



Western Quarterly News

of the Religious Society Of Friends

Western Quarterly Meeting Newsletter

Spring 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE MEETING CLERK

Greetings Friends!

Our Fourth Month Quarterly Meeting For Worship With Attention To Business may prove to be a meaningful next step in our collective journey. If you recall, our very good friend tonya thames taylor shared a concern during our First Month meeting about the extent to which monthly meetings and quarterly meetings could offer support to older members and attenders facing serious health and life-adjustment issues. The issue arose as a result of an East Fallowfield member's health emergency. Not only were members of our Western Quarter supportive as individuals but also a Leading began to form that we might want to investigate how we could support monthly meetings as an ongoing collaboration. Our members approved the formation of a Working Group to begin to investigate possibilities. The initial volunteers to begin the threshing were: Deb Wood, Larry Flood, Karen Halstead, Shelley Hastings and tonya thames taylor. Since January's meeting, we have met twice on Zoom. The concept of a standing committee addressing AGING CONCERNS has emerged and was presented to the Western Quarter Support Committee last month. We saw Unity with the idea and support for the initial direction. The next step will be to initiate a conversation as we gather to worship and conduct our business on 4/18. We are still at the idea generation phase, so please join us for some brainstorming time. And, of course, volunteers to help bring this to life are most welcome.

See you soon on Zoom,
Robert Frye
Clerk

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PYM News

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Western Quarterly Meeting

will gather [virtually](#) on 18 April 2021 with our hosts at

Kendal Monthly Meeting

9:00—ALL AGES program with Claire

10:00 Meeting for Worship—Kendal Monthly Meeting

Kendal FCNL Advocacy Team Presentation

will share following worship

2:00—Western Quarter Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business via Zoom

Contact Deb Wood, WQ Coordinator for online connection information

coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org

Western Quarterly Meeting's April intergenerational session will center around the 3rd query: "Spiritual Nurture and Inner Life".



Do you have a place in nature you like to go when you need to settle your inner self...an outer place that helps quiet your inner place?

In this session, we we'll explore what helps calm us when we're overwhelmed or upset.

We'll practice quieting the mind with meditation, using affirmations and images from nature.

We'll have some fun with a game and a story, and you'll have a chance to share something that comes from nature or symbolizes it – an object, a photo, a piece of sculpture or other handmade item.

Bring something to share that's meaningful to you.



Sunday, April 18, 9:00 – 9:45 AM

Click [HERE](#) to join. Questions?

Contact Claire Taylor (claire@creativesbs.com)

or Deb Wood (coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org)



This intergenerational program is geared for ages pre-K & up.

Third Query - Deepening Our Faith—Spiritual Nurture

For the Meeting:

- ♦ How does the meeting encourage the use of spiritual practices that deepen our faith, enhance the excitement of shared religious discovery and increase the possibility of spiritual transformation?
- ♦ What is the nature of our shared experience of the Divine and how do we nurture our collective spiritual growth and transformation?
- ♦ In what ways do we support each other in our spiritual journeys, in our search for God's will and in our efforts to increase understanding of humanity's relationship to life on earth?
- ♦ How do we recognize, develop and nurture the spiritual gifts of all in our meeting?

For the Individual:

- *How do I incorporate into my personal and family life those daily practices that focus on continued spiritual growth, including worship, reflection and engagement with writings that nurture the soul?*
- *How does my spiritual life integrate an understanding of a well-ordered relationship with the earth and deepen my reverence for the interconnectedness of all life?*

*[General Queries](#) are taken from the newest version of PYM's [Faith and Practice](#), available online.

