

Embracing Our Call to Faith: Imagining Our Shared Future 200th Annual Sessions

**Worship, connect, learn, and celebrate OVYM's 200th annual sessions
with an online gathering June 17-21**

Early registration will help with planning.

Register here: <https://form.jotform.com/200617972885163>

As most Friends of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting will likely have heard by now, OVYM will be marking the historical milestone of its 200th annual sessions this summer in an historically unprecedented way for us by moving our gathering online. The action is in line with Friends General Conference and other yearly meetings who are doing the same as a care-taking measure amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The OVYM Planning Committee, after much discernment and with sadness for the loss of a cherished annual experience, recommended canceling the face-to-face gathering at the Executive Committee's April 4 meeting. The Executive Committee approved and minuted the recommendation and subsequently charged the Planning Committee with organizing a virtual gathering in its place.

The theme remains the same as previously announced: "Embracing our call to faith; imagining our shared future." And our dates are the same as well, June 17-21.
(See page 2 for plans!)

The Quaker Quill



Dear Friends:

This is an invitation.

I invite you to embrace uncertainty and hope.

I invite you to feel grief fully—to mourn the little losses of the cancelled experiences you had anticipated with joy and to mourn the great losses of the death of loved ones.

I invite you to ask for help without shame or apology.

I invite you to serve with a whole heart.

I invite you to deepen your faith a little bit at a time, in great leaps forward, despite setbacks.

I invite you to our **Virtual Annual Sessions!**

It is sad that we cannot be together, but we gladly gather nonetheless. I pray we will find joy, love, peace and all the fruits of the spirit, that we will grow in understanding, and that we will build community even though we cannot share meals, hugs, and casual conversation in the usual ways.

Many of the regular events will take place. We will have abbreviated business sessions, and I pray that those who gather at annual sessions will entrust the Executive Committee to tackle the less pressing items that we will not have time to consider in June.

Martha Viehmann



We can worship together, and I have faith that we will feel each other's loving presence even though we will not be physically present.

I extend deep gratitude to the Planning Committee, Registrar, Website Development team and the many others who are working to ensure that our pandemic Annual Sessions still mark a meaningful 200th anniversary. The loving service of these Friends brings me joy.

As I prepare for the Annual Sessions, I am filled with gratitude for this opportunity to serve you, for the support I receive, and for the faith you place in me. And as I stay at home, protecting myself and my neighbors from COVID-19, I will continue to seek opportunities for delight, gratitude, and compassion, for such experiences remind me that God, the Infinite Mystery, is ever present, and that I am never alone.

(Plans for Annual Sessions, continued from page 1)

The Planning Committee has met almost weekly since early March, first discerning our recommendation to Executive Committee and then rethinking what an online gathering might look like. We've explored what other yearly meetings are doing, learned about online technology and best practices for online programs, and considered the essential components of our annual time together.

Our work has been led by three queries: Why do we have annual sessions? What Friends' needs are met through annual sessions? How can those needs be met in alternative ways?

Our work also has occurred at the same time that most monthly meetings have moved their worship, committee meetings, and other activities to Zoom and other online platforms. Annual sessions will benefit from those shared experiences, which will have become even more familiar by June 17. We also are working to learn who does not have access to online technology — whether by choice or means — and exploring ways to connect with everyone.

We have come to several understandings and conclusions in moving this year's gathering online:

- Maintaining a schedule that resembles our face-to-face sessions will provide familiarity and possibly even comfort in these difficult times;

- “Zoom fatigue” is real, and spending an extended time online is difficult and tiring;

- Multi-person households may have a limited number of devices to participate in concurrent activities;

- Parents overseeing children's participation will have a difficult time joining in a simultaneous adult activity.

For these reasons, we have scaled back the number of our activities and developed a schedule with limited overlap, while keeping the basic schedule much the same as in past years.

