



# Western Quarterly News

*of the Religious Society Of Friends*

## Western Quarterly Meeting Newsletter December 2019

**FROM THE CLERK** - This edition features a report on November 2, 2019 Continuing Sessions at Arch Street Meeting House. The Coordinator heard from several Friends that the session was moving, very positive, and nourishing. In addition to "homework" from the Committee of 14/19, Monthly and Quarterly Meetings were asked to consider a minute from Bucks Quarter printed on page 5. - Deb Wood, Western Quarter Coordinator

### **Fall Continuing Session, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting 11/2/2019**

Meeting for Worship for Business (as experienced by a member of the Committee of Fourteen-or-Nineteen) Susanna Davison, London Grove Monthly Meeting)

Western Quarter Clerk Mark Myers and Recording Secretary tonya thames taylor also attended. A Kendal at Longwood neighbor (and fellow member of the Committee of Fourteen) had kindly arranged a ride with members of Birmingham Monthly Meeting, Concord Quarter. Traveling together was a fine networking opportunity! (I look forward to our joint Spring Quarterly Meeting...)

Minutes of the afternoon business session are available on the [PYM website](#). For this writer, the highlights were:

The General Secretary's Report, indicating that a Diversity Equity Inclusion plan is being developed under a \$30,000 contract with Prototype Entities, which is also providing training to staff. (Although the proposal for the Yearly Meeting to work with that contractor, as recommended by the Multicultural Assessment Steering Committee (MASC), was not approved at Spring Continuing Committee, the former convener of the MASC expressed her belief that "we are now where we need to be.") The General Secretary noted she has also been looking at FGC's Institutional Assessment on Rac-

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### ***In this Issue:***

From Continuing Sessions

11th Query: Witness

January WQM

Kids Corner

Bucks Quarter Minute

Events

Minute of Appreciation

October WQM minutes

## **Quarterly Meeting Worship, January 19th**

**Mill Creek Friends Meeting, 9:15 am**

Intergenerational program \* potluck lunch\* schedule pg.2

Mill Creek Meeting House is located at 1140 Doe Run Road, Newark, DE 19711.



## Eleventh Query - Witnessing in the World: Education

### For the Meeting:

What does our meeting do to support and improve public education?  
 What help do we provide for the children and adults in our meeting to pursue their educational goals?  
 What is our meeting's role in support for Friends' education? If our meeting is connected to a Friends school or schools, does this relationship nurture spiritual life and the manifestation of Friends principles?  
 Do we enable children in our meeting to attend a Friends school? Does our meeting work with the family to consider all available means of support?

### For the Individual:

*How do I show my concern for the improvement of public education in my community?*

*Do I demonstrate my encouragement and support for Friends education through awareness and service?*

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



### Schedule:

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

Mill Creek MM will host us at their Meeting House for our first gathering in 2020!

**Program** - intergenerational art-based activities led by Mill Creek members and Claire Brandenburg, our Youth Coordinator!

**Potluck** - bring lunch, brown bag or something to share, and if you do not want to use paper and plastic products, please bring your own dishes and utensils. Note that cleaning facilities are limited.

**Further details to come in early January. Check the Western Quarter home page and events page.**

## Continuing Session, cont'd from page 1

ism to see what might be useful to us. (The census PYM is conducting this month was suggested in that assessment.)

Continuing revelation about how minutes forwarded by quarterly meetings are being handled by Quaker Life Council and PYM. Western Quarter has, in the past, been disappointed that minutes sent to PYM received no response from QLC.\* When this was mentioned on 11/2 by our WQM Recording Clerk, we learned PYM's process for responding is a work in progress. Current practice is for minutes forwarded by quarters to be referred by the PYM Clerk to the Council Clerks Group to discern to whom they should be directed.

Another work in progress, the 5-Year assessment of PYM's current governance structure (e.g. Councils, Collaboratives, Sprints, Threads etc.) is under the care of Administrative Council.