Some Events in PYM—See pym.org/events

Pathways to Ending Gun Violence—April 10 11:00-2:30pm sponsored by the Legislative Policy Collaborative

Recording Clerk Workshop with Jim Herr—sponsored by PQM, April 17 10:00am—noon

A Clean Energy future: How We Get There at the Local Level—April 19 7:00-8:30pm—Ecojustice Collaborative

A Brief Introduction to Black History— April 25 10:00-1:00pm—Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting

Employment Opportunities in WQ and around PYM

Western Quarterly Meeting—Youth Activities and Education Coordinator

[Western Quarterly Meeting](#) seeks a part-time Youth Activities Coordinator. The YAC is responsible for arranging and managing the children's programs during Quarterly Meeting (4 times a year) as well as working with others in the Quarter to plan and implement other youth activities throughout the year. Familiarity with or openness to Quaker beliefs would be helpful. This is a flexible hourly position with an expectation of 5-20 hours per month depending on the program calendar. Compensation based on experience and education. Weekend availability required. Please submit a resume and cover letter outlining interest and experience to: coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org

Concord Quarter Seeks Part Time Coordinator

Applications are now being accepted for a 14 to 20 hour/week, part-time coordinator position for Concord Quarterly Meeting, to begin June 1, 2021.

Applicant will be expected to work with the Concord Quarter Planning Committee:

- ♦ To facilitate spiritual and social opportunities for members of Monthly Meetings to come together in mutual support and community-building.
- ♦ To foster relationships between and among Monthly Meetings and the Quarterly Meeting to address issues of common concern.
- ♦ To provide support for youth programming which occurs at Quarterly Meeting and special events.

Interested persons may send inquiries for a fuller job description and compensation details to concordqm-search@gmail.com. Applications will be accepted until April 30, 2021

Friends Counseling Service of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

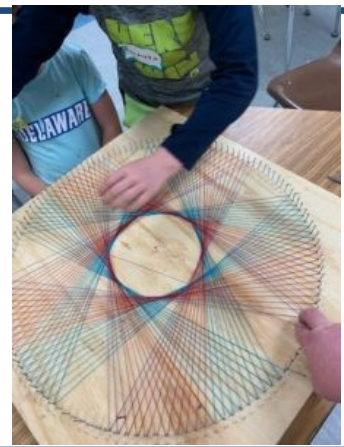
The [Friends Counseling Service of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting](#) is currently seeking qualified mental health practitioners to join our staff.

- Applicants must have experience and have advanced degree in a related field.
- Examples of qualifying degrees and certifications are Ph.D., Psy.D, LCSW, and LP.C.
- Applicants must currently be in private practice and be practicing members of The Society of Friends.

Questions? Janaki Spickard-Keeler, LCSW, *Counseling Service Coordinator*, 215-241-7019



Thanks, Claire, for your three years of service to our community of Friends! You brought loving kindness, creativity, flexibility, laughter, joy, and your passions for people and Quaker faith and practice to the programs and people you worked with. We wish you all the best! Stay in touch!



Facebook for Friends—an Outreach tool

a session in the Caln Quarter Membership Development Series

Roma Narhede of PYM and Emily Provance of NYYM shared wisdom for using Facebook for Meeting outreach.

Facebook can be one part of outreach. It has the most flexibility of post types (text, photo, video) of the current social media platforms, and has the largest overall reach in the US. You can schedule when posts will go live, and you can post and view through a range of devices.

Yet many individuals and communities are uncomfortable with Facebook because of privacy and social justice concerns. One justice concern is the way its algorithms emphasize particular posts. If you decide not to use Facebook or social media for outreach, it means there are places and people will likely not reach.

Content Options

Information: Announcements, scheduling changes, gatherings - this provides a window into the community.

Communication: This would include encouraging back and forth conversations. You could also post queries (official or not, check ins), the use of private messaging (when folks write to the page)

Thematic. Posts in times of internal or external notable happenings, pastoral care messages for the whole community. These kinds of posts show your relevance to the community by acknowledging the events.

Outreach: This would be about who are we as Quakers. A steady stream of posts about Quakerism helps seekers understand what Quakerism is (could include quotes from Faith and Practice, QuakerSpeak videos etc).

Queries to ask:

Do we trust our Facebook Administrators to minister on Facebook?

