

# The Canadian Friend

Volume 113, Number 1

Winter 2017



Around the Family • Poems • Quaker Gatherings • Book Review  
Around the Country • Thoughts & Reflections • Justice Concerns

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# The Canadian Friend

The Canadian Friend (ISSN 0382-7658) is the magazine of Canadian Yearly Meeting. It will be published three times in 2017 under care of the Publications and Communications Committee. The Canadian Friend is sent to all members of Canadian Yearly Meeting and to regular attenders. It is funded from Meetings and members of Canadian Yearly Meeting, with assistance from funds administered by the Yearly Meeting to further the work and witness of the **Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada.**

- **Submissions:**

Send articles, poetry, photos, and art, to the editor:

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Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1S 2L1

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## From the editor

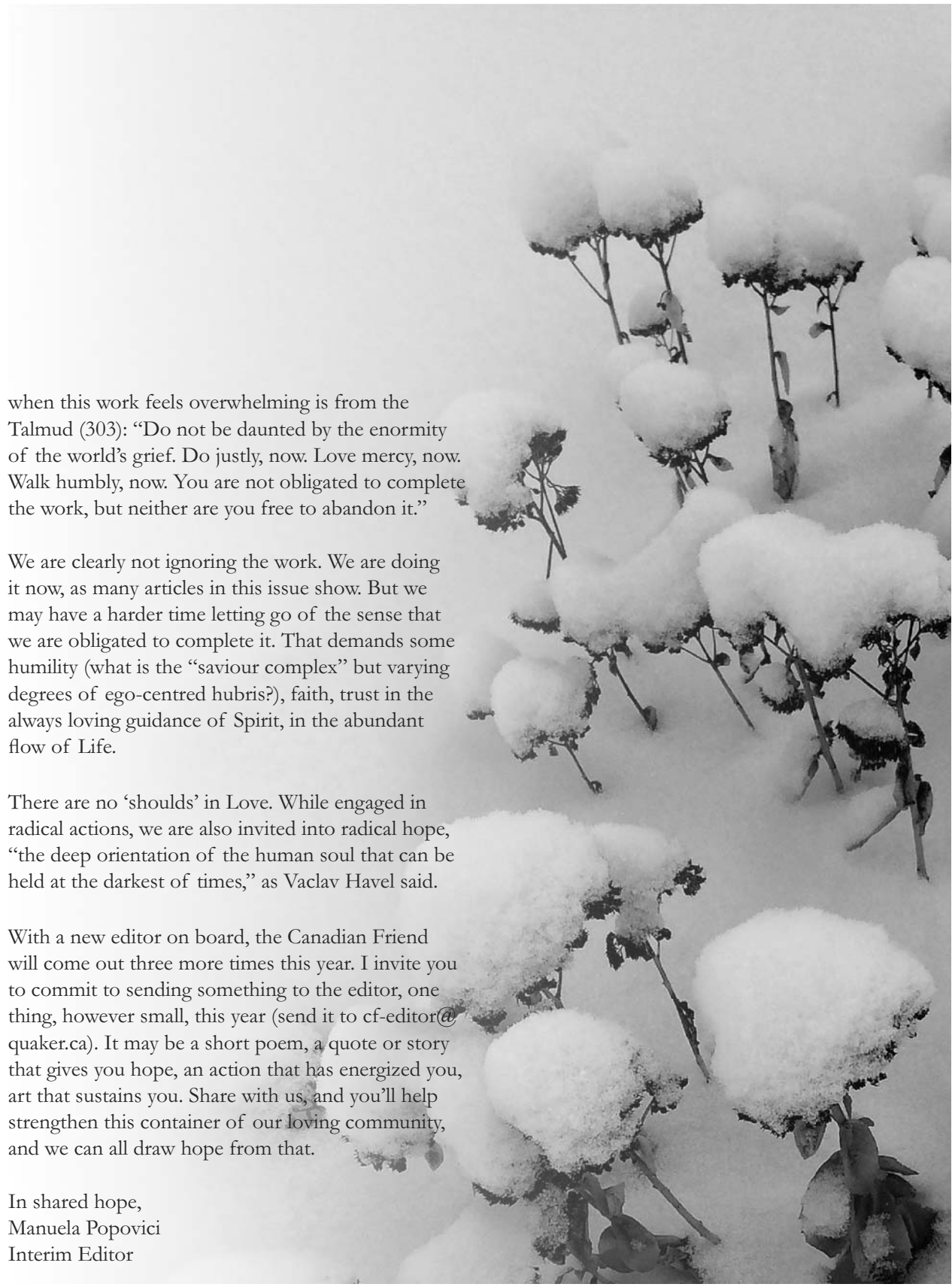
I believe I speak for many of us when I say that we are shaken by what has been happening south of the border and around the world. Suddenly, things we took for granted – facts, checks and balances, governance structures, democratic processes – no longer feel solid.

Instead, it may feel like we're on shifting sands, and that can make us feel anxious, fearful, angry, worried, uncertain, despairing, disconnected, apathetic, hopeless, frustrated – do these reflect some of what's been in your heart? I propose that all the 'shoulds' we've been saying and hearing from activists, and on the internet, and even in our own ministry – that they all come from this place.

I offer you this issue as a counterweight to all those feelings, and as one container that can safely hold them. It has a beautiful diversity of voices from all across Canada, and it reflects a rich tapestry of Quaker work, moments, prayers, and thoughts. It shows the strength, variety, and depth in our Canadian Yearly Meeting, half yearly meetings, regional gatherings, local Meetings and worship groups.

There are many, many people working both very hard and quite joyfully on behalf of CYM, HYM, local Meetings, and broader community, and here they share some of their work. We are strong together, and we have love and fire in our hearts, not just anxiety, and fear, and worry.

Yes, there's plenty more work to be done, issues to stand up for or against. A quote I return to often



when this work feels overwhelming is from the Talmud (303): “Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.”

We are clearly not ignoring the work. We are doing it now, as many articles in this issue show. But we may have a harder time letting go of the sense that we are obligated to complete it. That demands some humility (what is the “saviour complex” but varying degrees of ego-centred hubris?), faith, trust in the always loving guidance of Spirit, in the abundant flow of Life.

There are no ‘shoulds’ in Love. While engaged in radical actions, we are also invited into radical hope, “the deep orientation of the human soul that can be held at the darkest of times,” as Vaclav Havel said.

With a new editor on board, the Canadian Friend will come out three more times this year. I invite you to commit to sending something to the editor, one thing, however small, this year (send it to [cf-editor@quaker.ca](mailto:cf-editor@quaker.ca)). It may be a short poem, a quote or story that gives you hope, an action that has energized you, art that sustains you. Share with us, and you’ll help strengthen this container of our loving community, and we can all draw hope from that.

In shared hope,  
Manuela Popovici  
Interim Editor



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**This dilemma is my skin,  
rolled into the grit of earth,  
soaking in godwaters.**

**This dilemma is the pith,  
the pith that holds me,  
holy.**

**-Adrienne Macdonald - p.10**

# Canadian Yearly Meeting Gathering 2016

## Three asks

*Maggie Knight*

1

I ask that you practice explaining your faith and inviting others into it.  
What is the Light that you delight in letting shine?  
What are you quietly, humbly proud of?

2

I ask that you find your way to contribute to community-building in your meeting,  
to help your community transcend any Quaker crankiness,  
get better at conflict and money,  
and turn towards each other's bids for connection.

3

Finally, I ask that you discern what your life would be like if you decided  
to spaciouly, joyously, and abundantly gift some of your time to Friends.  
What Quaker service would you let go?  
What else in your life would you like to let go?  
What new service would you be led to undertake?

*Excerpted from Maggie Knight's SPG 2016 lecture, "Continuing Revelation – Quaking with Grace and Joy in Modern Times."*

*Watch the full lecture at: <https://vimeo.com/180618754>. And be sure to visit <http://quaker.ca/resources/audio-video/> for more audio files and videos of SPG Lectures and Quaker Study sessions from CYM gatherings 2011-2016.*

## CYM 2016 - A delegate's report

Kris Wilson-Yang, Ottawa Monthly Meeting

*An excerpt from Ottawa Monthly Meeting Delegate's Report from Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) Gathering University of Alberta, Augustana Campus, Camrose, Alberta, August 5-13 2016*

After landing in Edmonton, I drove through the countryside to Camrose. I had never been to this area of Alberta before. The tugging resemblance to my family's farms in Southwestern Ontario was welcoming. The presence of the railway, the complex flatness of the land and sloughs had a resonance of things "gone before." Augustana Campus, the home of the former Camrose Lutheran College, has a cloistered and protected feel. In the middle of the lawn, was a landscaped stream with rocks and a little bridge.

It immediately became the place to be if you were under five and your parents were fine with you taking off your clothes. A statue of a striding young Luther with robes flying was positioned near the entrance of the building that we used for our large meetings. I was inspired by the movement of this sculpture and reminded of the courage Luther must have had as he became the lightning rod of the Reformation.

I attended the Committee Clerks' Meeting on Sunday. Some CYM committees are happily functioning, while others are struggling under the burden of overwork, including Education and Outreach (E&O) and Publications and Communications (P&C). I am most concerned about these two important arms of our Yearly Meeting, because any organization needs to have a scholarly, informative, fun, national expression, and I feel that we are in danger of losing our national voice. This is a perennial Canadian problem and we just cannot succumb to defaulting to US and UK voices only.

Young Friends' Clerks are feeling stretched and burnt out. The Young Friends community is in transition, but then it always is. They struggle to represent this population, which does not know what the Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting does. I do wonder about duplication of work and why we treat Friends

between 25-35 as less than adult when they are doing the heavy lifting in many areas of society.

Many young Friends under this definition are parents and holding down difficult job(s) to survive. Some are farmers, some cannot take more than one week off for travelling holidays and some have complex and critical service jobs that exhaust them mentally, physically, or emotionally. They need the loving support of our Monthly Meetings and Yearly Meeting, not more pressure to perform!

Business on Tuesday morning was a struggle. Documents in advance were not available to everyone and the subject matter was difficult. At least 20 Friends left the meeting room to get caught up on the material to be presented. When we returned, we continued the 2015 discernment on our future structure, specifically, how best to use our spiritual and financial resources.

The clerks followed a worship-sharing model, a practice which I find personally difficult after having seen it in its worst incarnation. Authorities, one by name and one through a reading, were used to support this approach. Using "authority" suppresses dissent and those present feel hesitant to ask why things happen the way they do.

It is my considered position that worship-sharing in a large group (over 20 individuals) for discernment of decisions is not effective. It encourages reactivity and theatricality and brings the group to the edge of cultish behaviour. We naturally react to hurt and want to make it stop.

On following days, the clerks gave us direction on what documents to prepare for the following day and I found this, and the presentation by agenda and through the committee structure, very helpful and rich. I have limited experience with Yearly Meeting Business sessions, but found the preparation of a few documents the night before to be an enjoyable task.

*(continued)*

This brought me to my “Luther Moment.” I believe that we can only make spiritual offerings to the Silence that come from our own resonance with the Spirit. I do not believe that any time anyone speaks within the confines of a Gathered Meeting that they speak with the voice of authority of the Divine. I believe that we have a responsibility to always test our offerings and leadings and to help each other to accomplish the task.

**We have to continually ask where our own ego ends and the community begins.**

We have to continually ask where our own ego ends and the community begins and recognise those aspects of our humanity that can move us into the weedy area of magical thinking. I believe that any attempt to define a “good Quaker” is by its very act hurtful and exclusive. I believe that all the work we do is equally valid ministry: the Friend who looks up the current state of regulation on charitable giving, for example, is making as important an offering as one who comes to Meeting for Worship with a song in the heart. Like Bach, all our works are done to the glory of the Light. And like playing Bach, you have to do the hard work, you can’t just stare at the music.

Outside of the daily business, we joyfully accepted an invitation to visit nearby Maskwacis (muss-qua-chee) (formerly Hobbema), Alberta, the home of four Cree nations. We visited the local library and archives where language instruction is thriving. A local solar panel installation industry is growing and providing training.

We were asked to carry good news forward and also to remember that there is still much pain: youth suicides and gang activity were epidemic in the community last year. We were greeted as friends and received individual gifts of sweetgrass, which I found very moving. The visit is proving unforgettable for me.

An evening on transgender issues was well attended. There is open support of queer Friends in this Yearly Meeting and it is one of the reasons I have reassessed the value of the Yearly Gathering for me.

Visualisation of transgender issues from the points of view of borders and boundary definitions, of physical changes, and of the process of becoming a parent of a trans-person, was lovingly held. Here, small group worship sharing was warming, open and held with great trust.

After a lot of reflection of these and other events, I came to an epiphany: the Yearly Gathering is important to maintain the Idea of Friends in Canada and should be supported financially and spiritually.

This was new for me as I had been very negative about the Gathering, which I saw as a contributing factor to our perennial financial difficulties and ecological footprint. I now see that the annual Gathering helps us maintain our presence in the outside world and keeps us connected with a diversity of people and communities.

We are not the US, we are not the UK, we are not Australia or New Zealand, we are not Kenya or Burundi. We are what the land makes us: far flung, spiritually lonely, connected by every means available, driven by survival to build and support each other, both in small centres and the cities. We are a nation that needs structures like the CBC and good government, in whatever form, to hold us together.

We are a nation that has always traveled to meet with each other in summer and in winter, with the wardrobe to prove it. We have the benefit of our own historical paths and need to expel colonialism in our own house. Those of us in vibrant Monthly Meetings can feel that we have all we need. But I now know, in a visceral way, that those who are not so resourced need us to support them so they feel less alone.

However, it is a fallacy and a destructive idea that the Friends who meet to do business at the Yearly Meeting Gathering are doing business for all Canadian Friends. At best, it is only after every cycle of four YMs that we actually connect with the national population. Even at that, we have an attendance of 120-200 out of a Friends’ and attenders’ population of about 1,500.



I have been supported and authentically befriended by active, long-standing Friends who have never attended a Yearly Meeting-in-session. Yearly Meeting as a gathering was and is just not relevant to them or the vast majority of Friends in this country.

The problem is that Friends who do not care to attend the annual Gathering will not take the time to tell us why. A well-crafted survey instrument (and we have the expertise for it among Friends at large) with very active follow-up is needed. It may be easier for those not engaged with Yearly Meeting to have it reinforced that the executive functions of the YM – financial stewardship, publishing, educating, holding Representative Meetings, maintaining resources like Camp NeeKauNis and the Archives – are vital and can be supported without attendance or involvement with the Annual Gathering.

## Shinrin Yoku

*Beverly Shepard*

My cathedral –  
vast and still  
light streaming through latticed openings  
censed with cedar, pine, and birch  
choir and worshippers as one.  
There is no priest  
and God  
not far and fearsome  
is close about me.  
I touch him in twigs,  
in bark;  
she comes to me in a butterfly  
or falling leaf.

