



Western Quarterly News

the newsletter of Western Quarterly
Meeting of
the Religious Society of Friends
Fall 2026

From Annual Sessions - Notes from the Coordinator

It was a delight to see Western Quarter Friends in physical and virtual rooms. My spirit did the Quaker flutter.

Notable business - we approved nominations, and noted that we would love to have more Friends serve - Admin Council, Quaker Life, and Nominating. Included in the report from Nominating is the list of Friends serving as representatives to other Quaker organizations: FCNL, AFSC, FGC, Friends Peace Teams, and Friends World Committee for Consultation. There are Western Quarter Friends serving these organizations! ([Nominating Report and other Advance Documents](#))

We approved an endorsing membership in the [National Religious Campaign Against Torture!](#)

We heard a proposal to combine the three councils. Friends wanted to be sure that the Nominating Council retained a more separate status, one that made sure it maintained independence to make nominations. The language of the proposal did not make that clear. We will return to this at Continuing Sessions. ([Registration Link and Brief Schedule](#))

Five minutes of concern came to yearly meeting - the three from Western Quarter, one from Chester Quarter on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and one from Philadelphia Quarter on the expanding wars in the Middle East. The clerk, Nikki Mosgrove, sought a small group of volunteers to pull the five minutes together and include action steps. The original minutes asked Friends to take action but did not include specifics. Since three of the minutes came from WQ, I volunteered to be part of this work.

Saturday featured two rounds of workshops! And ice cream!! I co-led a workshop with colleagues from the Middle East Collaborative and I attended one on burial grounds from the burial ground gurus at Newtown Meeting. There were great tips on record-keeping, maintenance, and burial ground upkeep. I look forward to sharing at our quarter property committee session! (See p. 4)

In this issue..

notes from Annual
Sessions
8th Query
Responses to 5th
Query
Book Pick - Quaker
Process
Friends Home & WQ
Events
Minutes - July
QM flyer

Quarterly Meeting Schedule

October 18, 2026 - West Grove - 8th Query

January 17, 2027 - Kennett - 12th Query

April 18, 2027 - Fallowfield - 3rd Query

***July 18, 2027 - London Grove - 6th Query**
(joint gathering with Concord Quarter)

October 17, 2027 - Mill Creek - 9th Query

See the [query rotation](#) on the website.

See the [host schedule](#) on the website.

8th Query - Grounding for Transformed Lives: Integrity and Simplicity

For the meeting:

- What is the interplay between simplicity and integrity in the life of our meeting?
- How does our meeting embody simplicity and integrity in its structures and practices?
- How has our meeting considered humanity's impact on the earth's ecological integrity and the ways in which violence and injustice exacerbate this impact?

For the individual:

- *How do I strive to achieve harmony between my inner and outer commitments in my spiritual journey, my work, my family and my other responsibilities?*
- *Am I temperate in all things?*
- *Am I open to counsel regarding addictive behavior?*
- *Am I involved only with those organizations and activities whose purposes and methods complement my integrity?*
- *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?*

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

Query Responses to the 5th Query -

Nurturing Our Community: Religious Education in the Home and Meeting

New Garden - The 5th Query was read on Religious Education in the home & Meeting.

At one time we had an active First Day School for our children with dedicated teachers but we no longer have young children in our Meeting.

When we did have young children they had good teachers & their lessons were reinforced in homes that practiced a way of life consistent with the principles & teachings of the religious Society of Friends. The homes that they lived in on a daily basis thru the ups & downs of daily life resulted in the young adults that we can now be proud of. The "lives that we live" are the lessons that we teach.

Newark - Query Minutes - 05/10/2026 - QUERY FIVE

The fifth query was considered by Aliza Appel, Ginny Bailey, Annemarie Carr, Gavin Ferris, Diane Kesler, Ariana Langford, Sally Millbury-Steen, and Mike McDowell.

We don't have a formal adult First Day program, commented one Friend, due to our small size. She thinks that we prepare for worship by how we greet each other as we enter, and just by coming to meeting. We help each other in this way, rather than with a formal education program.

A Friend agreed with this view. She remarked that our meeting provides much experiential learning, such as seeing how members deal with physical challenges and other difficulties. She believes that this is an education unto itself.

Another Friend also agreed, but she is not sure that she doesn't want to strive to do more, as we have in the past. For example, we read the book *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, and we have provided other opportunities for adult education.

We're struggling with how to support each other now. A Friend suggested that maybe we could have a sharing time, learning what others are dealing with. She doesn't know how to do that, but she wants the meeting to strive towards it. Noting the value of learning experiences, she emphasized that she still remembers what she learned as a child.