Our plenary sessions, Thursday and Friday evenings, will feature presentations by Cathy Roma, a member of Yellow Springs Friends and a retired Wilmington College choral professor who has founded and directs choirs in three area prisons; and Emily Provance, who writes, speaks and travels in the ministry with concern for “hearth building” and outreach among Friends, and accompanied by a traveling minute from her home meeting, Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting in New York City.

Planned workshops include sessions on maintaining our spiritual communities and taking care of each other in a time of uncertainty; Quaker spiritual vitality; Bible study; art-making as spiritual practice; and resolving conflicts in our meetings.

Worship and worship sharing will be take place each day beginning Thursday. Yoga sessions will be offered in the mornings, and the Healing Center introduced last year will have an online presence as well.

HEALING CENTER

Gloria Stearns-Bruner and Deborah Jordan, who are organizing the Healing Center, give this description: The Healing Center will offer a variety of individual and group practices including mindfulness meditation, music and movement, self-massage, contemplative walk (away from computer!), and compassionate listening. There will be 3-4 licensed healing practitioners and peer helpers on hand. For questions, please contact Gloria (gloriabruner@gmail.com) or Deborah (ovymsec@fuse.net).

MIDDLE YOUTH AND TEENS

Kaia Jackson, OVYM Youth Secretary, with support from the Youth Services Committee, is planning activities for middle youth and teens. Kaia offers this summary:

“Our Middle Youth and Teen program will be diving into a virtual journey together during Annual Sessions! Here are the highlights:

During lunchtimes, we will host a casual social hour for middle youth, teens and community to interact with one another. Each day, there will be a featured activity or theme, including: Storytime, Puppets, and Intergenerational Conversations. We are looking forward to a fun and lively time with our middle youth and more!

Later in the afternoon, all teens are invited to gather to play interactive group games, partake in meeting for business, engage in volunteer/service opportunities, and plan for the infamous talent show! We encourage teens to start thinking now about their costume for our Character Dress-Up Day and Bad Hat party :)

Interested in volunteering as a FAP (Friendly Adult Presence) or mentor for either virtual group, or joining in the Intergenerational Conversation Day? Interested in registering your middle youth or teens? Any questions? Please connect with Kaia at ovymyouthsecretary@gmail.com or (330) 571-7395. I look forward to hearing from you!”

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Hannah Branson, clerk of the children's committee offers the following message from her committee about activities for children up to 11 years of age. (11-year-olds have the choice of joining either the children or middle youth groups.)

“We plan to read books together and talk about our hopes for the future of the world and our current anxieties and fears and concerns for the future.

We will have singing on a Zoom meeting so we can all sing together. You can be ready with a favorite song and we will see if we know it or you can teach it to us.

We will learn about the watershed in our area and take a walk together outside in our yards and compare the sights and sounds.

We will do an art activity together using household items.

We will hug our stuffed animals together and share what we have been doing in our lives during this time.

Come with your ideas and songs and animals to share yearly meeting with us in a new way.”

The Planning Committee would like to echo that final sentiment:

Please, do, come — to share yearly meeting with us in a new way!

(Continued page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

OVM's new website that is being developed will have more information about activities as they are confirmed, with Zoom links, material downloads and other ways to connect in one place.

Early registration will help with planning. Register here: <https://form.jotform.com/200617972885163>

OVM 2020 Annual Sessions, June 17-21

The following schedule is a general outline of what is being planned. We realize that some activities and/or their times may change as we get closer to annual sessions and everyone continues to live with the challenges of these uncertain times.

A Help/Registration Desk will be open daily from 8:00 to 8:30 and 12:00 to 12:30

Breakfast and dinner times are not explicitly scheduled. Friends are encouraged to take meals as they are able.