Praise the lord –  
I am healed.

(Shinrin Yoku is a Japanese phrase meaning “wood air bathing” or “forest bathing”)

## Queries for reflection from the LGBTQ+ evening gathering

- Do you think the LGBTQ community in your area is aware of Friends, and/or your Meeting in particular?
- If an LGBTQ inquirer was considering coming to your Meeting, how do you think they would feel about it? Do you think that feeling is accurate?
- Does your Meeting participate in any LGBTQ-related events, such as marching in a Pride Parade or attending ecumenical events run by/for the LGBTQ community?
- Imagine welcoming a seeker or new attender whose gender presentation you find jarring or hard to understand.
- Imagine experiencing a discontinuity between how your body should be and how it physically is. Over time, how would you respond to this discontinuity?
- Think of a time you felt physically and/or emotionally vulnerable. What emotions do you remember from that time? Do you still feel that vulnerability when the circumstances are recalled to you?
- If you're LGBTQ, do you feel supported in your Meeting?
- Empathy and understanding can be very difficult when someone's experience is very different than our own. What do you do to learn about “the other” and expand your understanding of people with very different experiences?

# Western Half-Yearly Meeting Fall 2016

## Friendly memories

*Barb Heather, Edmonton Monthly Meeting*

This year we met at Water Valley, north of Calgary, Alberta, in a Mennonite centre. The centre consists of small sleeping cabins and a large log cabin with upstairs dorm-type bedrooms and two lounges, and a large open space on the ground floor, next to a commercial style kitchen.

There is a huge log fireplace and plenty of area for displays, tables for dining and meetings, and meeting for worship around the fire. Upstairs is somewhat colder - warm slippers are essential. Walking in on Friday, we were greeted by warmth, welcomes, snacks and singing. Quaker singing is so much needed just now. We dumped our stuff, handed over our contributions to the food supply and joined in.

Two Friends had volunteered to run the kitchen and do the cooking – their work was little short of a Quaker sci-fi as they produced three or four versions of each meal to respond to various food allergies and requirements. Without knowing in advance what food would be brought, the cook somehow managed to provide for celiacs, the lactose intolerant, fat and spice avoiders and various other “brainiacs or foodiacs.” All the different meal presentations – with or without flour, sugar, spices, eggs etc., etc. – all neatly labeled and tasty. Amazing!

My favourite moments were when we gathered to eat. I love that circle of joined hands, often singing our gratefulness, our own thanksgiving.

Meetings for worship were a moving celebration and sharing of our togetherness, and Meeting for Worship for Business was kept effective, lightened with laughter, and well recorded by the clerk. I also

appreciated the downtimes built in for walks or browsing the bookstore display (I am sad we cannot keep up this bookstore tradition, but it is a costly and labour intensive effort).

This was a weekend of sometimes intense and sometimes light-hearted sharing, careful debate, hilarious quips, and deepening understanding, much of it also captured in the presentation/workshop led by JoLee Sasakamoose, focused on our involvement (present or potential) in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

Dr. JoLee Sasakamoose is an Anishinabe (Ojibwe) from M’Chigeeng First Nation in Ontario; she is an Assistant Professor in Educational Psychology and Counselling at the University of Regina. We began with sharing our own experience of knowing Aboriginal or First Nations peoples in Canada, and then decorated a large tree with our sense of who and where we are and where we might go (see photo).

For me this was partly painful and partly joyful, coming as I do from a very British, empire loyalist, and racist family. I have spent years gradually understanding more about the experiences of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples in Canada, trying to grasp the enormity of the colonial narrative, the injuries, the pain and grief, the incredible vicious cruelty of both government administrators on reserves and those who ran residential schools.

I felt shame in the assumptions and perspectives with which I grew up, and which were hard to shed. But I needed also to reconcile that moving on with my love

and respect for family members. It hurts my heart but mostly in a good way as I try to move forward and find what I am called to do in the last phase of my life.

I think my appreciation of this more condensed and intense gathering, the deeper Friendliness created by a small shared space (and the need to keep warm), and the humour that continually bubbles up is why I go to Fall WHYM more than to CYM-gathering or even Spring WHYM. It is more intimate in a comfortable kind of way, and I feel more integrated with Friends in this setting, with a greater sense of belonging. That of course is a very personal reaction, but perhaps indicates something worth exploring as we feel our way forward in regard to CYM.

What is that song, a round that we sing sometimes: "Dear Friends, Dear Friends, let me tell you how I feel. You have given me such pleasure. I love you so."



---

## Warship, misheard

*Adrienne Macdonald, Kitchener Area MM*

Within my eye  
there is a yellow flower  
or the sun beating  
at the base of vision; beyond  
the pulse, three crows spar  
with twilight tongues  
and coarse hearts. Beneath, we are  
lidded shadows writhing  
or stretched to some holy orb.  
I cup my empty palms  
to the eclipse of your heels and breathe  
until we soften -  
dark into light and release  
our steady yearn above:  
this is no armed worship

## Unfathom

*Adrienne Macdonald, Kitchener Area MM*

I know divine juices, yes  
I have dipped  
palmcups in the universal stream;  
my knuckles ached  
in the fleeting union  
- perhaps for withdrawal, perhaps  
for submersion, to plunge  
toes, belly, nose and  
let the nectars swirl  
across the back of my tongue.

This dilemma is my skin,  
rolled into the grit of earth,  
soaking in godwaters.  
This dilemma is the pith,  
the pith that holds me,  
holy.

# Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting

*Paul R. Dekar and Glenna Janzen, Hamilton Monthly Meeting delegates to YSHYM*

Friends in the three constituent Meetings of Yonge Street Half Yearly Meeting (YSHYM – Toronto, Yonge Street and Hamilton) met at Hamilton Monthly Meeting on November 6, 2016.

We acknowledged that our Meeting took place on the traditional territory of the Ojibwe and Haudenosaunee (“We build the house together”) nations. After worship, and over lunch, it was such a beautiful autumn day that a number of Friends took their bowls of soup outside and enjoyed the glorious sunshine.

Hamilton Friends had discerned that, as a follow-up to Jenn Preston’s presentation on the Truth and Reconciliation report at the Spring YSHYM gathering, we would strive to know our First Nations neighbours better. To this end, we invited Elizabeth Doxtater, a Mohawk from Six Nations who is both a storyteller and a visual artist (earlier, two Hamilton attenders participated in the Two Row Grand River Paddle and evening presentations).

Elizabeth gave a powerful presentation that included slides of her “Art of Peace” exhibit and book. Created as part of her own journey, the corn husk dolls tell of the Peacemaker who, around 1400, convinced the people of the Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, and subsequently Tuscarora nations to cease fighting. This became known as the Constitution of the Six Nations, or Iroquois Book of the Great Law. The Peacemaker based his message of peaceful relations among nations on the idea of living under a single roof, a longhouse.

Elizabeth told us that after a terrible accident that changed her body and her life, she decided to study the Great Law. She had heard all her life that everything one needed to know was in the Great Law, and it seemed to her that it was the right place

to start her own journey of healing. She chose Peacemaker as the story to tell, and the model for her healing, because she wanted to ensure that she not focus either on anger or the diminishments in her life. Peacemaker changed lives with his message. Through studying this story, she too was transformed.

We thanked Elizabeth for capturing the Peacemaker’s vision of unity and collective behavior, as well as for having addressed contemporary issues like the need to counter forces presently leading people, especially young people, to feel vulnerable, use drugs, or commit suicide. After her presentation, Friends approved a Minute of thanks to her.

We then heard from Coordinating Committee, Ministry and Counsel, the treasurer and the CYM liaison. Friends discussed possible ways to continue to meet jointly with Pelham Half-Yearly Meeting.

Paul Dekar, Hamilton Monthly Meeting liaison to the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC), encouraged Friends to sign Petition E-464 sponsored by MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre) to create a Department of Peace. Paul recalled an October 13, 2016 meeting he and Matt Legge (CFSC) had with Borys, who explained the rationale: there are proven methodologies for the non-violent resolution of conflict as well as proactive domestic and foreign actions that can reduce the likelihood of violent conflict.

Through instituting a stand-alone ministry, the Government of Canada would have the opportunity to heighten its support for peacekeeping and peace diplomacy. Borys anticipates that a Department of Peace could generate an initiative similar to the one when Paul Martin was Prime Minister. The government funded Canada Corps that involved over 500 young people in peacebuilding efforts. *(continued)*

After a short period of worship, Friends took refreshments for their homeward journeys and drove away. It was enriching to be together, and we look forward to Spring Half Yearly Meeting at Camp NeeKauNis on June 2-4, 2017.

## Retreat Relax & Reconnect:

# Canadian Young Friends & Young Adult Friends Gathering

At Camp NeekauNis, Waubaushene, Ontario  
Thursday June 29 - Sunday July 2, 2017

Whether you've never been to a Young Friend/Young Adult Friend event, you go every chance you get, or you've been wishing for the moment to return to your roots, this opportunity is for you.

Join the summer gathering at NeeKauNis and let a vibrant community and the peaceful surroundings bring out the best in you. It's a chance to connect to each other in community, worship, and nature.

Education and Outreach committee has generously agreed to pay all NeeKauNis fees!

Travel funding is also available!

For more information, please contact [canyfgathering2017@gmail.com](mailto:canyfgathering2017@gmail.com) or visit our Facebook event page at <https://www.facebook.com/events/805996552876808/>

The retreat will be followed by a group trip to Friends General Conference Gathering (Niagara, NY, July 2-8, 2017), for all those who wish to attend. For FGC information and registration (opening April 1, 2017), visit <http://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering>

# CYM Representative Meeting

*David Millar*

About 30 representatives gathered in Toronto on November 25-26 to deal with urgent Canadian Yearly Meeting business. I was moved at seeing old friends from all across the country after several years in the USA. At the age of 80, I realize that we are a graying group that needs to come to terms with questions of transition, finance, technology, and lowering our carbon footprint. All of these matters came under discussion.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Toronto Friends for their hospitality and kindness, and to Nancy McInnes and Elaine Bishop for brilliant clerking of a very full agenda in limited time. Full official minutes recorded by Eric Kristensen and Sean Hennessey will be posted soon on the quaker.ca website, so this account will only summarize highlights.

The 2017 budget was approved, including an unexpected \$250,000 donation that allows us to hire a Senior Staff Person (aka CYM Secretary) for three years, to work closely with present office staff (whose role has expanded) and committees. Suggested name of the position and precise duties, the hiring process and other matters were covered in a “document in advance,” but will be further defined. Essentially, the moving forward with hiring for the new position, which was approved at CYM-in-Session, is approved. Treasurer Anne-Marie Zilliacus reminded us to think of a succession plan before the term expires in three years.

A number of written reports were approved by consent, having been provided well in advance and not needing any specific decisions to be made: Discipline Review Committee, Friends General Conference representative report, Personnel Policy, Ministry & Counsel, Programme, World Council of Churches report by Anne Mitchell (including Religion & Violence peace-building work, WCC consideration of British Quakers’ “spirit-led church” proposal, synbio conference, and a call for papers on

the Pilgrimage for Religion and Peace), and Archives (plus a live demo: online access to books, genealogy, vertical files and papers at [quaker.ca/Archives](http://quaker.ca/Archives)).

We gave thanks for this faithful work that greatly improved the efficiency of our live Meeting, and urge all reports to be submitted well before the due dates, so that we can maximize our time on key concerns. [Editor’s note: see Laureen van Lierop’s piece on the next page.]

One of those concerns, which we had insufficient time to discuss, is Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting’s question about whether this is a time to divide CYM into more than one Yearly Meeting so as to lower travel costs and carbon emissions. This will be an important discussion at the extra 2017 Representative Meeting in June. Coldstream Meeting volunteered to take responsibility for Canadian Friends Foreign Mission Board for 3 years.

To a request from 50-odd African refugee Quakers in Québec City to found a Francophone Friends Church, we were only able to approve offering the “hand of friendship”, with further details to be worked out in careful consultation with them. We need to establish what help they are seeking from CYM, or from other Quaker bodies such as Friends World Committee for Consultation, Evangelical Friends International or Friends United Meeting as necessary, with communication through CYM volunteers who have the necessary experience and language skills.

In a larger context, we have a process laid out in Organization & Procedure for establishing Meetings for new groups if they are comfortable with being part of a Liberal Yearly Meeting, or we can support their finding a larger Quaker structure with which they may be more comfortable. Should this group prefer to be part of an Evangelical Friends organization, then it may be CYM’s role to find

good ways of our knowing and supporting one another across our different Friends' organizations. These matters will require discernment by Clerks Committee and future Representative Meetings.

Matters which were fully documented and approved: the Safe Nurture of Children (after 12 years of work!), revisions to Organization and Procedure, and approval of extra Reps names for several committees from Nominating Committee.

The next Representative Meetings will be:

- 28-30 June 2017, Friends House in Toronto (allowing distant members to minimize travel expenses by also being able to use the same flight to attend Friends General Conference Gathering at Niagara Falls, New York)
- 24-25 November 2017, Friends House in Ottawa

Other announcements:

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Indigenous concerns: Winnipeg Meeting has printed a full text pamphlet of the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

of Canada. Digital copies can be obtained from [winnipeg-contact@quaker.ca](mailto:winnipeg-contact@quaker.ca) to download and print for your local Meetings. Also ensure that your Meeting receives and prints CFSC bulletins with details of its ongoing work, events and news. The Kairoscanada.org and quaker.ca sites should also be checked at least monthly for news. We strongly suggest that local Meetings find someone to be responsible for each task.

- All written reports can now be downloaded from "business" section at quaker.ca, and printed for local Meeting use. We strongly suggest that local Meetings designate someone to be responsible for this.
- Friends General Conference Gathering conference at Niagara Falls NY, July 2-8, 2017, with the theme Ripples Start Where Spirit Moves. Information at [fgcquaker.org](http://fgcquaker.org).
- World Council of Churches synthetic biology conference in Toronto, November 2017 (exact date TBA).

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## From an annoyed representative

*Laureen van Lierop, Halifax Monthly Meeting*

This ain't the first time folks.

Many of the reports received by delegates were Late Reports. Two were even accepted only Friday morning. This meant that the Office Administrator, Kerry MacAdam, was unable to get the reports to Representatives in any kind of decent time.

Many representatives were reading reports as they came up for discussion. Bad practice!

A not-so-gentle reminder to anyone sitting on a CYM-level Committee that reports to CYM for either Representative Meeting or CYM-in-session need to respect the due date.

This due date is approximately two weeks in advance of either Representative Meeting or CYM-in-session. It isn't a surprise, we all know it's coming – plan your meetings and agendas accordingly. Smarten up.

If you are not the Clerk of your Committee, please remind your Clerk that this is a disrespectful habit that results in Representatives being unable to have a fully thoughtful response to any actions required.

I suggest we do away with all Late Reports and call them "No Late Reports."