4. The Committee of Fourteen (now expanded to at least nineteen Friends\*\*) was given ample time to report our roots in Annual Sessions 2019. Our clerk and the subcommittee who wrote up the report of our recent activities provided useful handouts and a modest suggestion that individuals or monthly meetings may wish to consider (*Source: Committee document available on PYM website*)

### “Let's Get Started, Together!

This “homework” is offered as an opportunity for self-reflection. This is all for you. We invite you to share the queries and readings at your meeting, or with a Friend, if led.

#### “Some Queries for Reflection:

- ☐ To whom do you feel accountable? When have you been held accountable? How did it feel?
- ☐ Where do you see yourself on the continuum of anti-racism work? Is one end very uncomfortable and the other is eager? Why might that be?
- ☐ How do you feel/react to the terms “white privilege,” “white supremacy” or “white fragility”? Has your reaction evolved over time?
- ☐ Can you think of a time when your intent was different from the impact of your words or action and ended up being hurtful to another? Has someone else's action impacted you negatively when that may not have been their intent? Could you create a skit about it?
- ☐ When the Undoing Racism Group proposal was brought forth at the 2016 Annual Sessions, how did you react? What feelings did you experience? Do you feel any differently now?
- ☐ Where do you find God in all of this?

“Invitation for reading and or viewing: Between now and March Continuing Sessions, we invite you to view and/or read as many of the following as you are led. (NOTE: *Live links to these materials are available on the on PYM website*).

- Watch Unequal Opportunity Race and this Cracking the Codes video
- Explore the Teaching Tools/Games resource on the website for Eliminating Barriers to Racial Equity
- Need some help understanding the deconstruction of white privilege? Check out this 20-minute video from Robin DiAngelo
- Make a list of readings or quotes that have been meaningful to you in your understanding of racism and undoing racism, and that you'd like to share.
- Read the Undoing Racism Group proposal from 2016 – see addendum to the report
- Read FGC's October 2018 Institutional Assessment Task Force Report (on structural racism) – see also addendum to the report
- Read or re-read the MASC proposal

Might you identify one or more friends with whom you could do this work? Read aloud together (in person or via phone)? Would you keep a journal of your thoughts?

What other ideas do you have for making this an inclusive journey of discovery, and for bringing joy to this work?

#### NOTES:

\* Minute on the Life of Jane P. Rushmore—Originated by London Grove Monthly Meeting, approved by monthly meetings in Western Quarter, endorsed by WQM, sent to PYM Clerk Penny Colgan-Davis and forwarded to Quaker Life Council 2/6/2017. LGMM's endorsed Minute on Prevention of Nuclear War was forwarded to Clerk Chris Lucca last spring.

\*\* In addition to Friends from monthly meetings in Concord and Western Quarterly Meetings, Abington (2), Bucks (2), Burlington, Caln (2), Chester, Haddonfield, Philadelphia (5) and Salem Quarters and an unaffiliated Young Adult Friend are represented on the Committee of Nineteen.



## Kid's Page - for kids of many ages

The image below is a finger labyrinth. You can "walk" it with your finger. Tracing the path in the labyrinth can be relaxing. It also can be balancing as you journey back and forth to the center. Repeat several times in succession to get the most benefit. Try it with your non-dominant hand for more of a challenge. It will help you to give up control and break out of your routine response pattern.

A **labyrinth** is an ancient **symbol** that relates to wholeness. It combines the imagery of the circle and the spiral into a meandering but purposeful path.

The **Labyrinth** represents a journey to our own center and back again out into the world. **Labyrinths** have long been used as meditation and prayer tools.

**Field Trip!** To prepare for the new year, Westtown Monthly Meeting lays out a labyrinth in their Meeting House on Dec. 31, 6-9 pm with 6-7 pm especially for children and families.

Some may remember making a labyrinth with Stan Glowiak of Centre Meeting!

Try <https://labyrinthlocator.com> to find more!