Reading the queries on a monthly basis is an education. Reading a query is a reminder of what is important, and how we can improve on what we've been doing all along.

All of us respond with pleasure when we hear of significant things that Quakers have done; not so much by reading, but by sharing and talking about the things that Friends have done.

On behalf of Newark Monthly Meeting, respectfully submitted, Mike McDowell

Query responses cont'd next page

Mill Creek - Query Response for WQM from Mill Creek Monthly Meeting

Most of our religious education at Mill Creek Monthly Meeting takes the form of shared reading among the adults, as we have no children in our meeting family. We have been reading, studying, and discussing the 2018 edition of the "Faith and Practice" book. We have gone page by page on the first First Day of each month. After several years, we have only gotten to page 59. We've carefully reviewed each page to discern meaning and intent and how our group functions within those parameters. That is one of many ways that we prepare ourselves. We conduct our MFW and MFWFB according to protocols outlined in Faith and Practice. In addition, our meeting house window sills and shelves are full of pamphlets and Quaker library materials, and we also take time to discuss our group's varying points of view regarding "that of God" during vocal ministry and worship sharing. We do not have a religious education committee, nor do we offer educational programs.

West Grove Monthly Meeting Query Answer for the Second Quarter 2026

Some of our history programs have had ties to Quakerism and West Grove Meeting.

Quakerism is a self-study religion that we learn more about as we go through life. Various studies that we have done have not always included the Bible.

London Grove - Fifth Month 3, 2026

Mid-way through Meeting for Worship, with 31 attending in the meetinghouse, and 11 joining via Zoom, the Fifth Query on Religious Education in the Home and Meeting was read. Several Friends spoke with these responses to the query:

A Friend who is a leader of the children's First Day program spoke on how the teachers spend a lot of time discussing Quaker beliefs and Quaker practices as well as Jesus's teachings with the children. The topics for May include stewardship and community. She said it is fun to watch the children making their own community in the classroom and making a connection with the adults in the meeting.

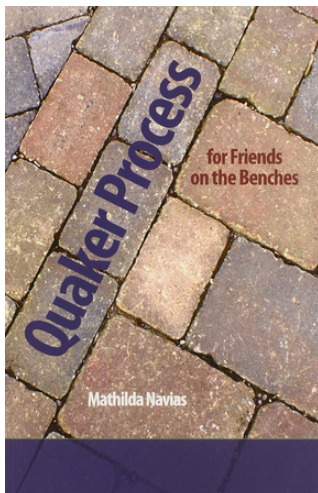
A second Friend delivered a message on what brings her back to Quakerism, and that it is how we answer the queries, and how we respect each other and respond to each other and ourselves. Her ministry was that Quaker teachings emphasize that of God in all of us, and finding answers in how we serve each other, instead of emphasizing serving God or repenting for our sins. We make decisions in the moment based on the respect we have for each other, instead of repenting our mistakes later. Of course, we all make mistakes, but it is so helpful in daily life decisions to consider that of God in everyone and how our actions impact others.

A third Friend spoke with a very personal example, reflecting on the messages from the two prior speakers about letting our actions speak and serving each other. He has an adult disabled daughter, and her experiences in the world can sometimes be very difficult. One of the few places she goes each week is London Grove Meeting on Sunday. He is very thankful that this meeting accepts her and has always loved her.

The final Friend stood to say that this meeting is always grateful for the prior speaker's daughter. He recounted a time years ago when she reflected the sense of the meeting by having a strong vocal reaction to a visitor's message of doom and gloom. She was called "our canary in the coal mine" by a longtime London Grove Friend.

Business meeting a challenge...

"Quaker Process for Friends on the Benches"



is the most thorough survey to date of the nuances of Quaker process and practice. This book provides historical context to how Quaker process has evolved, shares common practices and variations used by contemporary Friends, and gives real-life examples of model Quaker process in action. Readers will find answers to such questions as "What does it mean to serve on a committee?" and "How should new technologies be used in our Quaker business?" Readers will learn best practices from a range of perspectives on topics like discernment, leadings, and the mechanics of interrelated Quaker bodies. Both accessible and comprehensive, this richly researched handbook deserves a place in the library of every Friends meeting and every Quaker member or attender who seeks to find joy in the spiritual practice of Quaker process. A glossary, index, and annotated bibliography will give readers years of practical service and well-lit paths into a deeper study of the Quaker faith. "Mathilda Navias has written a remarkable book that is tender toward all varieties of Friends. Every page reflects not just wide study, but also deep experience and clear wisdom." -Tom Hamm, historian and author of *The Quakers in America*. - from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Friends Home and Western Quarter - a nearly 130 relationship in brief