Would the person who loves this post be welcome in our meeting? (Instead of asking about how many would agree with the post).

Can we agree on an internal process by which we express our concerns about posts? In other words, don't silently fume or publicly post a reaction – there is a need to have a process for when this happens - maybe express concern, and the post is taken down for further discernment.

Resources:

Roma reminded us that resources are available at PYM, FGC, and QuakersSpeak for content ideas. One tool for creating your own content is Canva - www.canva.com is user friendly. It has a free version and tutorials. Facebook has guides for creating events, boosting post and scheduling posts. [Facebook.com/help](https://www.facebook.com/help/).

Posting tips:

Have a rhythm for posting 1-3 times per week. The best times are Thursdays-Sundays at 9am, 1pm, 3pm.

Have a content calendar: event day, quotation day, query day...

Make sure to have Quaker in your page name. Remember Facebook groups are public to group members only.

Post pictures with the permission of people in them.

Have at least two administrators to post and respond regularly.

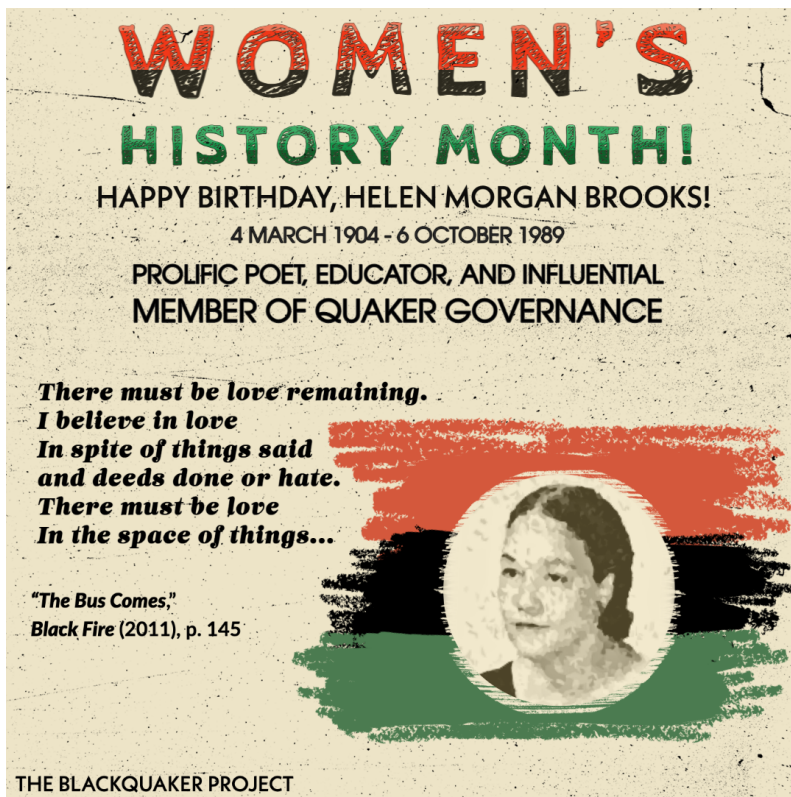
Quaker Facebook pages to look at - Radnor, Roanoke, Rochester, Harrisburg Meetings.

Facebook Ads: look at Emily's blog - for 35 pages of data about ads <https://quakeremily.wordpress.com/outreach/the-social-media-ads-outreach-experiment/>

Session Six—Meeting Vitality—Saturday April 10 from 10:00am-11:30am

Community-building — Managing dissension — Spiritual vitality

Check PYM calendar for details—<https://www.pym.org/calendar/>



From the [Black Quaker Project](#) -

Since 1987, the National Women's History Project has declared a theme for each year's celebration. In 2021, the theme is "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced."