	Wednesday 6/17	Thursday 6/18	Friday 6/19	Saturday 6/20	Sunday 6/21
7:00-7:30 am		Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	
7:45-8:15 am		Yoga	Yoga	Yoga	Yoga
8:00-8:30 am		Help/Registration Desk	Help/Registration Desk	Help/Registration Desk	Help/Registration Desk
8:30-9:30 am		Worship Sharing	Worship Sharing	Worship Sharing	Worship Sharing
10:00-11:30 am		Children's Program	Children's Program	Children's Program	Closing M4B, Epistles, and Meeting 4 Worship
Lunch 12:00-1:00 pm		Middle Youth/ Teen story time	Middle Youth/ Teen puppets	Middle Youth/Teen/ Intergenerational social hour	
12:00-12:30 pm	Help/Registration Desk	Help/Registration Desk	Help/Registration Desk	Help/Registration Desk	
1:00-3:00 pm	Meeting for Business	Meeting for Business	Workshops (1.5 hr.) #1,2,3,	Workshops (1.5 hr.) #4,5,6	
3:00-4:00 pm		Teen Program	Teen Program	Teen Program	
3:00-4:00 pm				Memorial Meeting	
4:00-5:00 pm		Healing Center	Healing Center	Healing Center	
7:00-8:30 pm		Plenary	Plenary	Talent Show	

News from Monthly Meetings

Bloomington

Despite limitations imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, our Meeting is doing well with supporting one another led by a variety of Friends in key positions.

Prior to restrictions on gathering we had a second hour program about the sexual misconduct materials developed and shared by OVYM. Since then we have held most scheduled gatherings via Zoom including meetings for worship, query discussions, worship sharing, meeting for business and multiple committee meetings. We also held a retreat via Zoom with the focus on spiritual lightheartedness which was enjoyed by some 15+ Friends. In general the participation is less than our face-to-face gatherings because some people don't have, don't tolerate, or are put off by the necessary technology. All Zoom users are building new skills such as remembering to mute and unmute ourselves and figuring out how to indicate an inspiration to deliver a message. This includes a lot of laughter.

Our Pastoral Care Committee has organized us to call, email or write to one another, which we probably should be doing more of anyway, but it has proved very meaningful to reach out to one another other than on First Day or for other official activities. We have shared photos, poetry, music, and stories to express our connections to one another. Our Maintenance Committee organized a Six-Foot Apart Work Day to move gravel around new raised flower beds in front of the meetinghouse. Peace, Environmental, and Social Concerns Committee has been looking for ways to support the wider community though this difficult time as well.

(Please see poetry on page 7)

Submitted by Christine Carver

Community

The pandemic has changed all of our lives; we grieve the losses and hardships of people around the world and of those in our meeting who have lost loved ones to Covid-19. Our meeting has shown great resilience, however, in the face of the many restrictions placed on us. Our online Sunday meeting for worship has been well attended, and although it can be difficult to have the same sense of spiritual connection at a virtual meeting, it has been surprising how deep the worship has often been, with inspiring vocal ministry arising from our gatheredness. One blessing of the digital format has been the presence of Friends we don't get to see much due to distance, as far away as Switzerland and South Korea! Also, we have been having after meeting "go-arounds" for those present to share how they're doing. Our Ministry and Counsel sent out a survey to assess needs, and our two-member pastoral ministry team organized the responses. A fund was created to help those who needed financial support and members were matched with others who requested to be checked in on regularly. The outpouring of support was wonderful- we had 3x as many offering help as those who requested it! All in all, we have been coping well.

Other news:

- We are pleased to have had a growing number of children present lately - 6 to 8 children in the primary classes and 3-4 younger ones in the nursery! The children were delighted that an on-line program was offered just for them, led by Bill Cahalan, and they have been clamoring for more!
- Adult education offerings have continued as well. Paul Buckley led a 2nd hour on the history of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, which was very informative and appreciated, in this, its 200th year of existence. He has also been providing weekly half hour sessions on Quaker history called "Quaker Bites." There are two book discussion groups, including one led by Carol and Doug Burks, reading *A Very Good Marriage*, by Tom Mullen.
- Our new web clerk, Eira Tansey, in collaboration with the outreach committee, has been tending to our website, translating "Quakerese" terms, like "second hour," and making more visible such things as child care, handicapped access, and religious programming for youth.
- Our FCNL Advocacy team, cited as one of the most active in FCNL's network, has continued doing important work, lobbying our state representatives. In a recent visit with Congressional representative Wenstrup, they were pleased to hear that, despite his strong military leanings, he supports the repeal of the Authorization of the Use of Military Force, a priority effort for FCNL teams. Similar good news: Sen. Portman's aide reported that his joining the Climate Solutions Caucus was in part a result of their lobbying efforts. Immigration and housing concerns are other areas of this team's focus.
- As a participant in a broader Sanctuary network, our meeting has been helping to host a Congolese family by providing material and social support. Mary Anne Curtis is the devoted leader in this effort, organizing and providing transportation, purchasing needed goods, etc. Her long history of concern for human rights feeds her passion for this important work.

We pray that this pandemic will open eyes to the gross inequities in our society as well as heightened awareness of the need for and benefits of a more simple lifestyle, requiring less carbon fuel, more time for walks and family, and a slower pace to be more present to Presence.

Submitted by Paulette Meier

Dayton

Dayton Friends continued work on the patio for Tom Applegate's memorial, and Phil Henry looked into replacing our Meeting's old water heater. We now have our own internet connection at the meetinghouse. Friends are eager to begin planting things in the garden, and suggested adding more garden space. Unfortunately, the meeting was broken into, but luckily, nothing was stolen or destroyed- just a mess made. Nikki Coffey Tousey and Barbara Robinson did the major clean-up that was required. Nikki is also involved in ordering a few trees for the backyard. We have been blessed by regular First Day School attendees Ben and Rose Branham, who have finished the Earthcare curriculum. The meeting was able to assist Catherine from Cross-Over Community Development to obtain some donated computers. Dayton Friends was able to deliver a sizable donation to support the Dayton Immigrant Transit Assistance Program including 40 polar fleece blankets, food, toiletries and other items. We are happy to report that Honour Horne-Jaruk (who had knee replacement surgery last year) returned home, and is doing well. Sue Brezine, who broke her hip has been in our prayers as well, and recently returned home. Al McGrew met online with Ohio Valley Earthcare Witness, and they want to meet at Dayton Friends later.

Dayton Friends have had to make adjustments due to Covid-19. We started by ceasing to shake hands after the silence, to stopping live meetings altogether, then to holding them via online video. As a result, the First Day School kids were sent some books from our library when we decided to not meet in person. Our Spring Retreat has been postponed until the virus danger has passed. Most meetings have moved online. Some members are holding second hour discussions and other communal gatherings online as well.

Submitted by Scott Hadley

Eastern Hills



Early this year, Eastern Hills Friends Meeting welcomed Rhonda Pfaltzgraff-Carlson and her son Reid as new members. We celebrated with a vegan Potluck in February. Rhonda conducted a Second Hour Discussion on Gratitude and Reid has brought additional musical talent to our meeting.

In addition to the Second Hour programs, we restarted our Bible Study group. Once a month, during the week, Eastern Hills has been taking its singing and worship crosstown to Llanfair Retirement Community to provide for a member unable to make the trip to meeting. We also celebrated eight years of building community over lunch with The Jimmy Heath House, a permanent supportive housing project for the homeless.

Sadly though, we have had to curtail or modify many of these activities with the advent of the pandemic. While we can still do some activities such as tending to the grounds while maintaining social distancing, much of our spiritual life has moved online.

Eastern Hills has sought to make this a positive and meaningful activity. Members are sharing daily meditations, offering spiritual companionship, making masks, distributing links to free streaming music, theater, and film, and conducting much of the meeting's business remotely. Most importantly, we are able to conduct meeting for worship through the wonder of technology, allowing us to maintain a sense of connection until the day we can meet again safely in person.