## Clerk's highlights, Representative Meeting

*Nancy McInnes, Presiding Clerk*

Thirty-five people attended Representative Meeting: 24 Monthly Meeting representatives, 7 committee representatives, 2 presiding clerks and 2 recording clerks. Regrets were received from 4 committee clerks.

We met at Toronto Monthly Meeting, hospitality was provided by the live-in staff and sumptuous meals were provided by Toronto Meeting members.

I am now the Presiding Clerk and Elaine Bishop is the Mentoring Clerk. Eric Kristensen and Sean Hennessy served as recording clerks.

Some Business highlights:

- Discipline Review Committee plans an update of Organization & Procedure and will print 50 copies so that each Monthly Meeting will have one.
- Friends General Conference 2017 will be held in Niagara Falls, New York, and a goodly number of Canadian Friends are leading workshops or are involved in the planning and implementation of the program.
- We now have a Personnel Policy and an Operations Manual. These will be accessible on the Resource section of the CYM Website. Appreciation to Virginia Dawson for her work on these documents. Personnel Policy Committee work is ongoing to ensure that CYM as employers reflect Friends' ways and meet Occupational Legislation standards.
- Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel (CMM&C) reported two years of positive pre-CYM Retreats, leading to a much higher sense of optimism. They have completed revisions to the CMM&C Manual to conform to CYM policies and reflect CMM&C's responsibilities and activities. They are planning to send out a series of helpful letters to support Monthly Meetings [Editor's note: see the CMM&C letter in this issue].

- Archives: Heather Kirk has a new book, *Seeking Peace: The Quakers*. The Archives website is now complete: [quaker.ca/archives](http://quaker.ca/archives).

- Programme Committee is looking forward to a fallow year to get rested and to look toward other commitments. Beth Ward has resigned as Children and Youth Co-ordinator. She will be missed. The Sunderland P. Gardner lecture will be given at the May 2017 Western Half-Yearly Meeting in Sorrento, BC. Steve Fick will be giving the lecture; Christina Tellez will be in Bolivia and will not be able to join him. An SPG Lecturer and Bible Study leader are being sought for 2018.

- The Safe Nurture Document was approved. These guidelines and policies are intended to help us provide a safe environment for young or vulnerable persons in our care and is required now for insurance coverage.

- CYM in session locations: 2018 will be at Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario, August 2-11. 2019 will be at the Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Manitoba, August 1-10.

It was a rich weekend of connecting with other Meeting reps, accomplishing the business of CYM and enjoying the hospitality of Toronto Monthly Meeting. Many also took the opportunity to see something of Toronto, which offers many worthwhile destinations.

**A rich weekend of connecting with other Meeting reps, accomplishing the business of CYM and enjoying the hospitality of Toronto Monthly Meeting.**



# Invitation from New York Monthly Meeting

Dear Ms. Bishop,

Lucinda Antrim, clerk of New York Yearly Meeting, has sent a message to Bill Mueller inviting members of CYM to our 2017 Summer Sessions, July 23-29, at Silver Bay, NY. This memo is a follow-up on that.

The Sessions Committee has agreed that I will be a liaison to CYM should you be led to join us at Silver Bay.

A theme for Summer Sessions has been selected. It is "Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World."

I'm enthusiastic about this theme, as it encompasses all aspects of our witness to the world. We will have workshops and seminars on our witness, and I believe that our work together would be enriched by having Friends from CYM participate in these.

Our Junior Yearly Meeting program will also focus on this theme with age-appropriate activities for the young people. Children and Youth from CYM families will, of course, be welcome to be part of the JYM program.

We know that our Summer Sessions will have long business meetings in which many of the details of the life of the yearly meeting and its member meetings are discussed. Sessions Committee has approved offering to CYM the use of other rooms on the Silver Bay Campus while our business meetings are in session in the auditorium. You could have your own business meetings, meetings for discernment, threshing sessions, or whatever you are led to have.

If you need information on the cost of staying at Silver Bay, I would be glad to provide that. I'm excited about the possibility of having CYM Quakers at Silver Bay and personally hope that you will accept our invitation to join us as we focus on "Bringing the Peaceable Kingdom to a Turbulent World."

Love and blessings,  
Sunfire (Robert Kazmayer), NYYM Sessions Committee liaison  
Contact: [sunfirequaker@earthlink.net](mailto:sunfirequaker@earthlink.net)

# CYM

## Quaker Studies

### 2017

#### **Topic: Palestine-Israel, Nonviolence, and F/friends**

Ottawa Monthly Meeting will host the annual Canadian Yearly Meeting Quaker Studies on the weekend of October 13-15, 2017 at Friends' Meetinghouse (91A Fourth Ave., Ottawa).

The format will include lecture, workshop and cultural events. Presenter/facilitator will be Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta of Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

|                        |              |                               |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Friday Oct. 13</b>  | 7 PM - 9 PM  | Lecture and Q&A               |
| <b>Saturday Oct 14</b> | 9 AM - 12 PM | Workshop session              |
|                        | 2 PM - 5 PM  | Workshop session              |
|                        | 7 PM onwards | Cultural event                |
| <b>Sunday Oct 15</b>   | 1 PM - 4 PM  | Workshop sessions and wrap up |

Further details will be posted on the OMM and CYM websites soon.  
Please check [ottawa.quaker.ca](http://ottawa.quaker.ca) and [quaker.ca](http://quaker.ca).

Contact: Carol Dixon, [carol.v.dixon@gmail.com](mailto:carol.v.dixon@gmail.com)

## **Around the Family**

### *Coldstream Monthly Meeting*

Coldstream Monthly Meeting has been quite busy in 2016. The Kurdish refugee we co-sponsored is settling in well, working in South London and improving his English. We look forward to the arrival of more sponsored refugees, although the timing is unknown.

Our retreat this year was an experiment - it was spread over two days in April. We invited Mark Burch of Winnipeg Monthly Meeting to talk to us on the theme of simplicity. It was an inspiring weekend, which attracted some 50 Friends from our Meeting and surrounding ones. We are thinking of adopting the two-day model for Pelham Half Yearly Meeting in order to include a sizable program component as well as the regular business meeting.

September saw us picnicking in the Meeting House grounds, continuing a long-standing tradition. This seems to be a good way to re-energize the Meeting after the summer lull. Also in September, we were visited by Canadian Friends Service Committee. David Summerhays, QFJ clerk, and Yugita Hogan, QFJ program coordinator, facilitated a one-day workshop on the work of the committee and how we could contribute.

### *Interior British Columbia Monthly Meeting*

The Monthly Meeting formerly known as Vernon has changed its name to Interior British Columbia Monthly Meeting. For some years we have been examining how we can be more visible in our communities and more accurate in our description of ourselves based on our wide geographic distribution in the Interior of BC.

In 2015 we moved to a new, public meeting place at the John Howard Society building in Kelowna. We now have a Facebook page (Interior BC Quakers) and are looking at how to do more outreach in these digital times. In addition, a Meeting committee is discerning how to best be involved at the new provincial prison in south Okanagan.

### *Montreal Monthly Meeting*

We are blessed with a vibrant First Day School. It is not uncommon to have seven children on first and third weeks of the month. A new Congolese refugee family has joined our meeting – we are overjoyed to have them.

Monthly potlucks have been very popular. We have some great vegetarian chefs, and we experience caring friendship. We showed QuakerSpeaks Youtube videos on other Sundays so we could concentrate on learning.

We visited the Laurentian Worship Group in Pauline Bernier's Lac Cornu "barn," north of St. Jerome. It is a Magicians/ Actors/ Yoga/ Community Classes/ Dance/ Meeting House/ Activity Centre (for info: [laccornu@sympatico.ca](mailto:laccornu@sympatico.ca)).

Clerk Claire Adamson attended a Clerking Workshop by Jan Hoffman and Jackie Stillwell held at Burlington Vermont Meeting, where 31 were present. David Summerhays gave a workshop on justice reform to Coldstream Meeting in Ontario.

### *Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

Refugee saga - OMM initially worked with the Canadian Unitarian Council as our Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) but when the Canadian Government imposed quotas on SAHs, we had to take back our application and redo it as Community Sponsors. This revised application was submitted in mid-June. We learned in early October via our MP's office that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Winnipeg office was only then processing applications from November 2015.

As a committee, at most of our meetings, we continue to be in touch via Skype with our Syrian family, who is in Istanbul. Two teen members of our committee from the Irving Street group Skype almost weekly with the children of the Istanbul family for English lessons and getting-to-know you.

*(continued)*

Response to hate crimes in the Glebe (the Ottawa neighbourhood where our Meetinghouse is located) - In mid-November a number of hate crimes erupted across Ottawa, with hate messages painted on houses of worship, including at the home of a trained rabbi in the Glebe. On November 26, Ottawa Friends hosted a gathering of Glebe faith community representatives as well as concerned citizens – about 50 in all – as a response to this unacceptable event in our community. A presentation by the rabbi whose home was defaced was followed by presentations from representatives of the various faith groups gathered (see Steve Fick's piece in this issue for the Quaker contribution at this event) and then by contributions from others who had gathered.

This gathering represented a standing together against hate crimes. There was a strong feeling among us, including the rabbi, that a restorative justice process would be the preferred response in caring for this young offender. We don't know what further action may result, but we do feel that it was an important first step in building bonds of resistance to hate crimes in our neighbourhood.

We continue to hold hour-long Sunday morning “warm ups” before Meeting for Worship; these were generated by our January Quaker-UP retreat. The First Sunday warm up consists of singing, and the other Sundays are given over to reading and considering passages from Canadian Faith and Practice.

#### *Yonge Street Monthly Meeting (Newmarket)*

Yonge Street Meeting had two wonderful events this fall:

In October we hosted a recital by Layla Claire, an international opera singer, whose interest in Quakerism has brought her father to our Meeting. Layla wanted to make a significant contribution to the fundraising campaign for our meetinghouse improvement project, which aimed to make our meetinghouse accessible by installing a lift and an accessible washroom. She offered a performance in the meetinghouse. Stewart Petrie, her father, led the organization and promotion of this once-in-a-lifetime event. The many tasks this entailed,



from special cleaning, to organizing the reception, to obtaining a concert quality piano, to directing parking, engaged nearly everyone in the Meeting.

The results were beautiful. An afternoon of lovely music entertained the 134 people who attended the recital and stayed to visit. Additional funds were raised through the sale of products, including fair trade products. We also displayed a set of six panels describing the origins and values of Quakerism, which were produced by Canadian Friends Historical Society (these are available on loan to other Meetings through CFHA).

Overall, this was a unique opportunity to raise funds while welcoming people who would have never visited Yonge Street Meeting otherwise. It was also an occasion that brought together members and attenders of Yonge Street Monthly Meeting to enjoy an extraordinary cultural event. The proceeds of the recital enabled us to cover the final costs of the accessibility project.

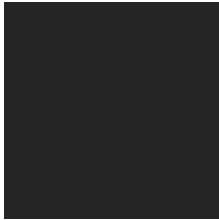
On November 13, we had another gathering, “Thanks for the Lift!”, to express appreciation to

the organizations, individuals and donors who made this possible. Sources included two federal grants, funds from Samuel Rogers Memorial Trust, CYM Meetinghouse Fund, the Newmarket Mayor’s Charity Golf Tournament, and contributions from about sixty Friends from across Canada as well as from members of Yonge Street Meeting.

We also thanked the contractor, Hawkey Church Management, for building the lift on time and on budget. The support and encouragement from so many sources is deeply appreciated. We held a red ribbon cutting ceremony, with the youngest and oldest members of our Meeting cutting the ribbon.

Our accessibility lift and the accessible washroom have now been suitably inaugurated. The new accessibility is already proving its value – Friends who have struggled to attend meeting are returning, and at least two community groups have enquired about meeting in our building. Now that the project is complete, we can turn our attention to other priorities, including a spring retreat about strengthening our meeting, outreach and social justice.

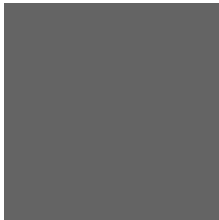




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# Canadian Yearly Meeting



Photos: Bruce Dienes and Rhymes with Orange Photography

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## The Lost Dream Revived

*Daphne Davey, Prince Edward Island Quaker Meeting*

Thanks to Prince Edward Island historian John Cousins, who recently launched his new book, *New London: The Lost Dream. The Quaker Settlement on P.E.I.'s North Shore, 1773-1795* (Island Studies Press, 2016), the word Serendipity has taken on a whole new meaning for PEI Friends.

John Cousins's book has filled in a great gap in eighteenth-century Quaker history. While some parts of the story are recorded through preserved papers of the period, this is the first in-depth study on this unique chapter in Quaker and Island history. For that alone, it is exciting. For the author's ability to bring it to life – with the pain and suffering, the aspirations and disappointments, the betrayals and injustices, the sheer grit and determination – it is a book that, once picked up, cannot be put down. John Cousins adds the driving force of a personal interest in the subject. He is a descendent of one of the settlers about whom he writes so vividly.

In 1772, Quaker clothing merchant Robert Clark from London, England, sent his agent, James MacDonald, to the tiny colonial outpost of St. John's Island (now PEI) to Lot 21, a township he had purchased. MacDonald landed on the inner shore of Grenville Bay (now New London Bay), on the sand bar-guarded north shore.

In 1773, MacDonald returned and established a hamlet, which he named Elizabethtown (present-day Springbrook) after Clark's first wife. Clark was to follow with a shipload of settlers, many of them Quakers.

In 1774, the first wave of settlers arrived. They soon established a second community, named New London (not the site of the present New London), on a point overlooking the outer harbour mouth.

A third settlement grew with the establishment of a gristmill seven miles inland. These three original hamlets formed a vital triangle of support for the settlers' survival.

**Like so many historic places in this province, we can walk where feet have formerly trod, and imagine those who went before walking beside us in companionable silence.**

“New London was planned to be a settlement of English Quakers – Quaker-planned, Quaker-finances, and Quaker-led” (*New London: The Lost Dream*, p. 9). It was a unique experiment. Clark's plan was to “seed” the settlement with skilled tradespeople: “sawyers, coopers, machinists, carpenters, millers, shoemakers, and blacksmiths” (*New London: The Lost Dream*, p. 9).

The settlement would rely mainly on the fishery and shipped exports and imports. His theory seemed sound, but events outside his control overtook his plans. New London stumbled on through severe hardship for a quarter of a century until it finally dwindled away.

In 1801, when Quaker travelling minister Joseph Hoag from Vermont paid a brief visit to the Island, he was troubled to find scarcely any sign of Quaker activity there.

Eventually, Clark lost everything to rapacious enemies and died with little to show for his labours. Yet not quite! Today's Friends have come to learn about his story and marvel at his vision and tenacity.

This has great significance because (as far as is known), until the PEI Worship Group was formed in 1991, no formal association of Friends has ever existed here, although many Meetings for Worship have indeed been held, including those of Clark's time.