Helen Morgan Brooks refused to be silent. She was a stirring poet, lifelong educator, and active member of governance within the Religious Society of Friends. Born in Reading, Pennsylvania, Brooks led an impoverished early life as her family endured financial hardship; this even included a yearlong stay in an orphanage after they moved to Philadelphia. She would go on to earn a B.A. in home economics at St. Augustine College, a historically Black college in NC, and later to study education at Temple University. Afterwards, Brooks worked as a home economist, as a dietitian, and as the editor of the poetry magazine *Approach*. She also taught poetry to children in the summers in Virginia Beach. Her writing reached critical acclaim, rising to such a level of prominence that her works ap-

peared in *New Negro Poets, U.S.A.* (1964), edited by Langston Hughes, and *The Poetry of the Negro 1749-1970*, edited by Langston Hughes and Arna Wendell Bontemps. In 1955 she published *A Practical Guide: One Person, One Meal, One Burner*, as an aid to those in financial precarity.

Brooks joined Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (Arch Street) in 1959 at the age of 52 and served as a meeting overseer. She was highly involved within the Religious Society of Friends, serving as a member of not only the Peace and Race Relations Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting but also the Friends Hospital Board of Managers and the Friends Journal Board of Managers. She was also a trustee at Friends Select School and received a fellowship to Pendle Hill in the 1940s, later acting as a member of its Board. At her passing, three separate funerals were held: one at Arch Street Friends meetinghouse in Philadelphia, one at Kendal at Longwood, and one at Friends Hospital.

To learn more about Helen Morgan Brooks and to read her selected works, please see Anne Steere Nash, "Helen Morgan Brooks (1904-1989)," in Weaver, Kriese, and Angell, eds., *Black Fire: African American Quakers on Spirituality and Human Rights* (Philadelphia: Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2011), 138-149.

Meeting for Worship

After a while,
after settling down.
waiting,
in the deep quiet time.
We are embraced
by the silence
that was there,
expecting us,
when we entered

Revelation [Unpublished manuscript from *The Log Book at Pendle Hill*]

I too bear record and testify to the thing that I saw. Praying all Saints and our Father in Heaven to have mercy on all little people, all hopeless ones, all hired hands, all share croppers, all tired washerwomen, all scrub women, the carriers of the hod, the laborers with pick and shovel, all menials, all who are rejected, all derelicts, all the abandoned.

The worn prostitutes, the whoremongers, the parasitical, the slaves of uncertainty, the nervous, the mentally deficient, the failing, the unwanted, the lonely, the degraded, the fallible, the delusioned, the dejected, the injured, the maligned, the sick, the weak....

From PYM Continuing Sessions—March 27, 2021—Three Concerns

Membership and Belonging -

At December Working Sessions we approved a sprint to look at membership. Melissa Rycroft clerks this Membership and Belonging Sprint. A part of the Yearly Meeting's 5 year plan is to have a vital and growing membership. We've also received two epistles from Young Adult Friends on this topic, [August 2016](#) and [April 2019](#). YM held a threshing session in January 2020 on membership. The charge to the sprint is to consider what makes membership welcoming and supportive, and to create a trial policy that would be amended after review. Participants in the Sprint include Friends from across the YM and has connected to several who have a complicated or challenging relationship to membership and belonging. All are welcome to join the work of the sprint. Share your interests and ideas with Melissa- mrycroft@pym.org

In our practice, a Friend is a member of a Monthly Meeting. Being a member of a MM establishes a membership in a Quarterly and Yearly Meeting. Friends need to feel like they belong (have an affinity for a situation or place) and to feel welcomed (treated respectfully, politely, and with friendship) to feel and become a member. Yet, the Monthly Meeting is not always where Friends/Seekers feel they most belong. Some have relationships of mutual care and respect at the QM or YM level. We heard from Johanna of her experience of her strongest connection to Friends being at the QM level. Johanna and her partner JT seek to build a diverse, intergenerational faith community. Learn more at their website, Forwardinfaithfulness.org or e-mail them, forwardinfaithfulness@gmail.com.

Melissa asked us to consider and share three things important to each about feeling welcomed and belonging to a Monthly Meeting, a Quarterly Meeting, and a Yearly Meeting.