Submitted by Eric Heineke



Oxford

Oxford Meeting was happy to co-host the February Miami Quarterly Meeting at Miami Monthly Meeting in Waynesville. We were glad of the cooperative effort and the opportunity to worship and fellowship with regional Friends.

Early in the year, we were delighted to have a number of Miami University students visit meeting as part of a history class. We had plans to participate in a number of community and interfaith events, and then, everything changed.

At first, we worshipped in our homes, connected by the Spirit. We used email to discern our input to FCNL priorities and our State of the Meeting report. After hearing other meetings' reports on the use of Zoom for meeting for worship, we have started to use it, and will soon hold our first business meeting using that platform. We will be considering a memorial minute for our beloved Barbara Diehl, who passed away in November. We supplement the Zoom meetings for worship with email chains about family news to keep us connected. We have continued to engage with our community. Individuals have contributed items to the local food pantry. In place of a table at the cancelled Earth Day event, we will submit a paragraph about our work to a directory of local organizations who are concerned about the environment. We have submitted outreach information about Quakerism and our meeting to Miami University's online summer orientation.

We find encouragement in George Fox's words, "Sing and rejoice, you children of the day and of the light; for the Lord is at work in this thick night of darkness that may be felt. And truth flourishes as the rose, and the lilies do grow among the thorns, and the plants atop of the hills, and upon them the lambs do skip and play. And never heed the tempests nor the storms, floods nor rains, for the seed Christ is over all, and reigns."

Submitted by Cecilia Shore

Yellow Springs

Life was chugging along as per protocol at the beginning of the year. We celebrated a Soup and Game night with lots of kids and adults playing various board games over a shared meal. Our roof was replaced. We began our plans and preparations to host Quarterly meeting.

Small groups were invited to join in Courageous Conversations: a partnership of the 365 Project and the Yellow Springs Havurah. Its purpose is to engage the community in personally meaningful dialog about their experiences of racism and to encourage individual and collective action.

In 2020, the project will conduct several more small groups. Each group will include 8-10 diverse participants and will meet for six two-hour sessions. The groups will discuss their experiences and understanding of racism, its effects on them as individuals, and its effect on Yellow Springs as a community. They will also identify methods for taking action to combat racism and identify collective action steps to be taken. Each group will be led by two facilitators and will meet in one of the participant's homes. The first three groups met in 2019 and the project is working towards three or four more in 2020.

Courageous Conversations groups set their own ground rules and share responsibility for the quality of the discussions. Facilitators help manage discussions but do not attempt to teach or instruct the group about racism. Groups start with personal stories, then look at the problem of racism from many points of view. Next, groups will explore possible solutions, and finally, make plans for action and change.

Outcomes from using this discussion model in other communities have included changes in individual behavior and attitudes, new relationships and networks, institutional changes, change in public policy, and change in community dynamics.

We began the work of updating our directory, which involves personal phone calls to every member and attender on our lists. Then the world shut down and the meeting pivoted to an online presence. Here is a message from our clerk:

Friends, the pandemic we are facing is real and changing all the time. Besides the difficulties of navigating daily activities and trying to remain healthy, we face spiritual challenges. It's easy to tune into external news and information about the spreading virus and lose touch with Guide found within.

We do need to "stay tuned" but to much more than things viral. We need our meeting community as a source of spiritual support at the very time when we cannot gather as we usually do. And in this health crisis environment, meeting decisions are being made outside our usual corporate practices. For example, a number of committee clerks made the decision to close Rockford to all activities, an action that would normally have been considered in meeting for worship with attention to business. But in order to protect public health in the immediate future, we had to trust that the meeting as a whole would forgive us.

As we anticipate that social isolation will need to continue for some time, we may find that it is possible to maintain our worship and meeting activities, but in new ways. We have had one meeting for worship online, and anticipate continuing that. Committees and clerks are using digital technology to communicate with each other. Our social media and email efforts continue. We can still call one another, send cards or letters, and wave to fellow dog-walkers as we move about our neighborhoods.