For over a century Friends in Western Quarter have helped tend to what we know today as Friends Home. The roots of the residential facility go back to 1898 when the quarter established the Friends Boarding Home of Western Quarterly Meeting. There was a desire and commitment of Western Quarter's monthly meetings to have a place for elderly Friends to live together and receive care. At the time, several quarters across Philadelphia Yearly Meeting established residential communities for their elderly members. The two homes in nearby West Chester, The Hickman and Barclay Friends, started in 1891 and 1893, respectively.



The Friends Boarding Home of Western Quarter was incorporated on March 21, 1901, thus Friends Home has long held the title to its property which gives it official independence, yet its relationship with Western Quarter continued to run deep.

The boarding home's oversight committee (board) had 3 representatives from each meeting in the quarter. That's over 30 people, and very large for a board. For a long time the treasurer of Western Quarter audited the books for Friends Home. In some monthly meetings, each member took a turn serving on the oversight committee. Over time this became unwieldy, and because everyone would take a turn, there was no guarantee that committee members had knowledge of the home, what was needed in running one or had the skills needed to provide responsive and effective guidance. About 30 years ago, the board transitioned to a smaller group with the requirement that 51% be Friends.

While there are still Quakers residing at Friends Home, most of the residents are friends. It is now the main outreach of Western Quarter to the broader community. Friends Home and the quarter continue to have a relationship forged in a moral obligation to help tend the community, and so Friends in Western Quarter, tend to Friends Home as able, an organization Western Quarter needed and wanted.

You can volunteer at Friends Home or serve on the board. To volunteer in the library, or to share your hobby or craft contact Nancy Wilson at 610-444-2577 x212. Interested in serving on the board, reach out to Teal Rickerman, clerk of the board, and member of Mill Creek Meeting.

It's Western Quarter Committee Discussion Time!

**Monday, October 5 - Religious Education: children's,
intergenerational, adult**

Tuesday, October 6 - Witness and Social Concerns

Tuesday, October 13 Pastoral Care and Membership

**Wednesday, October 14 - Property, Finance, Burial Grounds ---
including information from PYM burial ground maintenance and
record-keeping gurus at Newtown Meeting**

[WQM Zoom Link](#)

**Join friends from across the monthly meetings in Western Quarter.
Share ideas, programs, concerns, and generate new ideas to support
the important committee work of our monthly meeting communities.**

UPCOMING EVENTS in WQM and PYM

Downingtown Meeting Charity Fundraiser
October 10 9-4pm



Gather online on Thursday, October 29, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm for an evening discussion on this year's One Pamphlet, One Yearly Meeting.

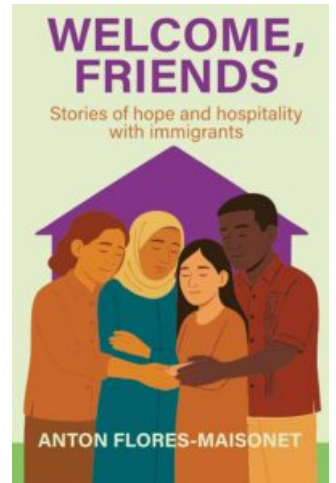
This year's read is Pendle Hill Pamphlet 495: Patterns of Racial Wounding and Racial Justice in Quaker Communities by Lauren Brownlee and Zenaida Peterson.

[Register for this program](#) so you can join other Friends across PYM on October 29 at 7:00 pm for a virtual discussion and sharing of our insights and reflections.



Welcome, Friends: Stories of Hope and Hospitality with Immigrants
A participatory conversation with Anton Flores-Maisonet about his book, [Welcome, Friends: Stories of Hope and Hospitality with Immigrants](#).