Ecojustice-

The clerks introduced our consideration of the minute for corporate witness on climate action with the reminder that in 1972 PYM minuted concern on this topic. We have across the decades since given varying levels of attention to this concern. Now we see that ecological destruction, income inequality, and racial injustice are intertwined. Working for climate justice is one way to recognize this intertwining. Our witness together is more effective when we are focusing on fewer, clearer goals. This witness would be connected to our strategic directions. If this minute is ideals without specifics on how to enact, are we ready to support the concept?

We entered into worship during which several Friends shared ministry.

The clerks called the question: Are we ready to support corporate wide witness on climate action, to develop a set of concrete specifics to adopt as individuals, MMs, and YM wide, considering ideas from this gathering and from those not present with us today? Yes. From discussion that followed we approved the clerks drafting a specific charge for a sprint that would give substance for specifics and on-going accountability mechanisms. The clerks will work with the Ecojustice Collaborative in this work. This work will be under the care of Quaker Life Council. The sprint will seek to help define how we relate to the concern and each other around the concern, and include attention to YM infrastructure needed to do corporate witness

Addressing Racism

The clerks set the context for the reports on our work related to antiracism by reminding us that we must get comfortable with discomfort and conflict; we are imperfect people in an imperfect system with imperfect tools. We must listen to uphold accountability, re-educate to take responsibility for our history; and change our pattern of relating to one that honors freedom, equity, integrity, and peace plus kindness. Recent work on antiracism stems from an impetus given to us by our Elders in 2014. The following reports highlight work currently underway.

AntiBlackness Thread Gathering on 1/23/21 had 126 participants. The program featured

Oskar Castro, PYM's HR and Inclusion staff and member of Central Philadelphia MM and Sarah Willie-LeBreton, provost at Swarthmore College and member of Providence MM. Oskar Castro shared his story of living with anti-blackness, and the many intersections of racism and privilege in this life. Sarah Willie-LeBreton led us in exercises for centering and grounding for our work in anti-blackness. Carla White of Chestnut Hill MM shared this report.

Report Truth and Transformation Thread Gathering from Karen Lightner, Germantown MM, and Ministry and Care Committee of QLC.

In 2019 concerns arose about how and where we addressed racism within YM. A truth and reconciliation process was recommended to address racial wounding and healing. Yet the group formed recognized that truth and reconciliation models were not the right process for us. We are developing our own process called truth and transformation. In the early work of this process we brought individuals with training to share their own truths involved in wounding, and identifying what the individuals needed in order to move forward in relationship. A gathering on 2/6/21 was a first step to expose Friends to this developing and ongoing work.

90 friends from PYM gathered. O and Dana Robinson shared stories of racial wounding and vulnerabilities. Participants shared responses to queries rotating roles as witness, listener, and speaker. We learned this deep transformative listening takes time. The Thread is planning more workshops for annual sessions in July. Friends shared that circles processes, dominant and non-

dominant thinking, and nonviolent communication principles and tools, spiritual formation listening skills, and compassionate listening project approaches helped many Friends in this work. We were encouraged to “listen with your hearts, Friends.”

Report from AntiRacism Collaborative by Wanda Wyffels, collaborative clerk. Wanda reminded us that the ARC’s mission is to provide accompaniment and support to Meetings seeking to move forward with anti-racism work. They began a survey of work we are doing in our MMs and worship groups. Much work falls in the category of education. Many began to work or increase this work after the murder of George Floyd. Your work has included holding protests and vigils, putting up signs, contacting local police and politicians, interfaith work, supporting wider Quaker organizations, advocacy for legislation, and donations to antiracist groups. Some meetings have not begun this work. We need to keep looking to each other and to the Light as we move forward. The collaborative website will soon have fuller analysis and detail of the survey results. There is a resource page on the website Friends may find useful. ARC hopes to facilitate joint work by Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. <https://www.pym.org/anti-racism-collaborative>