Staying in touch will be vitally important.

~Bruce Heckman

So with that change we implemented daily online worship opportunities. Our weekly worship is now on Zoom and this week we will attempt our first online meeting for worship with attention to business. Our communications committee has stepped up and stepped in to make sure that we all stay as in touch as possible in a time of social distancing. We now have weekly newsletters where folks can find out how to participate, get personal tutorials on how to use Zoom and find local resources.

As of the printing of this Quill our online version of quarterly meeting will have come and gone. We hope that we were able to see many of you then. As always, we look forward to having any visitors join us at Yellow Springs- whether it be on an online worship or in person once we come through this strange time together.

Submitted by Heather Snediker-Morscheck

Poetry created by Bloomington Friends at a Recent Retreat

the lighthouse

a fog rolls in, a wave breaks
gulls cry
we hunker down
a weight shifts. I do not know where we are, but there is shaking.
salt runs through.
a long tone announces
a ray reaches
from a tower balanced on the rocks edge
there is hope.

By Kiera Wilson, LSW (she/her/hers)

Spring 2020

Spring advanced in other yards
with blazing daffodil torches.

In our yard,
plain green spears,
tulip leaves,
no violets.

I agonized. "What if--?
What if we have no flowers this spring?"

My friends said, "Wait."

Finally, finally,
two bright daffodils,
one red tulip,
a scattering of violets.
By Peggy Squires

I Blaze

An infectious wildfire.
To brazenly expand
Light to every living thing that reciprocates.

Hop and spread, hop and spread.
Tingling laughter is lovely and delicate
So I must remember to circle my stones.

The lights of the forest just
as cardinal as mine.
By Nora B.

Retreat

Friends gathered
to look again together,
our hearts, our spirits
worn with love and pain.

Lift us up!
Lift us out!
Set us soaring again
with the singing birds.
By Gloria Stearns-Bruner

Winter-Spring

We hunker down
Finally, finally, two bright daffodils
Hop and spread, hop and spread
Set us soaring again
Therein lies the gift
By The Poem Group

Created by 5 lines by 5 people process

New OVYM website just in time for annual sessions

Two hundred years ago, our Quaker ancestors probably did not imagine the virtual world that would be constructed and how tied in we simple Quakers might be. In 2007, Lonny Burger of Miami Meeting took us into the virtual domain as he built our first website. This past fall, Lonny's job transferred him and family to Georgia so he resigned as website administrator. His new address is: 768 Austin Creek Drive, Buford, GA 30518

With thanks for Lonny's many years of service, the Quaker torch has been passed to Daniel Day of Fall Creek Meeting as our new website administrator. Along with support from an ad hoc website development committee, Daniel has spent the past six months gleaning the essentials for our new look. This will hopefully be inviting for those who are just being introduced to Quakerism as well as useful for those of us who are more seasoned. Please check it out at ovym.org. And since it's mobile-f(F)riendly, you can check it out on your smart phone as well. Your feedback is welcome.

Submitted by Deborah Jordan, OVYM Administrative Secretary

Friends General Conference News and Resources

The FGC 2020 Virtual Gathering will be June 28th - July 4th with the theme “Sink Down to the Seed Sown in the Heart.” Here is the schedule: <https://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering/2020-schedule-glance>. The FGC 2020 In-Person Gathering postponed to 2021.

Spring and Fall Retreats for Friends of Color and their Families <https://www.fgcquaker.org/FOCRetreat>

Difficult Conversations: How to offer an open hand if you are not a person of color

<https://www.fgcquaker.org/news/fgcds-anti-racism-ministry-may-2020-update>

11 actions for the planet during a pandemic <https://www.earthday.org/11-actions-for-the-planet-during-a-pandemic/>

Resources for worship, pastoral care and religious education during COVID-19

<https://www.fgcquaker.org/news/coronavirus-prevention-your-quaker-community-fgc-events>