Now our worship group has evolved into the PEI Quaker Meeting (an Allowed Meeting under the care of New Brunswick Monthly Meeting), well rooted and here to stay.

Like so many historic places in this province, we can walk where feet have formerly trod, (*continued*)

and imagine those who went before walking beside us in companionable silence. Robert Clark is buried in a cemetery in Charlottetown, but other Quakers rest in two cemeteries on the clay road leading to the original New London site.

As you drive towards the beach and lighthouse on the point looking out to the sand bars, you can glance to your right and imagine that row of houses built with blood, sweat and starvation, ranged along what they then called “Leadenhall Street.”

And the Serendipity? When John Cousins gave a lecture at the University of Prince Edward Island prior to his book launch, several PEI Friends attended the event, along with Andy Black, a Unitarian with Quaker family connections who attends our Meeting. After the lecture, Andy chatted with the author, only to discover that his property is as close as anyone can pinpoint to the site of Elizabethtown.

Andy has hosted PEI Friends at his home, and we have walked down through his field to the shoreline where we could imagine Clark’s agent, James MacDonald, wearily disembarking from the boat bringing him to shore from the ship anchored beyond the sand bars. The start of it all.

New London: The Lost Dream, the Quaker settlement on P.E.I.’s North Shore 1773–1795, by John Cousins, published in 2016 by Island Studies Press, UPEI, can be ordered online at <http://projects.upei.ca/isp/new-london-the-lost-dream/>.

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## Conquest

*Adrienne Macdonald, Kitchener Area MM*

I’ve been noticing  
the play of hawksoar  
and the bold disregard of white butterflies  
and that retaining walls  
don’t; the wild strawberry runs  
over brick, around heaps  
of tomato-paste beetles  
scrambling in busy love  
or some similar hilarity.  
The thistle holds  
its wisdom, and out back -  
a vast hope of ferns  
uncurling through the marrowless  
intentions of our concrete slab.

## Reflections on the Riverbank

*Sheila Havard, Coldstream MM*

Sitting on the bank of the Credit River, secluded  
from the sight of hikers on the trail, the pale  
autumn sun warmed my bare legs. All was calm;  
all was bright. The water sparkled. It was a perfect  
moment of worshipful silence. I felt utterly relaxed,  
profoundly convinced that all was all right and I was  
in good hands.

Abruptly, like a jagged crack in glass, harsh reality  
intruded. A fisherman waded through the shallows  
into my gaze, flipping his rod. I ignored him – didn’t  
want him to be part of my scene. He looked up and  
nodded briefly, sensing my hostility. Recollection of  
something I had read flashed through my mind: fish  
probably feel as much as we do. One little fish after  
another was flipped into the air and wriggled on the  
end of the fisherman’s hook. I didn’t want to know  
their fate but I could not look away.



## World Quaker Day Event Sparks Public Interest

*Mylène DiPenta*

How can a Meeting with only a handful of regulars, that hasn't hosted a public event since 2014, make a splash with an outreach event? Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting decided to find out this past October, on World Quaker Day. Using a donated space in the basement of a local university chapel, we organized "Meet the Quakers" – an introduction to Meeting for Worship for those who had never attended one.

In a way it was odd to advertise it as "open to the public"; Meeting for Worship is always open to the public. But calling it an "event" instead of a service or Meeting was meant to communicate that you could attend without any required beliefs or expectation of commitment. We put posters all over town – and in other towns up and down the Valley. About 8 people from our Meeting attended, and about 12 people from the community. Some were friends of attenders who had been hearing about Quaker Meetings for years, and wanted to see what their friends were up to. Some had previously participated in Unitarian Universalist (UU) services before moving to the Valley, where there is no UU church. Several university students attended. Others came directly from the Baptist service up the street, where the minister had announced the event and encouraged the congregation to explore it.

Inspired loosely by the "Quaker Quest" approach used by Friends General Conference, three speakers introduced Meeting for Worship, for about 3-5 minutes each. They spoke from their

own perspective about what they do, believe, and how Meeting works for them, focusing on what's happening now, not on Quaker history. In contrast to the Quaker Quest approach, though, we then went directly into about 30 minutes of waiting worship. At the rise of this short Meeting, those who chose to talk about what the experience was like. One participant, a member of the Baptist congregation, commented, "So this is how we do worship together."

Afterwards, most stayed for food and conversation. Friends from Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting staffed tables focused on specific topics: Indigenous rights, Canadian Yearly Meeting, LGBTQ rights, and Quaker humour. We also set up an information table with books, back issues of Friends Journal, and pamphlets for people to take home. The response was very positive; several people have since attended at least one regular Sunday Meeting, and we received many comments that we had "made people feel at ease."

If your Meeting is thinking about being more visible in your community, I encourage you to go for it. I think we were able to share what we love about Quaker Meeting while also clearly communicating that no one would be preached to or pressured. This uncovered a hunger for spiritual conversations and opened up deep sharing that I believe continues to enrich us – both within our Meeting and in our relationship to the broader community.



## Honouring the History of Quakers in New Brunswick

*Ellen Helmuth, New Brunswick Monthly Meeting*

A special event took place in New Brunswick in September 2016, when Friends from New Brunswick Monthly Meeting attended a time of remembrance of the 233<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the landing of the ship *Camel* on the Bay of Fundy shores on September 20, 1783. The *Camel* passengers included 104 men and 51 women; 30 children age 10 and younger and 47 older than 10; there were 13 Black settlers and seven indentured servants. The passengers were mostly Quakers, some Anabaptists; there were no slaves and no slave masters.

They could not have arrived at a worse time, the beginning of winter in New Brunswick. It was very cold, and they needed to clear the land, build shelters, find fresh water, and deal with only green wood available to build fires. Not all of the supplies had arrived and wild animals killed their livestock. With no fresh fruits or vegetables or other sources of Vitamin C, scurvy soon struck.

According to Deborah Coleman, whose 5-greats grandfather, Benjamin Brown, was on that ship, the Quakers prayed for divine intervention, and manna didn't fall from heaven, but the Passamaquoddy came. The Indigenous people had survived many winters and the deep snow helped hunters on snow shoes track caribou and moose. And the thing that really saved them was the sea mammals.

The blubber of dolphins, seals, and walrus was rich in Vitamin C and cured the scurvy. Many of the elderly and the very young did not survive that first winter, but if it had not been for the Passamaquoddy, many more would have likely died.

In the spring of 1784, the Passamaquoddies showed the newcomers how to plant the "three sisters," corn, squash, and beans. Help also arrived from the Quakers in Pennsylvania, England and Ireland. There were fish in the Bay of Fundy.

The settlement that the Quakers established was called Beaver Harbour and grew to 800 people and 15 streets by the time it was incorporated in 1785. It

is also recorded in the manifest of incorporation that "no slave masters [were] admitted" to the town. It was a place free of slaves and slave masters. It would have taken incredible courage to take a stand and be part of the testimony of Friends against slavery when slavery was part of the economic system and the wealthy were loath to change.

**It would have taken incredible courage to take a stand and be part of the testimony of Friends against slavery when slavery was part of the economic system and the wealthy were loath to change.**

One's imagination can appreciate the hard work that it took for this small colony to achieve and prosper in such a short time, only to lose it all to fire in 1790 when only one house remained. The devastation for so many people can only be imagined. To be thrust back into survival mode is a real test of one's courage and resilience.

The families scattered presumably to what is now Ontario and Nova Scotia and elsewhere. There are no firm records that can be found about where these families may have gone, only speculation. A brook to the east of Woodstock, NB is named Negro Brook. A family who lives close by say their ancestors arrived in the area in the late 1700s and tell the story that a black family that came up from the south settled down in the woods next to that brook and that's how it got its name. Could that family have been one of those Black families that arrived on the *Camel*?

Friends were also honoured to make the acquaintance of the people who keep this history of Quakers in New Brunswick alive. Deborah Coleman is president of the New Brunswick branch of the United Empire Loyalists Association of Canada. She gave an impressive presentation on the history of Beaver Harbour and the Quaker Loyalists who brought their remarkable gifts to share and survive.

Ralph Thomas, president of the New Brunswick Black History Society, was the emcee for the

afternoon program and shared his enthusiasm for the research he is engaged in regarding black history in New Brunswick.

Chief Hugh Akagi of the Passamaquoddy People was also present to receive thanks from all those present for saving the ancestors from freezing, starvation and scurvy. It is a remarkable history.

The establishment and maintenance of the Beaver Harbour Archives and Museum was undertaken by James Hawkins whose mother, Rita, contributed the first items for the museum back in 1901 and declared that we must preserve the history of the Quakers in Beaver Harbour. There is now green space in Beaver Harbour commemorating the place where the original Quaker meetinghouse stood, and a stone commemorating the Quaker burial ground.

Deborah Coleman would like the current Quakers in New Brunswick to help establish this green space as a provincial/national historical site. In addition, the Monthly Meeting is undertaking to create a poster panel honouring this historic testimony of Friends to be included with a series of "Who Are the Quakers" panels to be hung in the Beaver Harbour Museum.

In keeping with the current contact that New Brunswick Friends have with the Passamaquoddy People in New Brunswick, they have been led over the past two decades to give support to the Passamaquoddy in their effort to obtain recognition as First Nation People in Canada by the Canadian government. A minute of support for the Passamaquoddy recognition was composed in 2012 and sent to the many government offices involved in this quest.

This application was approved and recommended for adoption by the Justice Department in 2015. It was hoped that this might be brought to Parliament in September of 2016, but is now targeted for March of 2017. Two of our members who were very closely involved in this process are Maria Recchia and Marilyn Roper. Maria was part of a wampum belt ceremony celebrating this historic occasion. She writes:

"I would like to tell you about the beautiful treaty reaffirmation ceremony that I attended in St. Andrews on September 30. It was a wampum belt ceremony with a new belt to signify the negotiations the Passamaquoddy are entering into with the Government of Canada and New Brunswick. There were many government representatives there from Ottawa, Fredericton and Halifax. Also eight chiefs from other Wabanaki bands with communities in Canada and the USA. It was a stunning sunny day and there were about 80 people there, mostly Passamaquoddy and government reps. There was a meal of seafood chowder afterwards. Everything went beautifully and it was a very moving experience."

We remain grateful for this opportunity to work for First Nation recognition and continue with prayers of support for the ongoing negotiations. Friends in New Brunswick Monthly Meeting are blessed to continue the ties and bonds of fellowship with the Passamaquoddy, and to continue to work with the keepers of the archives of the history of Quakers in Beaver Harbour, New Brunswick.

## Quakers Against Hate Crimes

*Steve Fick, Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

*Background (excerpt from gathering notes):*

On November 26, the Ottawa Monthly Meeting (OMM) invited faith groups represented in the Glebe community [the Ottawa neighbourhood where the OMM Meetinghouse is located] and environs and community members to gather and show support to Anna Maranta. Anna Maranta, who leads the Glebe Minyan faith community and lives in the Glebe, woke up on November 15 to find a swastika and a racial slur spray painted on the door of her house (see the CBC story here: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/rabbi-ottawa-racist-graffiti-1.3851350>).

We gathered to show that we stood for safety rather than violence, for community rather than divisiveness, for reaching out across difference rather than racism. While this is an important discussion and action to have also across different faiths and communities, we wanted to show support for Anna and felt that we could let any such acts pass unchallenged. This one happened right in our neighbourhood, and we felt the need to respond with swift action in our neighbourhood, too. [Editor's note: see also *Around the Family* – OMM]

*Presentation by Steve Fick on behalf of OMM (adapted for print):*

One of the core beliefs of Quakers is that there is that of God in everyone. We believe that a connection to the Divine is an essential part of our human nature, although we each have a choice between fostering this connection or ignoring it. This belief has led us to respect the great diversity of paths toward the Divine.

Another of our core beliefs is that our beliefs need to be reflected in our actions. This has led us over our 350-year history to be pioneers in slavery abolition, the rights of women, prison reform, indigenous rights, peace-building and the humane treatment of the mentally ill. European Quakers played a dramatic role in rescuing and supporting Jews who were trying to flee Nazi Germany, a history

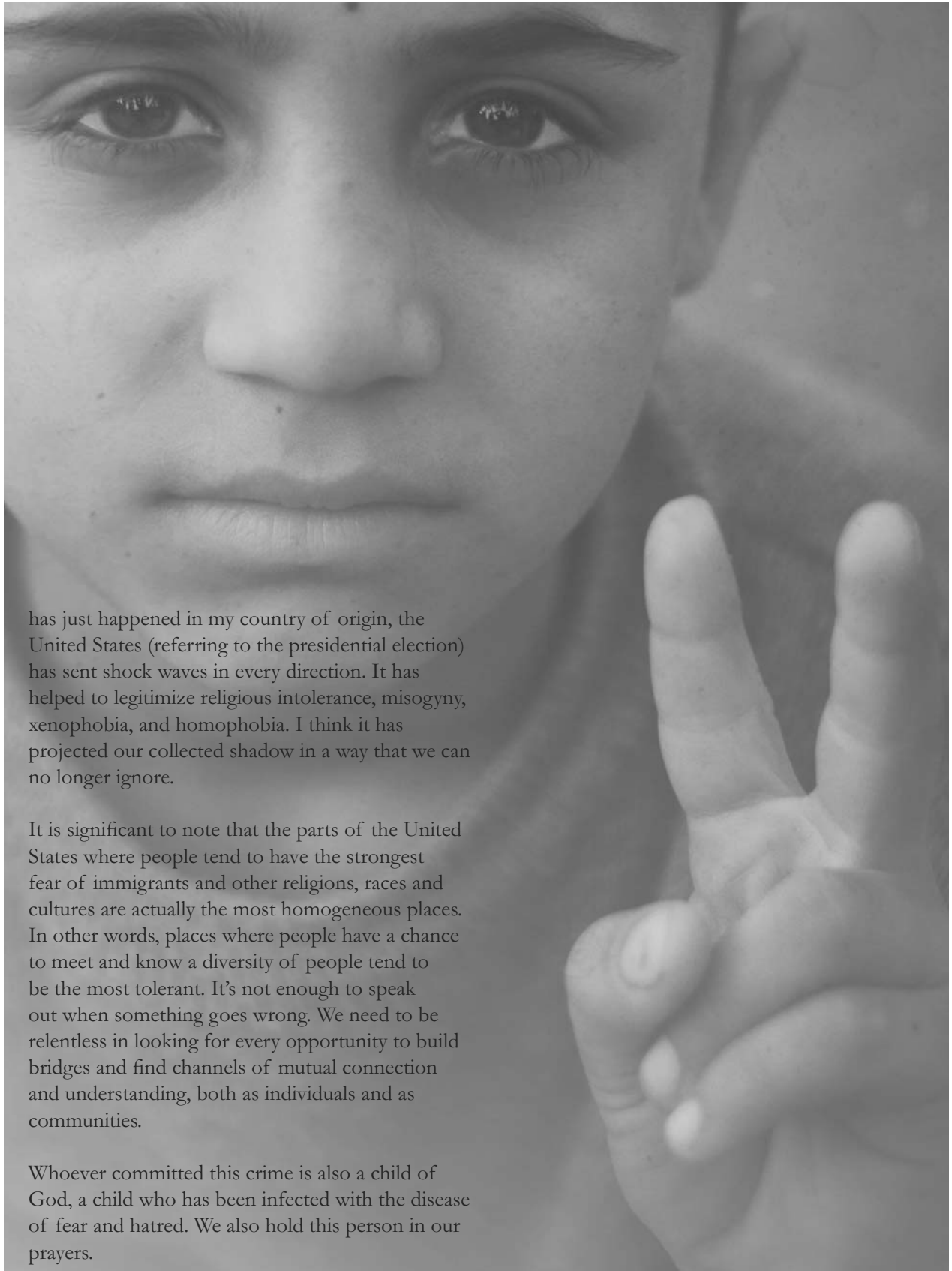
**We need to be relentless in looking for every opportunity to build bridges and find channels of mutual connection and understanding, both as individuals and as communities.**

that is not well known even among Quakers because it was done so quietly and without fanfare.