Report from Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Sprint - Zach Dutton, PYM staff. This sprint is charged with forming recommendations for governance and education to support structural change to enable us to live more fully into our desire to be an antiracist community. It is a challenge to populate this sprint with Friends having the experiences and skills needed, thus it is staff and leadership populated. This can challenge our ability to see beyond structures and patterns in place. The Sprint has shared its work with many across YM including the AntiRacism Collaborative and Undoing Racism Group. The Sprint decided to pause the work because of feedback. We want to be sure to take in all feedback and work more closely with partner groups. We need to reckon with past harms to BIPOC in our YM, identify and interrupt patterns in need of interruption, and we need to engage people who have been harmed and not just those that show up.

The body considered and shared the impact on our lives of having an active antiracist, pro equity and inclusion witness in the YM.

For the minutes from PYM Continuing Session check out the news story <https://www.pym.org/take-aways-and-minutes-march-27-continuing-sessions/>

The Ecojustice Collaborative shared the following with Friends to help provide some context for the March 23 evening’s Q&A and for work on climate action and justice.

Documents and QuakerSpeak videos on climate change

[Bios for the members of the Eco-Justice Collaborative](#)

[Eco-Justice presentation on the historic background and current work and projects](#)

[Eco-Justice webinar April 19, 2021 on A Clean Energy Future: How We Get There at the Local Level](#)

[Climate Change Resources](#), a one-page PDF compiled by the Eco-Justice Collaborative

[QuakerSpeak Video on Quaker Earthcare](#)

[QuakerSpeak Video on Why Climate Change Is an Issue of Faith](#)

[QuakerSpeak Video on How Quakers Approach Sustainability Work](#)

[QuakerSpeak Video on What Quakerism Teaches About Connecting to Nature](#)

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

Some news from Friends Peace Teams In-person AVP Advanced Domestic Violence Workshop in Ecuador by Monica Maher

The AVP Advanced workshop on responding to domestic violence, developed by Shirley Way and NY AVP, has been translated into Spanish by an Ecuadorian volunteer, Carolina Cajas, with Friend Charles Rand. The workshop was co-facilitated for the first time on March 12 by Beatriz Villareal and Mónica Maher with 15 Kichwa women leaders of Jambi Mascari in Cotacachi, Ecuador. The women loved it, and asked for sequential weekly meetings in order to put their learning into practice between sessions; the next in-person session will be held on March 19.



Stories from Children's Peace Library in Rwanda By Transformational Leadership Center (TLC)



My name is **Divine Imumpaye**, I study in primary5 and I live with my mother in Bugeshi Sector. I like to read books. Every Friday I come to pick books at the library and read them all in one weekend. This library helped me to improve knowledge by reading; I learned a lot of new words and I understand different stories from the books. For me I think the books will help me to achieve my dreams because I have a dream of being a doctor so it is why I have to read more books which will help me to develop my skills.

My name is **TUYIRINGIRE Obed** and I am a student in P6 in Kirerema primary school. I was lucky to participate in peer mediation training where I learned many things such as peace. This training helped me to change my behavior such as fighting with others. After training I decided to change my behavior, and try to adopt good characteristics that will bring peace to my peers. Also, I am going to help others by telling them about conflicts and how we can fight against them, I will explain to my

peers about anger and characteristics of someone with anger so that they will know how they must go away from him/her. I will teach them how we must ask for forgiveness when we make mistakes. This will help us to grow up with the culture of peace.

My is **MUKAMANA M. Louise** and I am a teacher at Optie Nursery and primary school here in Bugeshi sector. I want to thank you first for bringing this library to the area; it helps our children and teachers in learning and the students like to read picture books where they easily get many vocabularies matching with things they find at home or on the way to school. For us teachers we use these books in the lessons to help children in reading and in giving them an example of things. Really we are lucky to have this library because even us teachers we benefit from new words in English and more knowledge

For more on Friends Peace Teams— see <https://friendspeaceteams.org/>