be permanently attainable. Each little victory on the road to being better is a step toward joy. Anything that we have a small part in making better personally, for another person or animal, or the environment is a wee triumph. This is not the same as when our sports team wins or our political candidate is in office, this is an ongoing search for PEACE ON EARTH and in our daily life.

Love to you all,

Shelley Hastings, Co-Clerk

### **In this Issue:**

**From the Co-Clerks**

**January Quarterly Meeting details**

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## October Quarterly Meeting's Program Invited Each of Us to be Renewed and Active

The program at Western Quarterly Meeting on October 15 was built to let Friends to discover what Non-Violence means for them, personally. In the last two paragraphs, you will see the heart of Friends' overall message, calling us to be inspired by PEACE. (The double-negative word Non-Violence may seem less inspiring or more technical).

Tonya Thames Taylor (Fallowfield Meeting) gave a brief overview of concepts of Peace and noted that while some definitions picture Peace as "passive", there are deeper definitions in which we see concepts of mutual communication, support, and creativity; reconciliation where there was conflict; and sharing of resources within the human community and with ALL, including a sharing that allows other species and habitats to survive or thrive.

Friend Tonya concluded with parts of a video from QuakerSpeak (<http://quakerspeak.com/george-lakey/>) in which Friend George Lakey (Central Philadelphia Meeting) suggests that perhaps we are in a paradigm shift, like the time when people shifted from being convinced that the earth was flat, to being convinced that the earth is round. Perhaps people are seeing that non-violence is more effective than violence. Erica

Chenoweth's study, written in an award winning book: *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Non-Violent Conflict* found 26% of violent campaigns for social changes were successful (and more of those promoting tyranny), while 53% of non-violent campaigns were successful (and more of those were promoting democracy).

Then came the real heart of our program: Friends were directed toward studying our personal stories, shared in specific for all to ponder. With the personal stories and with other personal experiences unspoken, Friends began to feel that Peace is a verb, and that Love is the main action. Our deep fears will prevent us from connecting in a Light or Loving way and fears will create a violent response until we search our fears, and until we listen with deep attention to the lives and emotions of others.

Each of us is invited to do HOMEWORK for next Quarterly Meeting in mid-January at Kennett Meetinghouse: Set an intention of creating some Peace. Try the experiment in a way new for you, and see where this experiment leads. We should all bring our results to Quarterly Meeting (at Kennett MM) in January!

-Gail Newbold, Nov. 2017 London Grove MM

## Western Quarterly Meeting—January

Kennett Friends Meeting, hosts

## Peace is a Verb; Love is the First Action

Sunday, January 21, 2018

Coffee half-hour 9 am– 9:30 am

Program 9:30 – 10:45

Worship 11 am

Lunch\* at rise of Meeting for Worship

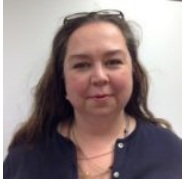
Children of all ages invited to enjoy the Children's Program—starting at 9:30 am.

Lunch will be provided by the hosts. Dessert contributions welcome.

Kennett Friends Meeting is located at 125 W. Sickel Street, Kennett Square, PA.



## Welcome to PYM's New Youth Engagement Coordinator!



We announce with great joy that Melinda Wenner Bradley of West Chester Monthly Meeting will soon join the staff of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) as our first Youth Engagement Coordinator. Melinda will work with other community

members to steward the ministry and religious life of our children, families and youth. She will begin in December of 2017, focusing first on the continued success of our current youth programs and then on the health and vitality of religious education and youth work within all the different communities that make up our yearly meeting.

Since 1995, Melinda Wenner Bradley's journey has woven together callings in children's spiritual lives, program development, education, and family and teacher support. She brings a wealth of wisdom and a vision that spans across yearly meetings. Melinda presently serves New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) as their Children and Youth Field Secretary. She will transition out of this role to join PYM staff, and we will collaborate with her NYYM colleagues to ensure a smooth transition that honors the important and valuable work she has done there. We are excited and deeply grateful to Melinda for the opportunity to forward a vision for religious education and youth work that brings us closer together, strengthens the spiritual lives of our many families, and builds vital youth programs locally and regionally throughout our yearly meeting.

### A message from Melinda:

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings!