Whether this crime against Anna was an isolated act done by a single troubled youth, or part of a larger group or larger trend, we need to speak with one clear and loud voice across our community and across all our different faiths, backgrounds and cultures, and say that there is utterly no place for this in our city. Like others who have spoken this afternoon, when I heard of the news I felt like I was being punched in the stomach. We need to say that we are alarmed and dismayed. We need to say that it was not just Anna's front door that was spray-painted. It was all of our front doors.

I don't want my city to be a place where this kind of thing happens. But if it does happen, I want it to be a city where our different faith communities, our different ethnic communities, our different cultural communities, all have each other's backs and no one stands alone.

Martin Luther King said, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." What



has just happened in my country of origin, the United States (referring to the presidential election) has sent shock waves in every direction. It has helped to legitimize religious intolerance, misogyny, xenophobia, and homophobia. I think it has projected our collected shadow in a way that we can no longer ignore.

It is significant to note that the parts of the United States where people tend to have the strongest fear of immigrants and other religions, races and cultures are actually the most homogeneous places. In other words, places where people have a chance to meet and know a diversity of people tend to be the most tolerant. It's not enough to speak out when something goes wrong. We need to be relentless in looking for every opportunity to build bridges and find channels of mutual connection and understanding, both as individuals and as communities.

Whoever committed this crime is also a child of God, a child who has been infected with the disease of fear and hatred. We also hold this person in our prayers.

## **A visit to Argenta Meeting**

*Kirsten Ebsen, Vancouver Monthly Meeting*

In August, while visiting friends in the Kootenays, I managed to join Argenta Meeting for Worship, something I have always wanted to do. Earlier this year I heard Argenta referred to as a Holy Experiment on a CBC radio special about the Canadian Peace Movement in the 50s and 60s, hosted by Michael Enright. My need to visit felt even more poignant since I had had to miss Jack Ross's Memorial Meeting in 2007.

The one glitch now was that I had to hitchhike along a gravel road for the last 7 km into Argenta from Hwy 31. The good news is that the Kootenays are probably the last place in the country where one can hitchhike safely, aside from several of the smaller Gulf Islands in the Salish Sea. True to the peaceful nature of this part of the country, Argenta has no Wi-Fi or cell phone access. Locals refer to the awesome nature here as "god's country."

I had to carry a can of bear spray because a grizzly and her two cubs were hanging out in an abandoned orchard not far from my friend's house. Bear spray gave me the sense of security I needed in order to forge ahead, however false that feeling of security may have been. Thankfully, no grizzlies were encountered.

There were five Friends present and three visitors - two from California and myself. Afterwards Dottie Ross invited me for a walk to the Argenta Cemetery where Jack lies buried. Their grandson had carved his gravestone. The cemetery lies on the forest floor with handmade gravestones of the most creative and colourful kind, in between the trees. Jack's is a simple grey. Dottie said the family wanted to bury him in a white shroud, in the tradition of Early Friends, but the local authorities insisted he be placed into a coffin in the event of soil erosion during a heavy storm.

Dottie told me how the family had moved to Newfoundland from Florida, and then on to Argenta, so Jack could teach at Argenta Friends School. She has been visiting Pendle Hill for the month of November for the past few winters and

was hoping to do so again this year. When I first saw her walking down the driveway through the trees to the Meetinghouse, she was engulfed in an aura of light. She doesn't attend WHYM anymore and still suffers some aches and pains from her fall several years ago in Nelson. She warned me to remain physically active or my older years will be filled with pain. I have taken her advice to heart. It was so lovely to see her again.

It was Dottie and Jack Ross who had reached out to me when I was having such a difficult time with Vancouver Meeting nearly two decades ago. Their kindness, respect, and letters, convinced me to remain with the movement.



## Letter from Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel

May 2016

Dear Friends,

Greetings and good wishes from Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel to Friends everywhere in Canada and to Canadian Friends serving beyond our shores.

As you probably know, due to financial constraints, Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) will not be holding the CYM Annual Gathering (hereinafter abbreviated as CYM-G) in 2017. This will be the first time that this has happened since the founding of the combined Canadian Yearly Meeting in 1955.

To many who hold this event very dear in their lives, this will leave a void. Many Friends attend faithfully every year even when long distance travel is required, and even those who only attend when it is held in their part of the country will feel the void because they know it is not happening at all. Even when not present, Friends took comfort in knowing that CYM-G was taking place, and were there in spirit, and held the Meeting in the Light, knowing the work of Friends was being carried on.

The work of CYM will still go on in 2017 in committees and in session at two Representative Meetings, and at a number of Half-Yearly Meetings. The work and worship of Friends will continue in the different Meetings and Worship Groups through the spiritual will and efforts of many individuals and Meetings.

A fallow year does not mean an infertile or moribund one, but instead connotes rest and renewal. We can consider 2017 as a 'sabbatical.' From biblical times the idea of Sabbath, the seventh day, was a day set aside for the nurture of the soul, when the people were called from their own work to do God's work on God's day, which belongs to God.

In working the land, the people were under obligation to obey this call in the same way for the fallow year – usually every seven years – which was also seen as a Divine message that the land should

rest, ploughed and harrowed, but not planted. This early wisdom of respectful land use is still with us in good agricultural practice.

A wholesome change would thus be introduced every seventh year, and the people would be morally improved. The population would become more and more humane, and the whole community renewed thereby. Now in modern times there is the necessity of more time for pensive meditation and thought.

The year 2017 may provide CYM with that time.

### Query:

*How will we be changed by the absence of YM in 2017?*

*Can we create in the sabbatical year the conditions necessary for greater thoughtfulness and reflection?*

*Can we make it a year where we reconnect with F/friends, family or relatives with whom we have not had much contact because of time or distance?*

*Can we make this fallow year a Jubilee year?*

*Could this be the year to make peace with someone we are estranged from – a year to forgive something from the past – a year to overcome the barriers of the mind?*

*Can we be generous in our support of all Friends in our Monthly Meeting/Worship Group?*

If there is some support from Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel that you would find helpful during this time of change, please let us know. CMM&C has heard of many actions and activities that are being planned by Worship Groups, Monthly Meetings and Half-Yearly Meetings for 2017 and some of them are listed below.

If you would like to share your intentions, please let us know. *(continued)*

- Make a Calendar and designate each month for a special action during 2017;
- Hold a Called Meeting to “Make 2017 a Jubilee Year”. Ask Friends what they would like to see and hear at your Regional Gathering;
- Help organize and/or attend a Quaker Regional Gathering and incorporate some of the well-loved features of CYM-G: The Experience of the Spirit in Our Lives, Remembrances of Friends dearly departed, Quaker Study, Special Interest/Actions sessions etc.. Write an Epistle, a letter from your gathering to CYM which can be displayed at CYM-G 2018;
- Attend Quaker camp, Camp NeeKauNis in Canada and others in the US;
- Write a letter or phone a friend you have not seen or heard from in a long time;
- Send a delegate to Representative Meeting so your Meeting is represented and we have input from all areas of the country;
- Be a regular attender at Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Worship for Business and a frequent visitor to Quaker.ca and local Meetings’ websites;
- Be pastors to each other and accept willingly love and kindness when it is willingly given;
- To all Meetings and Worship Groups – please share this letter with all Friends associated with your Meeting.

There is also a practical need to ‘Take Care of Business.’ Keeping in mind that the usual Meetings for Worship for Business that would normally take place at CYM-G will not happen, it is important that Monthly Meetings that wish to have a concern supported by CYM send Minutes that have been discerned at the Monthly Meeting level in time for the Representative Meetings in June and November 2017.

Send the proposed Minute with the background context to the CYM Clerk – email directly from Quaker.ca.

The CYM Clerks and other committees will continue to meet and carry on the work of Friends and all Friends are encouraged to give input and ideas at any time – contact a committee Clerk or any member of a committee with your ideas and suggestions – particularly around what kind of gathering you want CYM to be in the future.

Share your news, views and celebrations - The Canadian Friend will continue to be published on Quaker.ca – read it to keep in touch! The Canadian Friend is delighted to receive any material for publication.

We belong to many communities – family, neighbourhood, workplace and others – but for most of us our Quaker community is our only spiritual community and through our Meetings we are connected to each other and to CYM. As humans we need to express the strong spiritual connection we share and we do this best by getting together, by talking and listening, by sharing food and stories. Continue to do this in 2017. This is the magic that happens at the CYM annual gathering so we must make sure that CYM-G happens in 2018 and every year thereafter.

*In the Spirit of community and communication,  
Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel*

*Laurel Beyer, Beverly Shepard, Lesley Read,  
Mel Earley, Peter Harkness*



## Reflections on vocal ministry

*Ottawa Monthly Meeting, October 30, 2016*

The OMM Meeting of Ministry and Counsel invited Ottawa Monthly Meeting to come together and reflect on vocal ministry. About 30 people gathered on October 30, 2016, and used a Claremont dialogue process to share reflections. We had a diversity of voices speaking to their experiences with, reflections on, and understandings of vocal ministry. Below are excerpts from what was shared during this gathering, broadly organized by themes and kept in the first person to maintain the authenticity and diversity of voices.

**Feeling moved to stand up and offer ministry can be an embodied experience, accompanied by strong body sensations that can be scary when they happen for the first time. This strong embodied experience doesn't happen often, and it seems to take some time (i.e. years) of attending Meeting for Worship before it happens.**

- I sat in silence for two years before I felt moved to get up and speak. I was new to the Quakers and was terrified by the vision and strong emotions that came with it. I fought it and didn't speak; later I was counselled by an elder and was told that I should follow the impulse. Now I know when I feel deep emotion and strong movement in my body to get up and speak.
- It is an uncomfortable feeling – heart pounding, legs shaking, and you have to stand up. That's how I know that the Spirit is moving.
- It is important to thank people for their ministry. It is a big event when somebody feels Spirit-led to minister.
- The first time I experienced this it was very uncomfortable, my heart was beating fast and energy was moving through my body. What came to me was in response to somebody's ministry before and I fought it because I had been told not to dialogue with other people's ministry. Eventually I got up and spoke, but I was conflicted and quaking. I sat down and asked Spirit to send the message to someone else because I knew I hadn't expressed it well, and not three minutes later somebody got up and said exactly what I knew in my heart wanted to be said. Now when I feel those body sensations I don't fight it as much.

- The Spirit is called the Comforter, but it is also the Discomforter, it should make us a little uncomfortable, too.

**Not everyone experiences the call to give ministry in the same way. But we all experience the struggle to discern whether what we want to say is also what needs to be said.**

- There a difference between something that is troubling me and something that is deeply spiritual.
- I may carry a ministry with me for a week or more before I speak it in worship.
- It has to be something of such significance that I have no choice but to get up and speak.
- Ministry comes to me with tears, it's a way for me to recognize it. I struggle to determine if I'm really meant to say this or it is just a reaction to somebody or something, however relevant the latter might be.
- We do not have certainty that something is from the Spirit, it is always a struggle. Clarity comes from experience, too.
- I've spoken out when there wasn't a prompting – it is hollow for me and others.
- I've received personal insight into something even when not sharing a prompting, just from the struggle to decide whether to speak.

*(continued)*

- There's an unspoken culture in our Meeting that some ways of ministry are not ok, especially Christ-centred ministry. I would like to see space for all the voices.
- I resist giving vocal ministry and haven't done it that much, maybe two or three times in 20-30 years. The struggle is to listen very deeply – perhaps what I'm hearing inwardly is a message just for me that I'm resisting and then I don't need to speak it; or perhaps it is a message for others, then I need to release it.
- Giving ministry in meeting for worship is also a trial ground for giving ministry in the world, where it is much scarier and it is a very vulnerable place.

**We move on a wide spectrum between loving the silence and loving the ministry – both among and within ourselves. We are a community, and ministry helps to strengthen it.**

- I love listening to ministry, and I love the silence. There's a duality both among and within us.
- Some days, as I've struggled with something in my life, somebody does speak to it. It feels like our community has a life to it. It is important to come more often to worship.
- In my first meeting for worship somebody got up and spoke for 20 minutes. I have learned never to do that and hope never to experience it again.
- Meeting for worship is not just a period of silence nor just a period of spoken word, but the combination and interaction of the two that makes the worship period.
- When I started coming to worship I was so grateful for any ministry because it helped me to endure the silence. Over time I moved to the other end [of the spectrum] where I'd be very judgmental of what people said, and of who spoke frequently. Now I'm trying to sit back into silence and expectant waiting, without judgment.

**Vocal ministry invites us into deep listening.**

- I sit hoping that somebody says what is in my heart. I love to hold people who give ministry in the Light, and to listen to what's trying to come out.
- I think a lot about ministry during Meeting for Worship for Business (MfWfB). I try hard to listen for and understand the sense of the Meeting. When I come to MfWfB and when I speak not from that place of deep listening for the Spirit, things tend to go wrong. It is a humble way to look at the role of the recording clerk, and to encourage people to clarify what they want to say.
- Sometimes you can hear a beautiful thread going through the ministry in a meeting. In some cultures, each speaker begins by saying, "yes, and ...".

**We come to Meeting for Worship with expectancy, and practice expectant waiting. Not expectant waiting to listen to ministry, and not expectant waiting for what we might want to say, but rather expectant waiting for the Spirit. Ministry that comes out of that kind of waiting can touch all our hearts.**

- We come and try to still ourselves because we expect to hear Spirit.
- When somebody in ministry speaks directly to the Divine, it helps to connect me deeply with the sacred.
- Coming to meeting is like breathing to me, I can't do without it. Spirit-breath.
- Ministry is helpful for my seeking for what would love have me do.
- At its core ministry is calling me – and us – to a deeper place, a deeper truth, in relationship with God – I appreciate feeling that from ministry.