### December is full of religious holidays and celebrations!

December 8 for Hindus is the birthday of their sacred text, the *Bhagavad Gita*. For Buddhists it is Bodhi Day, the day the historical Buddha, experienced enlightenment and became an "Awakened One." People may commemorate the event through additional meditation, study of the Dharma, chanting of Buddhist texts, or **performing kind acts towards other beings!**



December 21/22 is the Winter Solstice or Yule. On this shortest day of sunlight, **gather natural objects and make a spiral on your yard, a table, a plate and add candles.**

December 23-30 Hannukah/Chanukah is the Jewish eight-day "festival of lights," celebrated with a

Umoja  Unity	Kujichagulia  Self Determination	Ujima  Collective Work & Responsibility	Ujamaa  Cooperative Economics
Nia  Purpose	Kuumba  Creativity	Imani  Faith	Kwanzaa Yenu Iwe Na Heri  Happy Kwanzaa!

December 26-31 is Kwanzaa, a weeklong African American and pan-African celebration. A different value is the focus of each day. One of these values is Ujima. It is the name of a Friends group in North Philadelphia! [Ujima Friends Peace Center](#) is a ministry of the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent. **Join them for worship or help collect food for their monthly food cupboard.**

## Minute from Bucks Quarter

*At November 2019 Continuing Sessions, Quaker Life Council asked the following minute be shared to help Friends gain a sense of the energy within the body for the action envisioned. As of publishing time, Western Quarter has not set a time for discussion and discernment.*

Bucks Quarterly Meeting recently conducted meeting for worship with attention to business at Fallsington Friends Meeting in Fallsington, Pennsylvania. During this meeting, which took place on August 18, 2019, Friends approved the following minute:

Bucks Quarterly Meeting supports a Friends-led national protest against the private sale and possession of assault-style rifles and large-capacity gun magazines in the United States. This is rightly ordered and in alignment with our peace testimony, or opposition to physical violence, and with our support of efforts to reduce and eliminate armaments and militarism in our society. The protest should take place in our nation's capital at the earliest possible date that a well-organized one can be launched.

Friends of the Quarter also asked that the Quarter communicate its approval of this minute to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and that the Quarter request that Yearly Meeting assume responsibility for coordinating efforts with the appropriate local, national, and international organizations to achieve the Friends-led national protest proposed by Bucks Quarter in its minute.

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**Upcoming Events**      *For more details about these events and to find additional events see [westernquarterquakers.org/events](http://westernquarterquakers.org/events) and [pym.org/calendar](http://pym.org/calendar)*

**Quaker Family Meet Up** - a PYM event  
At Birmingham Friends Meeting  
**December 14** - 3:00-5:30pm

**Meeting for Worship and Carol Sing**  
At West Grove Monthly Meeting on Harmony Road  
**December 16** - 7:00 pm

**Christmas Eve Music and Worship**  
Centre Monthly Meeting  
**December 24** - 6:30-8:30 pm

**Young Friends Christmas Gathering**- a PYM event  
At Woodstown, NJ Meeting House  
**December 27 4:00pm - December 30 12:00pm**

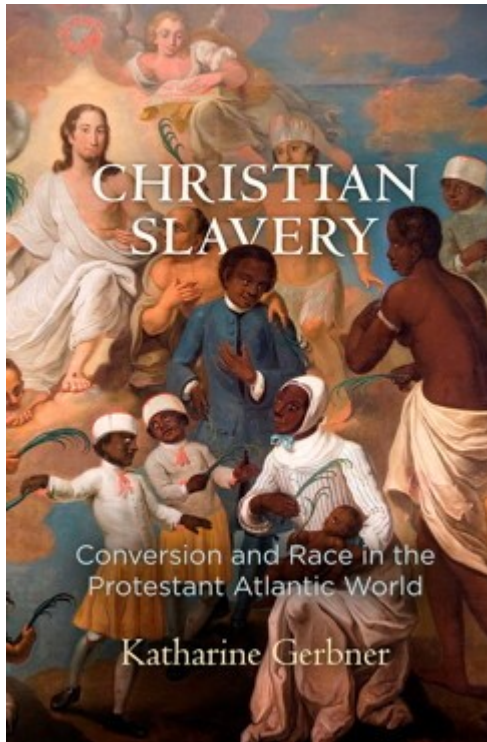
**Winter Family Overnight**- a PYM event  
At Camp Onas  
**January 11 3:00pm - January 12 noon**