October 15 7-8:30pm at Pendle Hill.
[Anton's Cary Lecture](#)

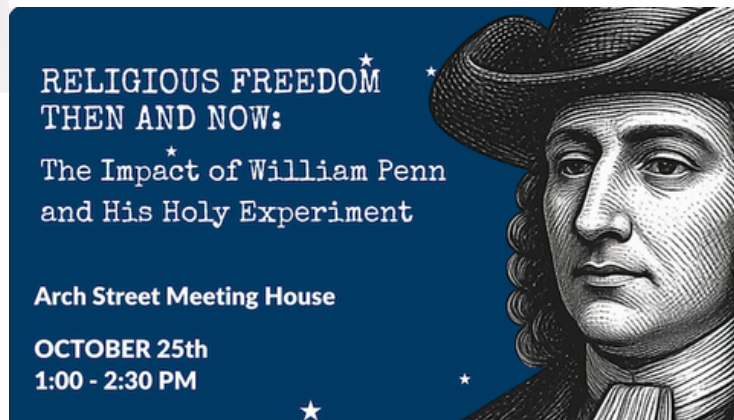


Meetinghouse Carbon Reduction Webinar October 22nd 7:00 to 8:30 PM

Invitation to monthly meetings and members to reach 50% carbon reduction by 2030

[RSVP Here](#) or copy and paste this link:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/PYMEvents/event/webinar-benchmarking-meetinghouses-ejc-cws/>



[RSVP for Impact William Penn](#)

Tours at Old Kennett Meetinghouse!

HALLOWEEN • OCTOBER 31, 2026

FIRST TOUR 11:00 a.m.	SECOND TOUR 11:20 a.m.	THIRD TOUR 11:40 a.m.
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Guided walking tours.
Allow a little over an hour.

————— Honoring the lives. Remembering the stories. —————

1109 E. Baltimore Pike, Kennett Square, PA
Near the entrance to Kendal at Longwood

TROUBLE REGISTERING? CALL
(610) 444-1012

Kennett Friends Meeting
Leave a message for the Old Kennett Committee.
Register online or scan the QR code:
sites.google.com/view/old-kennett/home

Minutes - July 19, 2026 at Wilmington Friends Meeting

Twenty-two Friends were present representing Newark, Centre, Fallowfield, Mill Creek, London Grove, West Grove, Kennett, Hockessin, and New Garden Monthly Meetings.

Opening Worship with responses to 5th query.

Minute of Appreciation for Hockessin Friends Meeting - Friends Approved

WQM minutes its gratitude and appreciation to all members and attenders of Hockessin Friends meeting who helped host the April 2026 Quarterly meeting. QM visitors enjoyed Hockessin's pre-worship fellowship coffee. The all-ages worship included a dynamic reading of Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears a Who. The children then had a program about finding God in nature while the adults participated in communal committee discussions. WQM visitors found the small group discussions very valuable, enjoyable, helpful and enlightening. The discussions produced a lot of information sharing and cooperation. The extensive and delicious luncheon buffet, including a build-your-own taco bar with visiting meeting members contributing side dishes and desserts, ensured that everyone was satisfied and ready to take on the business of the Quarter after the meal.

Minute of Appreciation for Margaret Walton - Friends Approved

Western Quarter minutes their appreciation for the service of Margaret Walton. Margaret formally began her clerkship of Western Quarter in the spring of 2023. She was serving on the nominating committee for the quarter, and heard Support Committee's assessment that she had the skills and character needed by the quarter. Margaret opened our meetings with an invitation to join with Spirit as we engaged in work for and in support of Western Quarter Meetings and Friends. She managed our time, our agenda, and our discernment astutely and with humor, love, and laughter. For three years, she served as clerk while frequently having a hand in the children's programming as well. Her personal outreach and invitations to Friends to come to quarterly meeting, brought many to our gatherings, and her handwritten thank you cards made all feel treasured. Thank thee, Friend Margaret, for this care of the quarter.

Treasurer's Report Quarter 4 FY 2026 - Karen Conlan (LG), treasurer

We received the report with gratitude. Karen Conlan noted that we finished the year well with no deficit as projected a year ago. Thanks everyone for the covenants to make it possible.

The asterisks represent pass-through funds, see note 2 on page 1.

In addition we distributed \$3,900 for six grants from the William Jackson Education Fund.

A friend asked if the amount of the Friends Fiduciary account is holding steady, going up or going down. We could not recall with certainty. The treasurer can track this for future year-end reports.

FY 2027 Budget - for approval-Karen Conlan (LG), treasurer

We approved the budget with the following change:

Raise the Quarterly Meetings program line from \$200 to \$500 and know that we can use the cushion of the \$2,000 surplus from FY 2026 to help supplement programs or potential honoraria.

Friends Home Report - prepared by Teal Rickerman (MC), clerk of Board of Trustees, and Samantha Roos-Meiser, Interim Executive Director given by Teal Rickerman

The report was received with gratitude. The following were of particular note for Friends:

The Willow Wing is majorly supported by the Longwood Foundation, and expects to welcome new residents this fall. The Willow Wing has a waitlist!