Meeting for Worship requires some inner preparation before coming, and we do this in different ways, maybe not reading the news that morning, minimizing conversation before coming, checking inside about the attitude we bring with us.

- Being prepared is important – being fully present and aware so the Spirit can come in.
- I have a busy life and worship can be the only moment of quiet all week – but coming to worship involves some preparation, commitment.
- I start my experience of meeting for worship as I wake up in the morning – I read something spiritual, I minimize conversations before, and I settle in and feel connected with the Earth, then the people, and then with a deeper level of silence and emptiness that is full of love. That's the level ministry should rise out of; the other levels are important because we are human, but ministry should come from the deep center.

We were grateful to everyone who came and shared from the heart. We saw this as opening the space for this conversation, believing that there is value in coming together to speak from the heart and listen deeply. In this way we deepen our understanding of a matter that is central to the way we practice our faith, and we also deepen our community.

For any comments and questions, please contact Manuela Popovici, clerk of Ministry & Counsel, Ottawa Monthly Meeting, at [amanuelap@gmail.com](mailto:amanuelap@gmail.com).



## Carolina Locust

*Beverly Shepard*

There you sit,  
dull as a stick,  
still as soil,  
barely seen on the pebbles.  
I take one more step,  
and, Whoop!  
You are aloft,  
fluttering black and gold:  
a frill upon the air.

## **Canadian Faith and Practice Study Guide**

*Marjory Reitsma-Street, Victoria B.C.*

Coming in 2017, Canadian Quakers will be able to access a new educational resource online: a study guide of the Canadian Faith and Practice book. The purpose of the study guide is to explore the experiential understanding of Quaker faith and practice, as presented in the foundational book *Faith and Practice* of the Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, first published in 2011.

The guide reviews key aspects of Quaker living, in sections on:

1. affirmations of faith and practice;
2. Quaker worship;
3. Quaker worship with attention to business;
4. the testimonies; and
5. advices and queries.

The pdf files on the [quaker.ca](http://quaker.ca) website, to be uploaded under “Resources-Education,” will consist of study notes, handouts with spiritual exercises for small groups, and audio recordings of selected excerpts. Materials are linked directly to the chapters in the book, and include excerpts from it. You can download, print, copy, and circulate some or all of the study guide.

The study materials were prepared by Marjory Reitsma-Street, with the assistance of Catherine Novak. Gale Wills wrote the section on “Meeting for worship with attention to business.” These authors are Friends living in Victoria, British Columbia. Marjory and Gale earned doctorates from the University of Toronto and are Professors in Social Work and Social Policy, retired, or nearly so.

Gale has served as a clerk for local and national Quaker committees, while Marjory has concentrated on music and other services close to home.

Catherine is currently on the Canadian Yearly Meeting Publications Committee; in addition to active mothering, she is working in digital marketing and communications, having recently completed a Masters in Interdisciplinary Studies from Royal Roads University in Victoria.

The educational materials were used in four monthly live study sessions in the spring of 2016. They were facilitated by Marjory, Catherine and Gale, and hosted by the Committees of Outreach and Education and the Ministry and Council of the Victoria Friends.

Each session was a drop in. Between 20 and 35 attendees and seasoned Friends came to each session, while others read the materials circulated by email in Victoria and beyond. A Skype session was used by two Friends on some materials. No one was expected to sign up for all the sessions. Participants were asked to read chapters of the Canadian Faith and Practice relevant to a session. The guide concentrates on Chapters One, Three, Four, and Six of *Canadian Faith and Practice*, while the remaining Chapters Two and Five were to be explored in personal study.



## Archive news

*Joyce Hohwerda, Clerk.*

We are delighted to report that the Archives are online! We did this so that Friends (and others) can access our holdings. To find our page go to the [quaker.ca](http://quaker.ca) homepage, scroll down and you will see the Archives button. From there a whole world opens up.

Please use this site for projects, study groups, research. We are thankful for the help of Michela Lockhart, our new Archivist, Nancy Wade, our cataloguer, and Glen Newbury, our computer expert, for pulling this together.

This is what you will find in the Collection:

### **Dorland Library Catalogue**

The Dorland Library is a reference, not a lending library, the contents of which support the activities of Quakers. Researchers are welcome by appointment. Note that many of the holdings are also available in other Friends' libraries. The major Quaker works are online as ebooks in the Earlham School of Religion Digital Quaker Collection – available for free.

### **Index to the Vault Collection**

This is a historical collection of minutes and collateral materials from Canadian Quaker Monthly Meetings, Regional Gatherings, Yearly Meetings and committees since the late 1700s, especially the Canadian Friends Service Committee. It also includes photographs of places, persons and events and the personal files of various Canadian Quakers. To access this material, please arrange for a visit or contact us for a scanned copy to be sent to you. Some restrictions may apply.

### **Current Holdings**

Index to the current holdings from Monthly Meetings, Yearly Meeting committees and Regional Friends' Gatherings. This is where you can see how up to date you are in sending in your minutes.



### **Canadian Quaker Genealogical Index**

This contains names of people mentioned in the Canadian Quaker minute books to about 1900. Information includes births, deaths, marriage dates and membership transfers. This is also available through [Ancestry.ca](http://Ancestry.ca).

### **Index to the Dorland Library Vertical File**

This is a collection of files on Persons, People and Miscellaneous topics. Please send in newspaper clippings, papers and other items about your meeting and its members.

### **Transcriptions**

Many early records have been transcribed and are available on this website.

### **Index to Microfilms**

These are of early Canadian Quaker records and are held in the Ontario Archives.

### **E.H. Marion Cronk Fonds**

This is a collection of Quaker documents and records of the Hughes, Cronk and Bowerman families, primarily in Prince Edward County, Ontario. Some letters have been transcribed and are found under transcriptions.

## 2016 at CFSC

Matthew Legge

It has been a busy year once again at Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) - the peace and social justice agency of the Religious Society of Friends in Canada. It has also been an enriching year. I really feel that we are living into our new, smaller structure that will strengthen our ways of meeting together, making decisions, and carrying them out faithfully. We are also following a recently developed strategic plan; there are many challenging but deeply rewarding things about this planning and executing of our work.

Each day at CFSC is different. It is interesting for me to take stock of all of the changes we've experienced over this past year and even more so over the few years I've been employed by CFSC. The work consists of constant adaptation and learning, while never being quite sure what the future will hold. Hopefully we recall past conversations and mistakes and don't repeat them. When it's at its best, CFSC responds to external conditions and possible setbacks with flexibility - something small organizations can often do uniquely well, if we are ready to be bold.

Sometimes when we finally see a change happen we immediately know it is "right" and wonder why we were ever doing things the old way. For instance, this year we realized that our office filing system for mail we receive wasn't working. It involved packaging envelopes away with elastic bands in a box and putting letters in many different folders. When we needed things, it often took us some time to locate them. As soon as we made the switch to opening a new folder for each month's mail and putting everything from the month in it, it seemed incredible how obvious this solution was!

It can get frustrating when some changes seem to be taking forever, but our work requires that we try to remain patient and hopeful until the moment is right. Jennifer Preston, CFSC's Indigenous Rights program coordinator, recently reminded the staff that 18 years ago when she was first working in support of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

**Sometimes when we finally see a change happen we immediately know it is "right" and wonder why we were ever doing things the old way...It can get frustrating when some changes seem to be taking forever, but our work requires that we try to remain patient and hopeful until the moment is right.**

Peoples it was unclear what the results of her work were. It was very uncertain that the Declaration would ever be approved, and for years this work might have seemed like a waste of effort. Yet it was done by CFSC with care, following a leading. Today the landscape is entirely different and some of the importance of this quiet work CFSC did behind the scenes back then has become increasingly clear.

While this is true of this particular piece of work, we must also be ready to "fail" in other pieces of work where the conditions that are beyond our control don't go as well. We must maintain priorities so as not to stretch ourselves too thin, and we must be ready to change our priorities or specific activities when it becomes clear that what we're doing is not the most useful thing to focus on.

For me, one of many noteworthy moments at CFSC this year was on the floor of the business meeting at Yearly Meeting. Friends adopted a minute that asked all Meetings in Canada to consider six specific steps in support of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples (read it at <http://quakerservice.ca/reconciliation>). In my role as the CFSC Communications staff person, I was excited to share this very progressive and practical minute. I was even more excited to see the incredible positive response it got with thousands of downloads and shares.

There is much more I could say about this year but we have already written a short Annual Accountability Report, so I will leave it to those who are interested to read it at <http://report.quakerservice.ca>.

## Quaker Environmental Action Network (QEAN) news

Our concerns include pipelines and First Nations, Truth and Reconciliation, KairosCanada and local ecojustice events, Q&A about resilience, permaculture, biodiversity, synthetic biology, food sovereignty, and greening our Meetings and homes. The CYM-QEAN listserv has fallen into disuse since Bill Curry's death, but CYM's official Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) reps Lyn Adamson (Toronto), Ruth Walmsley (Vancouver) and David Millar (Montreal) propose that Canadian Friends who would like to engage in online discussion join the bi-national Quaker Earthcare Witness ([qewdiscussions@googlegroups.com](mailto:qewdiscussions@googlegroups.com)), on which we suggest that you identify threads by adding "Canada -" in the subject line to clearly identify CYM-QEAN concerns or queries. On the QEW website [quakerearth.org](http://quakerearth.org), under "Living Our Testimonies" and "Speak Out," you will find news and expert information on many of the concerns above. For how to join the QEW listserv and subscribe to e-publications, see [www.quakerearthcare.org/article/get-involved](http://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/get-involved).



## KAIROS response to federal government decisions on pipeline projects

30 November 2016.

KAIROS is dismayed with the federal government's decision to approve the expansion of the Trans Mountain pipeline, as announced by Prime Minister Trudeau on November 29.

This decision is incompatible with the government's commitment to respect and implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Prime Minister's promise to work towards "a renewed nation to nation relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership." It also jeopardizes Canada's commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as promised under the Paris Agreement.

The approval of the Trans Mountain expansion is

a major blow to Indigenous Peoples' right to free, prior and informed consent as established by the UN Declaration. It is the fourth project this year to be approved over the objections of the First Nations most affected.

It follows an earlier decision to issue permits allowing construction of the Site C dam on the Peace River without the consent of the West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations and the decision to allow the Pacific Northwest LNG terminal to be built on Lelu Island threatening the traditional lands and waters of the Lax Kw'alaams nation.

Simultaneous with the Trans Mountain pipeline announcement, the Prime Minister announced approval of the Enbridge Line 3 *(continued)*

replacement pipeline through Manitoba to the U.S. despite strong opposition from Indigenous peoples in that province.

The Tsleil-Waututh Nation on whose lands the Trans Mountain terminal is located has firmly rejected the pipeline's expansion, citing it as a threat to their traditional territory and survival. As Tsleil-Waututh Chief Maureen Thomas wrote in her 25 November 2016 letter to Natural Resources Minister James Carr, "If the Federal Cabinet directs that the Project be approved, against our informed withholding of consent ... it would reopen the many wounds we have suffered as a result of the Crown's historic disregard for our Aboriginal title and rights, including in relation to the Project's predecessor facility... Quite frankly, such action would risk jeopardizing and irreparably harming our nation-to-nation relationship for some time to come, possibly for generations."

Tsleil-Waututh Elder Leonard George said "If the pipeline goes through, the [Burrard] inlet will become a dead zone and that contamination will affect the Georgia Straight, the salmon run and our food source. We're trying to save it not only for ourselves but for mankind."

In announcing approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline, Prime Minister Trudeau said 39 First Nations signed agreements supporting the project with Kinder Morgan, the pipeline's corporate sponsor. However, the Ministerial Panel appointed by Natural Resources Minister James Carr to consult with affected groups in the wake of widespread dissatisfaction with the project's approval by the National Energy Board found that these agreements may not represent unconditional approval of the pipeline project.

The Ministerial Panel's report states that "some First Nations said ... they signed the benefit agreements or letters of support out of concern that, if they failed to do so, they risked getting nothing at all." And, that during its consultations with First Nations, "many Indigenous presenters ... characterized these [impact benefit] agreements as bribes, often aimed at the communities that needed them most desperately.

In the words of Summer Ebringer [from the Enoch Cree First Nation], 'It's divide and conquer.'"

When asked how the Trans Mountain pipeline would impact climate change, the Prime Minister said the additional tar sands oil production needed to fill the expanded pipeline is within the cap on total emissions from tar sands production announced by the Government of Alberta - 100 megatonnes (Mt) of greenhouse gases (GHGs). In fact, the additional production of tar sands oil needed for the Trans Mountain expansion would add 14 to 17 Mt of GHGs annually to the atmosphere, and combustion of that oil would result in another 74 Mt of emissions per year. In addition, the upstream emissions in Canada associated with the production and processing of crude transported by Line 3 could add between 19 and 26 Mt of GHG emissions annually.

Together these extra emissions will be greater than all the projected annual emission reductions from three recent government initiatives – a carbon tax starting at \$10 and rising to \$50 by 2022 (18 Mt in emission reductions), the phase out of coal generated power (5 Mt of reductions) and the clean fuel strategy (30 Mt of reductions).

These decisions cast doubt on the federal government's determination to help Canada make the necessary transitions to a just and sustainable economy. Rather than attending urgently to the very real issues of a just transition for affected workers, including support and retraining for a clean energy economy, decisions like Trans Mountain prolong and exacerbate fossil fuel dependency.

While we are grateful that the deeply flawed Northern Gateway pipeline project was definitively halted, we continue to be concerned that the trajectory of decisions favour the creation of more fossil fuel infrastructure despite the deep ecological impacts and strong opposition of many First Nations

KAIROS echoes the concerns of our Indigenous partners who say these decisions perpetuate the status quo and undermine confidence in the federal government's promise to work towards a new, rights based, nation to nation relationship.



## Quaker peace testimony development

*Carol Dixon, Ottawa Monthly Meeting, with input from Elaine Bishop and Anne Mitchell*

*Notes from a presentation to Canadian Council of Churches - Commission on Justice and Peace, November 2, 2016.*

Quakerism - a non-credal religion, although “That of God in everyone” is a deeply engrained principal often quoted

Testimony - considered to be an obligation not an optional extra

History - Quakerism was born in a period of political, social and religious turmoil of the 17th century, 100 years after the protestant reformation, with many competing divisions in protestantism, strained relations between Catholics and Protestants, Charles I beheaded, rise of Cromwell, a series of parliaments, civil wars, restoration of the monarchy.