### *Minute of Appreciation, Approved by the Quarter October 19, 2019 at Kendal*

Western Quarter minutes its appreciation for the warm reception of Hockessin Friends and the cool reception of the Hockessin Meeting House for July 19, 2019 Quarterly Meeting. We felt blessed that the summer heat wave coincided with gathering at the recently renovated Meeting House. Several toured the new First Day School rooms and saw the morning's work- plantings to take home- that Claire and Rose helped produce with young Friends. The tour also made clear the extent of the work as well as the vibrancy of the space. We had a quiz on environmentally friendly lawn practices in the morning. Our group effort paid off, we passed as well as learned new practices and strategies for nurturing the plants and pollinators in our local world. Ministry was meaningful and many found the James Turrell quotation posted in the Meeting Room to fit the naturally lit space and the Friends gathered: "Light is not so much something that reveals, as it is itself the revelation."



## Friends Historical Association Lecture and Recommended Read



Katharine Gerbner is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Minnesota. She is the author of *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World*, has written about Quakerism, and is currently working on a book entitled *Constructing Religion, Defining Crime: Slavery, Power, and Belief* and gave the lecture at FHA's recent annual meeting.

### Katharine Gerbner - "Rethinking the History of Quakers and Slavery"

Katharine grew up in Philadelphia and researched this topic in part for personal reasons - she wanted to do something more meaningful to her community (grew up in Chestnut Hill and attended Germantown Friends School).

Gerbner's talk explored early Quaker anti-slavery writings. She noted that early individual Quakers' anti-slavery writings were struck down by their communities, which continued to enslave people. George Fox's legacy is complicated. Furthermore, much Quaker anti-slavery thought was based in racist ideas - e.g. Cadwalader Morgan. Gerbner places her analysis in the context of a larger frame about the ideology of "Protestant Supremacy" - the idea that Protestant sects allowed slavery of "heathens" but not co-religionists. As this caused confusion and de-incentivized religious instruction of enslaved people, the ideology of religion-based "Protestant Supremacy" came to be displaced by racial categorizations and "White Supremacy."

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### DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business of the Western Quarterly Meeting held on 19 October, 2019 and hosted by Kendal Monthly Meeting

1:00 pm In attendance: Members from Kendal, Mill Creek, Newark, New Garden, London Grove, Kennett, Hockessin, and Centre Monthly Meetings, and Crosslands Worship Group

22.35: Meeting began with worship, during which Monthly Meeting responses to the 7th query from New Garden, London Grove, Newark, Kennett, West Grove, and Mill Creek were shared.

22.36 **Announcements** - A Kendal group seeking to address the bitterness over the divide in our political life are drawn to listen to each other without the goal of changing minds. The Friend shared this endeavour to encourage Friends gathered to go back to our communities and listen to others. Grayferd Gray

Friends Historical Association will have their annual meeting and a lecture on 9th day 10th month at Arch Street Meeting House. After the short business meeting, Katharine Gerbner will present on Quakers and Slavery.

Parents Morning Off is the next Western Quarter Youth event co-sponsored with Concord Quarter. It will be at the Cabin at Westtown School on Saturday, November 23.

22.37 Friends **approved the Minutes of the September 1, 2019 meeting** of Support Committee.

22.38 Friends **approved the Minute of Appreciation for Hockessin Friends Meeting.**

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#### 22.39 **Treasurer’s Report** Western Quarter treasurer, Stan Glowiak gave the following report.

Friends were reminded there is not a covenant amount set by our Yearly Meeting or Western Quarter for constituent Meetings. Because Monthly Meeting, Quarterly Meeting, and Yearly Meeting schedules vary, covenant income and expenses are not the same each quarter. The treasurer does send reminders for covenant payments to be made. Guide One has changed its policy structure. Now our previous policy would be made up of several policies. The increase in the Quarter’s Expenses is the result of spending more on bookkeeping and accounting. It was also noted that no support from the William Jackson Fund to support Quarter students in Friends schools was made.