I'm delighted to accept this position and begin serving Philadelphia Yearly Meeting as the Youth Engagement Coordinator. Its creation presents an exciting opportunity to collaborate with colleagues in youth ministry, and to serve young people, families, and local meetings across the yearly meeting. Since 2013, I've focused on religious education work in yearly meeting, local meeting, and Friends school communities, in service to growing sustainable models for children and youth programs. My work has been shaped by listening and nurturing connections in the communities I have served. Developing and sharing resources is only one part of this work. I am equally excited about how we build networks and lift up the many gifts among Friends, and how we gather vital spiritual communities for young people in yearly meeting programs for Children and Families, Middle School, and Young Friends. I view life-long spiritual formation as a ministry that our Religious Society can be more intentional in supporting. Partnership with other ministries in a meeting community, and between meetings and families, is vital for our young people to grow to be the Quakers the world needs. In the coming weeks and months, I look forward to visiting among Friends, re-connecting and introducing ourselves as we work and play together.

In faith and friendship,  
Melinda Wenner Bradley

### Parent's Morning Off -- Another Successful Youth Event

Over a dozen children from Monthly Meetings throughout Western and Concord Quarters came together on December 7th to enjoy a morning of play, adventure, creating, and f/Friendship. As luck would have it, they also got to enjoy our first significant snowfall of the year, and had a wonderful time playing in the snow. Outside they built forts, played Frazzleeram, and studied snowflakes, then came back inside to decorate cookies, craft with beads and/or playdough, roll-play with friends, and generally have a ball. Everyone agreed— we should do this again!

Crafting  
with  
beads



Having a ball -  
inside!



Decorated cookies, ready for gifting --  
or eating!



## Twelfth Query - Integrity and Simplicity

### For the Meeting:

What does our Meeting understand to be the meaning and implication of our testimonies on simplicity and integrity?

How do our Meeting's actions demonstrate this understanding?

As a Meeting, what are we doing to encourage members to embody integrity and simplicity in their everyday lives?

### For the Individual:

*How do I strive to maintain the integrity of my inner and outer lives - in my spiritual journey, my work, and my family responsibilities? How do I manage my commitments so that over-commitment, worry, and stress do not diminish my integrity?*

*Am I temperate in all things? Am I open to counsel and advice on over-indulgence and addictive behavior, such as gambling? Do I take seriously the hazards associated with addictive and mood-altering substances?*

*Am I careful to speak truth as I know it and am I open to truth spoken to me? Am I mindful that judicial oaths imply a double standard of truth?*

*Do I refrain from membership in organizations whose purposes and methods compromise our testimonies?*

## Faith and Practice – New Edition

The newest revision of our Faith and Practice is not available as a published book yet, but Friends can (and should!) read and review the whole edition online. The “old” (2009) edition used to be available online, too, but this has been replaced by the most recent Faith and Practice. The site allows users to navigate through the material, and easily find the section they’re looking for. For many of us this is particularly useful for finding the Queries. The revised queries are a little different from what we’ve been used to, and in fact are no longer “numbered”. Here are a few links to explore. The “General Queries” section: <http://www.pym.org/faith-and-practice/guidelines-and-procedures/general-queries/>

The new edition divides the general queries into four sections, with three queries each.

**Deepening our Faith** includes queries on Meeting for Worship, Meeting for Business and Spiritual Nurture:

<http://www.pym.org/faith-and-practice/guidelines-and-procedures/general-queries/deepening-faith-meeting-worship/>

**Nurturing our Community** includes queries on Care for the Meeting, Religious Education, and Stewardship of Resources:

<http://www.pym.org/faith-and-practice/guidelines-and-procedures/general-queries/nurturing-our-community/>

**Grounding for Transformed Lives** includes queries on Peace and Alternatives to Violence, Integrity and Simplicity, and Equality and Justice:

<http://www.pym.org/faith-and-practice/guidelines-and-procedures/general-queries/grounding-transformed-lives/>

**Witnessing in the World** includes queries on Outreach, Education, and Witness and Civic Responsibility:

<http://www.pym.org/faith-and-practice/guidelines-and-procedures/general-queries/witnessing-in-the-world/>

### Deepening Our Faith: Meeting for Worship (First Query)

- Are our meetings for worship held in stilled, expectant waiting upon God?
- As we worship in the living silence, are we drawn together by the power of God in our midst? Do we experience a deep reverence for the integrity of creation?
- How does our worship nurture all worshipers, creating a deeper sense of community?
- How does our meeting encourage vocal ministry that spiritually nurtures the worshiping community?
- *Do I faithfully attend meeting with heart and mind prepared for worship, clear of any predetermination to speak or not to speak, expecting that worship will be a source of strength and guidance?*
- *Does worship deepen my relationship with God, increase my faithfulness and refresh and renew my daily life, both inwardly and in my relationships with other persons and with all of creation?*
- *Does worship enhance my capacity for attentive, non-judgmental listening to others?*
- *How does participation in meeting for worship contribute to my life-long spiritual journey?*