George Fox, a restless and deeply devout young man, sought truth amongst the church leaders of the time and found no answers to his quest for truth, nor understanding of religious issues. He was deeply distressed by the lack of integrity in all leaders and lay people that he saw and spoke to. He saw that they professed one thing on Sunday at church but did not live those professions of faith during the week. He was greatly upset by corruption within the church of the time. In his distress he prayed fervently, seeking guidance. He recorded a dramatically formative experience thus:

“But as I had forsaken the priests, so I left the separate preachers also, and those esteemed the most experienced people; for I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition. And when all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could tell what to do, then, oh, then, I heard a voice which said, “There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition; and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy.”

This came to be the base of Quaker faith - that within each of us is the Inner Christ, the Seed, the

Inward Teacher - that each person can tap that source of Light and Truth to discern God’s will. Fox understood that outward professions of faith were empty and that Christians must live their faith and witness to the truth. In 1661, in the midst of Royal fears of a Fifth Monarchy Uprising, Fox and a number of the earliest followers of the faith took directly to the King their testimony about their refusal to fight with outward weapons or to participate in any physically violent civil strife on behalf of or against any leader. Described as “our testimony to the whole world,” the first public articulation of Friends Peace Testimony was Fox’s quote, “I told [the Commonwealth Commissioners] I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars.”

Other testimonies became more clearly articulated over the years, including Simplicity, Integrity, Community, Equality and, more recently, Stewardship/Care of Creation. Testimonies as an expression of faith and understanding of God’s will have evolved over time, responding to the situation of the time but unchangeable in their basic nature. Testimony is a personal expression of understanding of divine will. Corporate discernment in worship is a vital part of the way decision for corporate action is developed.

John Woolman, distressed by the slave trade, refused to wear clothes that were dyed by slaves because of the unsafe work conditions; he paid the slaves whenever he stayed with Friends who kept slaves as he traveled among them. He spoke eloquently and passionately about the wickedness of the slavery system. He travelled to England to further preach his concern among Friends.

Gradually, Quakers took action both personally and corporately against the slave trade, including a large role in the Underground Railway in the US and working behind the scenes with Church of England abolitionists. Woolman lived his life as simply as possible and encouraged others to do the same. “May we look upon our treasures, the furniture (*continued*)



of our houses, and our garments, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishments in these our possessions,” he wrote.

The formal beginnings of work on Indigenous issues within the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) was prefaced by a minute recorded by Canadian Yearly Meeting in 1974: “...a confrontation between the Ojibway people of the [Kenora] area and various levels of government...has occupied our hearts and minds. We are concerned that active violence not erupt; and equally concerned that long standing grievances be understood, and all measures of settlement of those grievances be encouraged.”

**Peace is not the absence of war,  
but rather the presence of justice.**

A group of Friends joined First Nations protesting the pollution of waterways from sawmills in the region. Two of the team stayed to conduct professional research on the health of the local communities by testing local residents for mercury poisoning/Minimata disease. That work has continued intermittently through other agencies. CFSC work has continued the witness through work with Indigenous Peoples first in Geneva and then in New York to help bring about the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and now continuing the work of implementing the Declaration.

The late Ursula Franklin, perhaps the best known contemporary Canadian Quaker speaker on peace, emphasized that peace is not the absence of war but rather the presence of justice. In more recent years she spoke of peace as being the absence of fear. In speaking to the present, she added, “Any modern theology of peace must take into account the worldwide drift towards techno-fascism, the anti-people, anti-justice form of global management and power sharing that is developing around the world. Our corporate search for a theology of peace may give us strength and help to witness against such trends. And again, it will be our conduct that will be the measure of our faith.”

I have tried to emphasize that, for Quakers, the Leading is from the “Inward teacher,” the individual who brings a Leading, a Concern, first for their own examination, and then to the Meeting for Worship for corporate discernment where a Minute is crafted to reflect the understanding of the issue at hand and the search for what should be the best response. This in turn may be brought to a broader body for further discernment and action in a broader context. The principle of “seeking to take away the occasion for war” became a more prominent corporate witness in the late 1800s, sometimes summed up as Conflict Transforming Testimony and broadened out into witness in various areas of conflict. Quakers of today are quietly involved in many peace initiatives both at home and across the world.

## The Greening of Dzaleka

David Millar

The Dzaleka refugee camp in Malawi is the largest in Africa; it was formerly a political prison, and conditions have not changed much since then. After fleeing genocide and war in Burundi, Rwanda and the DR Congo, some 18,000 refugees have been in limbo at this camp for the last 20 years. Malawi refuses them citizenship, and they are forbidden to take paid work.

One Congo refugee, Daniel Mulenda, attended Friends World Congress (2012) and contributed to the Kabarak Call. He presides over a small Friends community in the camp. In August 2015, he wrote to me asking if it was possible for Friends to help with a small soap-making project in the camp. He believed that, with a small initial purchase of supplies, the project could become self-financing and make possible further projects such as community gardening or trades training.

Mulenda, coordinator of the project and a professional engineer by training, stated the goals of the 2015 startup as follows:

"After the first period of training laborers we plan to open an artisanal soap factory. There is no local supplier. We could produce at least 32 boxes of soap daily for sale at about US \$2,304 per day, for gross revenue of US \$17,971.20 in four months. Expenses are estimated at around US \$8,473.60 for wages, together with 3% loss margin of approximately US \$539.10 and profits at about US \$8,958.50. I am firmly convinced that with this minimal starting investment, good management policy and rigorous administration will achieve impressive results without need of further external financial support, adequate for other projects such as small trades training."

The project was halted in December 2015 by the Malawi government's demand that they build a workshop and provide protective clothing. Miraculously, the Quaker refugees – and some non-Quaker refugees as well – have since constructed the workshop and two other buildings with volunteer labor.

Mulenda also initiated a community garden project, which despite severe shortages of basic tools, floods, drought and insect pests, successfully engaged 22 Quaker families, with 155 beneficiaries, in producing their own food. With adequate tools they could become self-sufficient and even produce a market-garden surplus that would cover other essential family expenses.

**With adequate tools they could become self-sufficient and even produce a market-garden surplus that would cover other essential family expenses.**

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) contributed \$500 as a mini grant, counterpart to \$930 in donations by members of Burlington Friends Meeting in Vermont. QEW was considering a second mini grant request in November 2016. The project reports on gardening and soap-making (on file at <http://tinyurl.com/godunho>), including children's drawings, show how much has already been done by refugee Friends in the Dzaleka camp. They are now in urgent need of further support for garden tools and soap-making supplies; as you will see below, they also have solid plans for becoming self-sufficient after this initial stage. *(continued)*



US\$ donations can be made through Burlington Friends Meeting (BFM) by cheque earmarked "Daleka Friends Concern" made out to Treasurer BFM (Chris McCandless), and mailed to 173 N Prospect St, Burlington, VT 05401. To avoid bank and cross-border exchange fees, Canadian Friends who are interested in setting up an equivalent are asked to contact David Millar [fdmillar@gmail.com](mailto:fdmillar@gmail.com) for further discussion.



We asked for photographs, but they do not have a camera. Instead they sent drawings by one of the children: Friends Meeting, and work in the garden.



## QUNO launches briefing for Friends on new developments at the UN for the protection of refugees and migrants

On September 19th 2016, the UN set a new agenda for responding to large movements of people crossing borders, under what is now known as the 'New York Declaration'. Motivated by our testimonies and drawing on long experience of working on international peace and justice concerns, the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) is focussing on how current opportunities can be used to achieve a fair, ambitious and rights respecting international response to people on the move.

QUNO has long worked on the issue of displaced people, helping to advance the international legal standards and structures designed to protect their rights and dignity. This stems from our principle to uphold the dignity and worth of every individual, regardless of their nationality or circumstance they find themselves in.

Faced with new and complex global migration challenges, the international community has struggled to coherently respond, and has often failed to protect people on the move. Responding to this, States came together at the UN in New York and adopted the New York Declaration, a political statement which outlines their commitments to protect refugees and migrants and initiates new processes towards fairer and more effective international policies on this issue.

The declaration, agreed by consensus by heads of State, is a product of intense and difficult political negotiations and the outcome was met with a mixed response. On one hand, achieving a high-level political commitment on the protection of both refugees and migrants can be recognized as a huge success, especially as it includes robust language on human rights.

However, there are some more problematic areas, for example the language it contains on detaining children for immigration purposes is weaker than existing standards. Despite its limitations, the declaration can be viewed as

a useful tool in efforts to improve international governance on this issue.

The declaration includes declared commitments, which are not binding, but can be used as advocacy tools and to hold countries to account in upholding them. It also includes a commitment to improve refugee response, a commitment to find agreement on safe, orderly and regular migration and to develop principles on migrants in vulnerable situations.

**"The time for this is now. 'We the peoples' can take a stand for rights. Local actions can add up to a global movement to save the rights that a global movement, composed of countless committed individuals and some inspired leaders, created in the first place."**

**Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein,  
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

There are many ways Friends can engage in the progress of this work. We encourage you to read the full briefing, 'Protecting refugees and migrants under the New York Declaration: challenges and opportunities at the UN level', (found here: <https://goo.gl/cv4bmZ>) to learn more details about the Declaration and how you can be involved. The report describes how QUNO is actively engaged in this work, as well as ways that Quakers around the world can engage with, and benefit from, UN level initiatives for improving global protection of refugees and migrants.



## Factsheet: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

*The following is a precis of a factsheet created by the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Download, read and share the full sheet here: <https://goo.gl/s5NSoq>.*

### What is the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

1 - The Declaration is an international human rights instrument adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 2007 after more than two decades of negotiations.

2 - The Declaration affirms the inherent or pre-existing collective and individual human rights of Indigenous peoples. It provides a framework for justice and reconciliation, applying existing human rights standards to the specific historical, cultural and social circumstances of Indigenous peoples.

3 - The Declaration is described as “a standard of achievement to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and respect.” Indeed, it reinforces the Treaty relationships that exist between Indigenous peoples and the Crown and which form “the basis for a strengthened partnership...”

### Is the Declaration consistent with the Canadian Constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

11 - In a May 2008 open letter, over 100 Canadian legal scholars and other experts on matters of law and Indigenous rights, stated that not only is the UN Declaration “consistent with the Canadian Constitution and Charter,” it is also “profoundly important for fulfilling their promise.”

### What is the Government of Canada’s position on the Declaration?

12 - The federal government announced in May 2016 that it “is now a full supporter of the Declaration, without qualification.” This comes after the former government had opposed and campaigned against the Declaration for more than four years, and then issued an official statement of endorsement in 2010.

### How should the Declaration be implemented in Canada?

16 - The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has stated “the Declaration... is the framework for reconciliation.”

17 - Courts and human rights tribunals can use the Declaration as a relevant and persuasive source in interpreting Indigenous human rights and related state obligations.

18 - Indigenous peoples and their institutions are using the Declaration as a principled framework for advancing their rights, in their own policy- and decision-making and in their negotiations with governments and other third parties.

### What is happening internationally?

23 - The global consensus on the Declaration reinforces its weight as a universal human rights instrument. The ongoing and widespread human rights violations against Indigenous peoples worldwide underline the urgency of realizing full and effective implementation of the Declaration.

24 - The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights emphasized in 2010 that the “Declaration is now among the most widely accepted UN human rights instruments. It is the most comprehensive statement addressing the human rights of Indigenous peoples to date, establishing collective rights and minimum standards on survival, dignity, and wellbeing to a greater extent than any other international text.”

25 - The Declaration is being used by UN treaty bodies to interpret Indigenous peoples’ rights and related State obligations under international treaties.

## Face to Face: Early Quaker Encounters with the Bible

*Reviewed by Leona Crabb, Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

T. Vail Palmer, Jr., *"Face to Face: Early Quaker Encounters with the Bible,"* Newberg, Oregon: Barclay Press, 2016, 288pp, ISBN 978-1-59498-037-4.

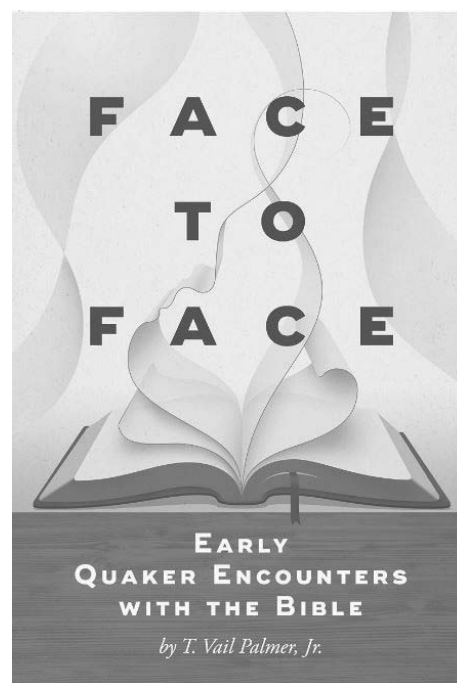
T. Vail Palmer, Jr. is a member and recorded minister at Freedom Friends Church (unaffiliated) in Salem, Oregon. A Quaker by birth, Palmer has a Ph.D. in Ethics and Society from the University of Chicago and is a retired Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Kentucky Wesleyan College and the University of Rio Grande.

By his own admission, two movements have inspired his life and work: the Quaker movement of the mid-seventeenth century and the Biblical Theology Movement of the mid-twentieth century. The Biblical Theology Movement promised renewal and healing of divisions in the church and was characterized by, among other things, a confidence in the unity of biblical theology, an emphasis on God's revelation through mighty acts in history and a focus on the Bible's immediate relevance for modern life.

Palmer recognizes that most Quakers have taken the Bible seriously and looked to it for guidance. As far as the earliest Friends are concerned, Palmer argues that George Fox, Edward Burrough and Margaret Fell read the Bible with empathy. That is, they entered into the biblical world of the Hebrews and early Christians, identifying themselves – face to face – with biblical writers, personalities and communities and looking out at the world through the window of biblical faith.

This narrative approach to scripture enabled early Quakers to make sense of the contradictory messages in the Bible and led to an affective spirituality, grounded in biblical symbolism and metaphor, out of which emerged their innovative positions on issues such as war, women's ministry and social justice.

Moreover, Palmer suggests that the encounter between George Fox and the Seekers in 1652 was a mighty act of God and that Quakers today can learn



more about God and God's purpose in history by looking at the Christian way of life and spirituality of early Friends.

As the subtitle suggests, Palmer begins the book by exploring early Quaker encounters with the Bible. However, he then continues on to examine the different ways in which later generations of Quakers interpreted the authority of scripture. While Palmer maintains that Fox, Burrough and Fell viewed the Bible as an internalized authority, he also explains that, because they did not consciously recognize nor articulate their empathetic approach, many later Friends looked instead to Robert Barclay for the official Quaker position on the matter, namely that the authority of the Bible is a secondary rule, subordinate to the inward testimony of the Spirit.