Excerpts: Leadership Update (from Teal Rickerman, Board Clerk) - Effective July 1, 2026, we welcomed an Interim Executive Director, Samantha Roos-Meiser, an experienced licensed administrator. We have been impressed with her knowledge, care for the staff, and organizational skills. In addition to this change, one Board member, Karen Lee Brofee, termed out. We were joined by two new Trustees: Anna Medeiros (Centre Friends Meeting) and Laura Foltz, an educator at Wilmington Friends School.

Capital Improvements - Three major improvements are underway. The new elevator continues to be a source of frustration with the slowness of progress. The original contractor sold the company; the new owner of the company had little interest in our project and was not efficient in addressing the unknown

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circumstances related to working on an older building. That contractor was let go, and this spring, a new firm, Tru-Built, was hired to complete the project with a due date of September. There was a new generator installed as part of that project. In addition to that, FHK installed a brand-new HVAC system. This project is nearly completed, with the arrival of a digital server being the last item that we are waiting on. Willow Wing, the secure memory care unit, is nearing completion. There is strong interest in this living option, and a waiting list has been developed for potential long-term care and respite stay residents. Unfortunately, last Saturday, July 11 th, the older elevator in our community became out of service. The Board of Directors, along with our new Director of Facilities, was instrumental in pushing this forward to be repaired. The parts have been received and will be installed early next week.

The board is working with legal counsel to change the name legally to Friends Home in Kennett.

Historic Properties and Coordinator Report - Deb Wood, coordinator

How do we tend to the futures of our people and our properties?

Two main items were the focus of Deb's work in addition to the regular duties. One was assisting New Garden Meeting in meeting with legal representation, New Garden township staff, representative from the township historic commission, and an area resident interested in the property. These meetings were to help New Garden lay the groundwork for the future care of the property when the meeting is laid down.

The second main focus of the work was following up with Western Quarter's Historic Properties Committee on the result of the title search on the Colora Meetinghouse and burial ground.

Brief recap: West Grove Monthly Meeting asked Western Quarterly Meeting to take over the care of the Colora Meetinghouse and property. Western Quarter wanted to ensure the property had a clear title before taking on its care. The property has a centrally located burial ground and meetinghouse in the usable area. It is a triangular shape with woods and wetlands. There are a few neighboring residential properties. The caretaker house and school house are no longer there.

A property search indicated the title is held by Friends Fiduciary. (In the past year, Friends Fiduciary decided it needs to turn over property titles they hold to monthly meetings, quarterly meetings or the appropriate LLC. They have begun this process, but they have many records to sort through, and it will take some time to get Colora's title transferred.)

The Colora property is not on the usual paths Friends in Western Quarter travel. It is difficult for Western Quarter to envision itself being able to be an observant and proactive owner/caretaker of the property. Communications with Cecil County historic and civic groups over the years have not yielded interest in acquiring the property, and communications with Baltimore Yearly Meeting and individual Friends we believe to be affiliated with BYM have also not resulted in sustained communications.

Western Quarterly Meeting is very grateful for Steve Balderston's and his father's care for the property over the decades. We hope such devoted care continues for the property whether with the Balderston family or not.

Western Quarter's Historic Properties committee recommends arranging the transfer of the Colora Meetinghouse and property into a LLC created specifically to care for the property.

Friends approved.

In addition, the Historic Properties Committee recommends that Western Quarter actively seek a new owner for the property.

Friends approved.

Legal and real estate costs may draw upon the Historic Properties reserves. Any fees generated would replenish the Historic Properties reserves.

A Friend noted that in the Newark area faith communities have invited Community Development Corporations to bid for laid down properties.

If the burial ground could be expanded, it may also be of interest to the two area funeral directors.

Host Rotation was approved. - We may make adjustments as needed.

Respectfully submitted, Deb Wood, coordinator

[*Previous Minutes and Reports*](#)



**Sunday, October 18
at West Grove Friends
Meetinghouse**



**10:00am Ann Preston -
West Grove Friend
pioneering woman doctor
founder of Pennsylvania
Women's Hospital
presentation by Dr.
Roberta McManus
11:00am Meeting for
Worship
12:00 - 1:00 Lunch
1:00pm - meeting for
worship with attention to
business**

**LUNCH POTLUCK
West Grove Friends will
provide main dish.
Please bring sides and
desserts.**

**Program for young children
in the works.**



West Grove Meetinghouse - 153 E. Harmony Road, West Grove