## Moving on....

Christian Garber has resigned from his position as WQM's Youth Activities Coordinator. We are sad to see him go, but he is excited to be focusing on his career as a hair and beauty stylist. To the families in the Quarter he writes:

"In working with the youth in our Quarter, the pleasure has been all mine. This year has been full of excitement and growth, and I'd like to say thank you for letting me be there and experience all of it with your children. Your involvement means the world to me. It's crazy how much the children have grown in such a short time. There were also many people there to help me when I needed it, and of course I'd like to thank them as well. I am so happy to have had this experience and I will never forget it." -- Christian

## Preserve Quaker History AND Keep a Good Thing Going for the Future



Built in 1845 and in continuous existence for community use until recently, *The People's Hall* needs your help now.

**Significance of People's Hall?** Isabella Stokes, daughter of a former slave, sums it nicely:

"One old building still stands,  
As a tribute to voices now stilled,  
It stands as a monument to Old "Friends"  
Who dared to do right."

**History of People's Hall?** Quaker abolitionists, who were members of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, created *The People's Hall* as a place "To Let Truth and Error Grapple." I suspect that *The People's Hall*, where everyone is still free to discuss "religion, morals, physics, politics and the like regardless of clime, cast, sex, sect or party," is the only remaining of this kind in Pennsylvania.

**Why this cause?** We are still grappling with the legacy of slavery and its offspring of segregation, mass incarceration, disfranchisement, etc., The very existence of the building says unequivocally: Humanity Over Profit. Also, *The People's Hall* stands as an example of how black agency to exercise "inalienable rights of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness" shaped American politics and the testimony of white Quakers. The symbiotic relationship transgressed and made real the hope and audacity of the enslaved who put one foot in front of other yearning to be free. After slavery, the building served as a Grange, school, church, seminary, civic and historical meeting place, etc.,

**Why the need?** We need to maintain our insurance as well as work on other projects, including roof repair and Underground Railroad designation.

*The People's Hall* urgently needs you to support this building in the National Historic Village of Ercildoun.

Please Send your tax-deductible checks to:

**The People's Hall  
c/o Fallowfield Meeting  
800 Doe Run Rd  
East Fallowfield, PA 19320**

OR

Donate via Crowdrise for a small fee by simply going to <http://peoples-hall.org> and clicking the "Donate" button.

## Hope Is the Place Where Joy Meets the Struggle

By Parker Palmer, reprint from [On Being post, Sept 19, 2017](#)

Of all the virtues, “hope” is one of the most-needed in our time. When people ask me how I stay hopeful in an era of widespread darkness, I answer simply: “Hope keeps me alive and creatively engaged with the world.”

When privileged people like me choose hopelessness over hope, it’s not a reflection of the state of the world. It’s a reflection of the state of our souls.

If I were to lose hope and turn to cynicism, what would I do? Sit in a corner, stare at the wall, and suck my thumb? When people like me allow ourselves to become hopeless — while [there’s so much we can do for those who are truly suffering](#) — we need to remind ourselves that [opting out is not a fit way for a grown-up to live](#).

Here’s one of my favorite quotes on the nature of hope by a fine writer named [Victoria Safford](#). If you’d like to hear me read Safford’s piece, [[there’s a recording](#) online].

It comes from my onstage interview that Krista Tippett did [with Courtney Martin and me](#). We had spent over an hour talking about spirituality and social change when Krista asked me to read a brief piece to close us out. I could think of nothing more appropriate:

### “Hope”

by Victoria Safford

Our mission is to plant ourselves at the gates of hope — not the prudent gates of Optimism, which are somewhat narrower; nor the stalwart, boring gates of Common Sense; nor the strident gates of self-righteousness, which creak on shrill and angry hinges; nor the cheerful, flimsy garden gate of “Everything is gonna be all right,” but a very different, sometimes very lonely place, the place of truth-telling, about your own soul first of all and its condition, the place of resistance and defiance, the piece of ground from which you see the world both as it is and as it could be, as it might be, as it will be; the place from which you glimpse not only struggle, but joy in the struggle — and we stand there, beckoning and calling, telling people what we are seeing, asking people what they see.



### Fairville Friends School’s Silent Auction is Coming Soon!

The auction committee is busy preparing a wonderful evening of fun, fellowship, and great deals on local goods and services. This wonderful event brings together Friends and friends in support of Fairville Friends School.

**Save the date! Mark your calendars for Friday, February 2nd from 7–11pm in the Barn at Fairville School -- 216 Pond View, Chadds Ford, PA.**