A Conversation on Grief, Death, and Dying: A Resource for Friends during COVID-19

<https://www.fgcquaker.org/resources/conversation-grief-death-and-dying-resource-friends-during-covid-19>

Source: Vital Friends newsletter

Friends Committee on National Legislation

This spring FCNL’s already well-used website has grown as staff find new ways to stay connected and support digital advocacy during the coronavirus pandemic. In March, FCNL’s annual Spring Lobby Weekend brought together hundreds of students for virtual lobbying on the critical issue of climate change. From April to May, FCNL General Secretary Diane Randall is hosting a bi-weekly online conversation *Thursday with Friends* which features FCNL lobbyists and discussion of current issues of concern. For those who would like to get involved with FCNL from home, you can now register through FCNL’s new Digital Action Center <https://FCNL.org/congress> and get training for virtual and teleconference lobbying online at <https://act.fcnl.org/survey/im-ready-virtual-lobby/>. As always, you can keep up to date on FCNL advocacy and action by following @FCNL on Twitter and @QuakerLobby on Facebook

Submitted by Jamie Young

American Friends Service Committee

AFSC is featuring news related to caring for each other during COVID-19. This page <https://www.afsc.org/content/caring-each-other-during-covid-19> includes articles on how the virus is impacting immigrants and incarcerated persons. There are also articles on connecting farms to foodbanks and ways to organize mutual aid activities while maintaining social distance.

AFSC Midwest

AFSC has been working with partners in Midwestern states to bring attention to the dangers of incarceration as a risk for COVID-19, and to work on behalf of immigrants’ rights. <https://tinyurl.com/MidwestAFSCApr20>

Right Sharing of World Resources

The Spring Newsletter includes a report from the October 2019 Field Representative Consultation, information about how new and increased gifts will be matched, and an update from First Friends Indianapolis about the Stamp Program. <https://tinyurl.com/RSWRSpring20>

The New Association of Friends

The New Association of Friends has been conducting business via Zoom. They also post resources for religious education from Quaker Religious Education Collaborative (<http://www.quakers4re.org/>)

Source: <https://tinyurl.com/NAFSpring20>



Peace Resource Center to reflect on 75 years of nuclear weapons

The Peace Resource Center is partnering with Brianna Matzke, Wilmington College Assistant Professor of Music and Concert Pianist, to collect artists’ responses to something they experience while visiting the Peace Resource Center’s (PRC) Barbara Reynolds Memorial Archives. These archives focus on the experiences of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings and the legacy of nuclear war. The artistic productions will be made public in conjunction with the 30th Annual Westheimer Peace Symposium, October 1-2, 2020. The theme of the 2020 Westheimer Peace Symposium will be “Peace and the Nature of War,” from the 1945 bombings through the following 75 years of the nuclear threat.

Source: Wilmington College Website

Indiana Yearly Meeting

Yearly Meeting Preview: We are trusting by the end of July it will be safe to gather for our yearly meeting sessions at Quaker Haven Camp, July 23-25. “Knowing Jesus” will be our theme as we begin our bicentennial year.

Message from Doug Shoemaker: Have you been paying attention to the birds this spring? They are ignoring social distancing directives and have refused to stockpile toilet paper. While outside recently I thought of the Skeeter Davis song, “The End of the World,” released in December 1962. In it she asks, “Why do the birds go on singing? Why do the stars glow above? Don't they know it's the end of the world? It ended when I lost your love.” Some of us might feel like it's the end of the world as we've known it – or maybe the end of a job, a loved one's life, or even the value of an IRA. And yet those pesky birds just keep on singing!

I don't think anyone reading this will remember the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918. It prompted quarantines and the banning of public worship and other public gatherings. Worldwide 50 million people died including 675,000 in the United States. Some pastors responded creatively, some declared the judgment of God, and others seized the opportunity to care for “epidemic orphans.” Some complied with the government's directives while others defied them. And yet, those pesky birds just kept on singing.