#### Discussion

A Friend asked if the timing of covenant payments during the financial quarter made a difference.

The treasurer noted that paying early in the quarter is better.

A follow up question led the treasurer to note that Western Quarter does work on an accrual vs cash basis, so he has to show the numbers, but it does not cause too much distress to work in that format.

#### 22.40 The **Treasurer brought forward two minutes for consideration.**

The first regards removing the names of previous clerks from accounts.

#### **Friends approved.**

The second concerned opening a spending account meeting with current banking practices.

**Friends approved**, noting that a monthly spending limit and regular oversight of the account be conducted by the Treasurer.

Approval of these two minutes brings Western Quarter more in line with our bank’s standard operating processes.

#### 22.41 The **Friends Home Report** is posted at the Western Quarter website.

Friends Home is a continuing care facility with a care relationship with Western Quarter.

Sarah Kastriner highlighted the following portions of the Friends Home 2018 Annual Report to Western Quarter:

Bob Norris, an active Kennett Square resident, joined the board, and several staff changes occurred during 2018;

The Board Vision seeking a safer connection to Linden Hall and resident access to outdoor facilities, led to a number of renovations. Several Western Quarter Meetings provided help for these changes and participated in celebrations of the renovations;

Plans include a 24 hour bistro;

Friends Home was able to make grants for financial support of residents and did not turn away any request for assistance;

The Friends Home census is above budgeted numbers;

Work towards Montessori certification continues and completion of all 102 tasks should happen in the fall of 2019;

There was a week of wonderful celebrations for the 120th anniversary of Friends Home;

*Cont. next page*

Volunteers provide invaluable service to residents and Friends Home, especially driving people to appointments, please feel free to sign up;

Future areas of work for Friends Home are the inclusion of dementia residents, providing affordable housing and care, and being a walkable community. Kennett Square's community resources positions Friends Home to meet these objectives. They remain dedicated to continuing to provide these options for Chester County residents;

Friends Home is thankful for the volunteer and financial assistance from Western Quarter Monthly Meetings and individuals.

#### Discussion:

The Census is up about 30% from a few years ago, and people going in to Friends Home are going later in life.

Please visit!

We should consider it a location for Quarterly Meeting.

**22.42 Penns Grove Annual Report-** Bob Frye and Mary Sproat shared that Penns Grove is in good shape physically and financially. There was a lightning strike over the summer that damaged a tree and jumped to the porch to cause some damage. Plans are underway to tend to trees on the property, and fix the porch. The Quarter clerk noted that Penns Grove is a good model for historical meeting houses under the care of the Quarter. It has a very dedicated group to tend to it and solid financial reserves.

#### 22.43 Coordinator and Youth Report

Deb Wood shared the following highlights of the report, the full report is attached to draft minutes online.

Attending worship, business and programs by Monthly Meetings and Friends in the Quarter is the highlight of the work as well as providing the best way to get a sense of each Monthly Meeting and Quarter Friends. Attending meetings does present a challenge to maintaining the needed connection to my home Meeting.

The recent hayride and potluck co-sponsored by Western Quarter was delightful, but had little attendance from Western Quarter Friends. Our Youth Coordinator has begun work on the next joint Quarter youth program.

I provided logistical and some follow up support for the best practices session for the Quarter's burial grounds.

Mill Creek will host the January Quarter gathering and Fallowfield will host in July. Kennett will host a joint Western and Concord Quarter gathering the 4th Sunday in April.

#### Discussion:

Should the January meeting be at Friends Home?

Mill Creek Friends can be the hosts and perhaps Friends Home can provide the space. It will be more accessible for Friends and their vehicles especially in inclement weather.

The Burial Grounds session was excellent. Will there be more?

A next meeting on burial ground best practices will likely focus on green burials.

London Britain, Centre, and Kennett have all had green burials.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Wood, Western Quarter Coordinator, acting recorder for tonya thames taylor