Jesus had something to say about those birds. Really, he had something to say about us. “Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? (Matthew 26:26-27). If you are feeling stressed today, listen to the birds. They know something we don't.

Source: IYM Communicator April 15

Paulette Meier Releases a New Album of Chants

As part of her ministry, Paulette has released a second album of chants she composed from Quaker quotations. It is aptly named *Wellsprings of Life: Quaker Wisdom in Chant*. Unlike her first album, *Timeless Quaker Wisdom in Plainsong*, this one includes quotes from Quakers spanning three centuries, from Mary Dyer to Thomas Kelly to contemporary writer Catherine Whitmire. Most are very singable and many include music accompaniment and harmonies.

We have been blessed with her vocal ministry during worship at Community Friends and now the greater world has an opportunity, once again, to experience this powerful and transforming ministry.

In talking about her ministry, Paulette said “...The words of George Fox and others testify to their conviction, grounded in inward experience, of the power of Love to overcome wrong, no matter how evil. My hope is that the testimony of Friends presented in these chants may provide us with reminders to go deep into Presence, to enter that stream of Love and be nurtured by it, even in traumatic times like these.”

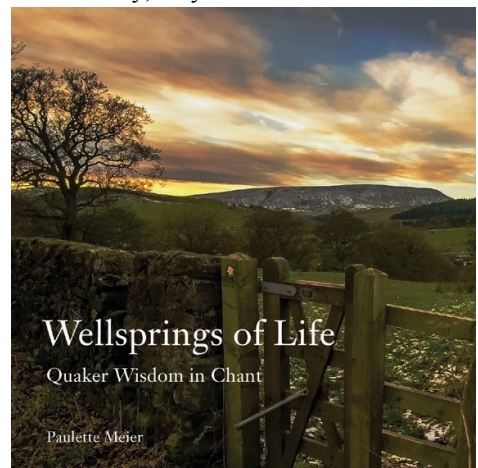
This album was prompted in large part by students of Cynthia Bourgeault, a well known writer and teacher of the contemplative Christian Wisdom Tradition, who, after hearing her first Quaker CD, initiated working with Paulette to “bring the Quaker and ancient Christian Wisdom streams together,” recognizing their immense resonance. Paulette has since taught her Quaker chants to hundreds of Cynthia's Wisdom students, and co-led several “Quaker Wisdom Schools” with Marcelle Martin at Pendle Hill. Chanting, or repetitive singing of simple spiritual texts, is an ancient Christian practice, that helps open the body and heart for silent meditation and worship, and Paulette has been happy to help introduce this to Quaker communities. Cynthia wrote that “Paulette's chants are creating a whole new musical and spiritual art form, introducing mainstream Christian contemplatives to the pearls of transformative wisdom waiting to be discovered in the Quaker mystical tradition, and introducing many Quakers to these treasures as well! This new album adds nineteen new chants to the repertoire and two talented instrumentalists to the mix. The results are lively, inspiring, moving and deeply practical, all at once. Concepts as subtle and challenging as surrender, inner stillness, non-attachment and the indwelling Christ spirit come powerfully alive through these mystical chants!”

Paulette's chants deepen one's inner spiritual life. Michael Birkel wrote: “Early Quaker writings have a poetic quality, and Paulette Meier shows that there is music in them as well. In this second album, she has composed chants from texts spanning three centuries of contemplative Quaker wisdom. Embellished with instrumentation and harmony, they become verses of mindfulness to grace one's day, offering nurture for the soul.”

Friends can listen to the new tracks here: <https://paulettemeier.bandcamp.com/album/wellsprings-of-life-quaker-wisdom-in-chant> and/or download them here: <https://www.paulettemeier.com/wellsprings-of-life-cd1.html> . Paulette is hoping that the CD will be available this May.

In these difficult times, Paulette's ministry is a beacon calling us into a deeper spiritual life to enable us to be a force in the world.

*By Doug Burkes
Community Companion May 2020
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