According to Palmer, not only did later Quakers lose sight of what scripture really meant to the earliest Friends, but because their concept of authority implied the imposition of external rules and ideas, their attempts to try to harmonize the discrepancies within the Bible led to *(continued)*

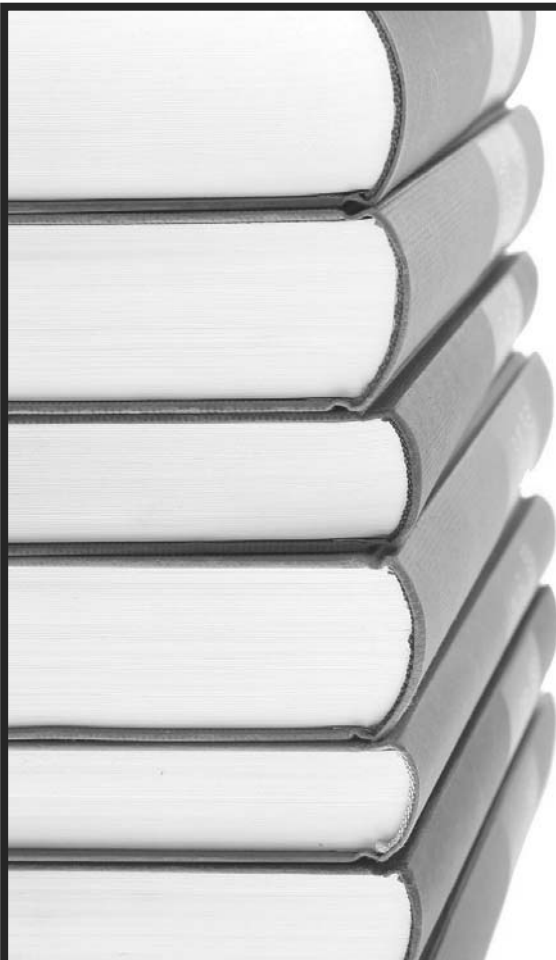
significant arguments over the authority of the Bible and the Spirit, culminating in the Hicksite-Orthodox Separation of 1827.

In addition to liberally quoting scripture, Palmer freely reproduces long passages from the writings of Quaker leaders, a style that will be welcomed by readers who want to read for themselves how different Friends approached and understood scripture over time. The same style may be seen as a bit of a distraction by those readers who simply want to get on with the story.

Palmer also seems to imply that if Quakers in later generations had only adopted the empathetic reading and interpretation of the Bible characteristic

of early Friends, then perhaps the various misunderstandings and divisions would not have emerged. In so doing, he completely sidesteps the question of whether or not complete unity is actually achievable, let alone desirable, and leaves unexplored the further assumption that different approaches to understanding scripture among Quakers will, by definition, lead to devastating arguments and divisions.

Palmer intends to continue his discussion of Quakers and the authority of scripture in a second volume (forthcoming) that begins its explorations with the year 1827 and examines the place of creeds among Friends and the different ways in which Quakers have understood Christ's atonement since Separation.



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## Why I identify as a Christian

Maida Follini

Some good friends I know reject the label of “Christian,” not because they belong to other non-Christian faiths but because they have rejected the mainstream faiths of Christianity in which they were raised. Some of the rejected tenets are:

- The creation of the world by God in seven days.
- Original sin, inherited from parent to child, and supposed to be present in all people.
- The concept of sacrifices of human beings, animals, or the fruits of the earth, to appease God.
- Jesus Christ as a supernatural being.
- God as an all-powerful personage who could, if he wanted, prevent wars, famines and other evils from happening.
- Heaven as a reward for good behaviour on earth and Hell as a punishment for bad behaviour.
- Many other beliefs derived from Bible stories or from the traditions of Christian churches over the ages.

As Alice in Wonderland told the White Queen, “One can’t believe impossible things.” To which the White Queen answered that, with practice, “Sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.”

The White Queen represents Traditionalists. Tradition is so important to many people that they reject criticism of it that may come from logic, common sense, or scientific knowledge, and depend on the beliefs handed down in their culture from the past. My friends who reject the Christian culture from which they came represent Revolutionaries. Like Alice, the Revolutionaries cannot believe in the impossible.

But as they reject tradition, they may go so far as to throw out the whole of Christianity along with it - the ethics, the guidance on how to live a good life, the examples of love and peace provided by Jesus.

There is a third way, and that is the way of Evolution. Quakers, through their belief in Continuous Revelation, through the ever-present spirit within us

**Quakers, through their belief in Continuous Revelation, through the ever-present spirit within us and within the world, find that their beliefs can grow and change with new knowledge and new inspiration.**

and within the world, find that their beliefs can grow and change with new knowledge and new inspiration. A Revolution throws out all the past, including the good parts. An Evolution sheds the unnecessary parts, like old hair or old teeth.

Thus we have Traditional Friends, Revolutionary Friends, and those like myself, Evolutionary Friends. For me, the divine is not a personage, but an attribute of the universe. This divine attribute is the force that generates constructivism and caring for life. It is the spirit within each person that can move them to do good, help one another, and celebrate peace rather than war. It is the spirit which led Jesus to teach his followers to “Love one another” and to say “Blessed are the Peacemakers.”

Jesus’s influence has lasted for over 2000 years, so we can truly say he is resurrected spiritually, although not physically. Aspects often stressed in Traditional Christianity, such as atonement on the cross, Jesus as a “son of God,” or God as a creator are not of importance to me, and do not define Christianity for me.

I call myself a Christian because for me, a Christian is one who tries to follow the teachings of Jesus as exemplified by his parables, and especially by the Sermon on the Mount.

We each take what we need from religion. I would never denigrate someone else’s belief in traditional religion just because it is different from mine. Christianity should not be seen as restricted to a certain creed of narrow beliefs, but as a faith open to all who wish to follow Jesus’s teachings, the basic one being: Love one another.

## Who am I to...?

William H. Mueller

This Fall, St. Lawrence Valley Friends had a First Day school on the prophets, the longest scroll of the Hebrew Bible. One of us could not attend but was able to make potluck following meeting for worship. He asked us what we had learned. We went around the table; I didn't have an immediate answer.

From my childhood Sunday school, I remember the prophets as venerable 'wise men' who lived a long time ago; I would not have dreamt of filling their shoes, is the implication. By the way, references to 'prophetesses' abound in both testaments, so in the past the job was not gender-limited in Hebrew society.

Study reveals that the prophets were 'poets of anguish,' not future predictors, though they warned "If you continue to do this, you will get that!" as they challenged poor leadership and injustice under the kings of Israel (see scholar Walter Brueggemann). They were ordinary people dramatically confronted by God, often reluctant to obey God's call and apparently not suited to the task.

I was reminded of George Fox who "at the command of God" left home and security at age 19 on a search for truth. He ultimately found that "the Lord would teach his people himself."

Furthermore, Fox challenged Margaret Fell and us, "Christ saith this and the Bible saith that, but what can you say?" Fox is reminding us that we are the prophets! We love the prophets because they are us! They are the ordinary "churchgoers" who, whether they feel up to the job or not, must obey.

This is why the book of prophets is so appealing and perhaps why it is the most important scroll of the Hebrew Bible! Sadly, most Christians in my experience regard it as a dull "history of the Jewish people." It isn't. It is our history acted out by God's faithful covenant partners, for our benefit, I would rather think.

Consider the life of the greatest prophet of Judaism,

**Religion is less about discerning right from wrong than it is about teaching me to listen to my heart, encouraging me to shoulder my cross and persevere in doing right in spite of fear and a feeling that I'm not up to the task.**

Moses. Here God confronts a felon, of all people, and says 'I want you to go back to Egypt where you are wanted for capital murder, and lead the Israelites out of there.' Moses responds with the incredulous "Who am I to...!!!" Can we blame him? He goes on to argue four times more, explaining why he is not suitable. God reassures him, "I will be with you" and "not to worry about what to say, I will provide a message." This sounds like the "inward light" and ministry in Quaker meeting for worship, respectively.

The study of the prophets showed me that I already instinctively know right from wrong, as we all do, but most often I don't do the right thing; that it is easier to let wrong happen and, like Moses, rationalize my passivity. Then I realized that religion is less about discerning right from wrong than it is about teaching me to listen to my heart, encouraging me to shoulder my cross and persevere in doing right in spite of fear and a feeling that I'm not up to the task.

*Bill and Pat are members of St. Lawrence Valley Friends Meeting (Ottawa MM - CYM). Bill is retired from a career in anthropology applied to public health. He can be contacted at b-hutch-m@twcny.rr.com.*

## A sojourn at Pendle Hill

*Arwen Brenneman, Vancouver Monthly Meeting*

I grew up in a Quaker household, attending meetings since I was small. What impressed me from the very beginning was the sense of seeking, of searching for gnostic connection – there’s a core of spiritual responsibility in Friends’ faith and practice, of reaching out so that you might be caught. Translating that connection into contribution is something I’ve watched my mother, and so many other Friends, do with tireless energy. Even a small group of people can shine so much Light, together.

These two teachings have been such gifts, for they’ve given me faith in finding connection to grace when I can find stillness. If humanity’s biggest quest is making meaning of our lives, I have been very lucky to have found answers to that question, as lived daily by so many Quaker mentors.

This year, my health and career are in transition and my kids are no longer small and dependent. I’m letting go of many of the structures and frameworks I’ve needed or created over the past decade, which is exciting but destabilizing. In the vacuum created, I have been open to new leading. When I received CYM’s call for applicants for the Pendle Hill Scholarship, for the first time it read like an invitation to me rather than a piece of Quaker business. I wanted a big dose of the medicine provided by Quaker worship and fellowship. Additionally, I’m a writer and I’m working on a novel with Quaker themes. Where better than Pendle Hill to focus on that project?

When I got an email saying I’d gotten the scholarship I danced with my kids in the living-room. Way was opening, and I felt blessed and excited.

As the summer rolled by, I stowed hopes and wishes into the highlighted two-week trip on my calendar in October. I needed a place to stow dreams into as the summer became tough, with friends separating or falling ill and well-loved projects failing. I was also preparing to leave my career, taking a great jump into the unknown. Whenever my chest got tight with the heat of life, I would imagine the brisk days of

Pennsylvania in the fall. I could breathe deeply and imagine the golden moments of a gathered meeting, celebrating the holy gift of being. Pendle Hill became a reminder that even when life gets challenging, if you’re looking, you’ll find that way opens.

With all the flux in my life, I knew I needed a steadying hand. I planned to come away from sojourn with a grounded sense of myself and an inkling of next steps.

I should have remembered the Yiddish proverb – “Men plan and God laughs.”

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The highlighted spot on my calendar finally arrived. I said goodbye to my family and sat in the airport lounge waiting for my plane. When the boarding call was made, I reached into my bag to put my phone into airplane mode; an email pinged just as I threw the switch. I waited until we were airborne before opening it.

I immediately wished I hadn’t. My career transition had ended up in serious conflict, and I was hurtling through the sky without a way to address it. Travelling felt like the worst way to get such an email: I wouldn’t be able to bring people together to talk things through. Carrying on with unaddressed problems is not a skill I’ve mastered. I want a Claremont Dialog, stat.

When I arrived, the beauty of Pennsylvania fall was as I’d imagined. The steadying presence of worship and Friends were as I’d imagined. But I was not as I imagined I’d be – quieted, centred, and ready to listen. Instead I was, to put it mildly, a hot emotional mess who couldn’t seem to get anyone back home on the phone.

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Pendle Hill is a bucolic place. A local train dropped me at a well-weathered red-brick station – a sight that is missing from every landscape in the Pacific Northwest, where I live. The road wound up, canopied by a diversity of trees, to the beautiful stone buildings of the campus. *(continued)*

The leaves were not yet in their full evening-gown finery – but they were beautiful even still, in green and sage and yellow, and the wind of season's change meant the treetops bowed and waved in constant dance.

The people of Pendle Hill also had a rhythm. There was a much bigger staff there than I'd expected – the kitchens, offices, and grounds were well supplied with international interns, Friends in Residence, and paid employees. The first few days, there were only a few sojourners on the ground with me – none of the larger groups who came by midweek. At mealtimes, with a tray full of delicious food, I'd sit with one or another table and learn the stories of the others who had been called to Pendle Hill. In the relaxed cycling of days, I even managed to be sociable at breakfast. My kids would have called that a miracle.

In the evenings there were often presentations. Drick Boyd hosted one about his book *White Allies in The Struggle for Racial Justice* (Orbis Books, 2015), a compilation of stories of white activists working against racism. I had not been aware of the painful Quaker history of slave-owning, and was inspired by John Woolman's work challenging the status quo within Quaker communities.

Lina Blount hosted a presentation about Direct Action activism for the assembled Quaker Earthcare Witness gathering. Though I've grown up with Quakers and activists, I'd missed the analysis of what works and what doesn't in moving public opinion, and was thrilled to find a structural framework in the workshop. Lina talked about different types of activists as separate but interrelated groups, and how working together to support each other in different roles was the backbone of social change.

Lina also talked about the need for a spiritual centre in Quaker direct action, and the different roles each person in a direct action group can take, so that no one has to be everything. It was an uplifting and inspiring talk highlighting how interrelationship is a powerful force.

I found advice and support on my own project in places I didn't expect. One Friend, without much

information, spoke to the problem of my first draft – a peaceable protagonist can make needed narrative conflict a lot less intense than it needs to be. Other friends suggested books to read, or simply were encouraging and hopeful.

It was a beautiful place to be.

And yet.

When I worked alone my distant conflict sat like an undigested lump between me and any sort of stillness. Rather than feeling connected to the source, I felt like a sparking and severed live wire.

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One morning at worship I stopped fighting for a way past myself. As the silence gathered around me, I let myself be messy, miserable and distracted. I was a little dark smudge in the Meeting room, frustrated, but letting go of the dream I'd had of October as a time of deep seeking. I had no stable place to cast from; I was froth and tidal ocean, not solid ground.

Instead of stillness and grounding, I floated.

Around me, Friends observed the silence.

Occasionally a chair would creak, as someone repositioned themselves. Someone unwrapped a cough drop. That morning, and each after, as different people came and went, I had a new experience of meeting. Rather than sharing gathered meeting, or even having the prosaic experience of sitting with my own thoughts, I experienced the people around me.

**All around Pendle Hill – in workshops, in conversation, over meals, in the art room – people were seeking and working and challenging the world to be a better place. I couldn't feel the Light within, but I could see it shining like candle flames in the lives of those around me.'**

In these little moments, I found a new gift from Quakers. All around Pendle Hill – in workshops, in conversation, over meals, in the art room – people were seeking and working and challenging the world to be a better place. In the middle of it all I was given a place to sleep, served nourishing meals, given

hours of time to paint and to write. I was invited to be part of conversations that inspired, challenged, or nurtured.

Although I've been uplifted by Quaker gatherings in the past, I've always carried a sense of my responsibility through each moment. For a time, at Pendle Hill, I laid that down. To my surprise, I found myself taken care of in little and large ways. The community absorbed me. I couldn't feel the Light within, but I could see it shining like candle flames in the lives of those around me.

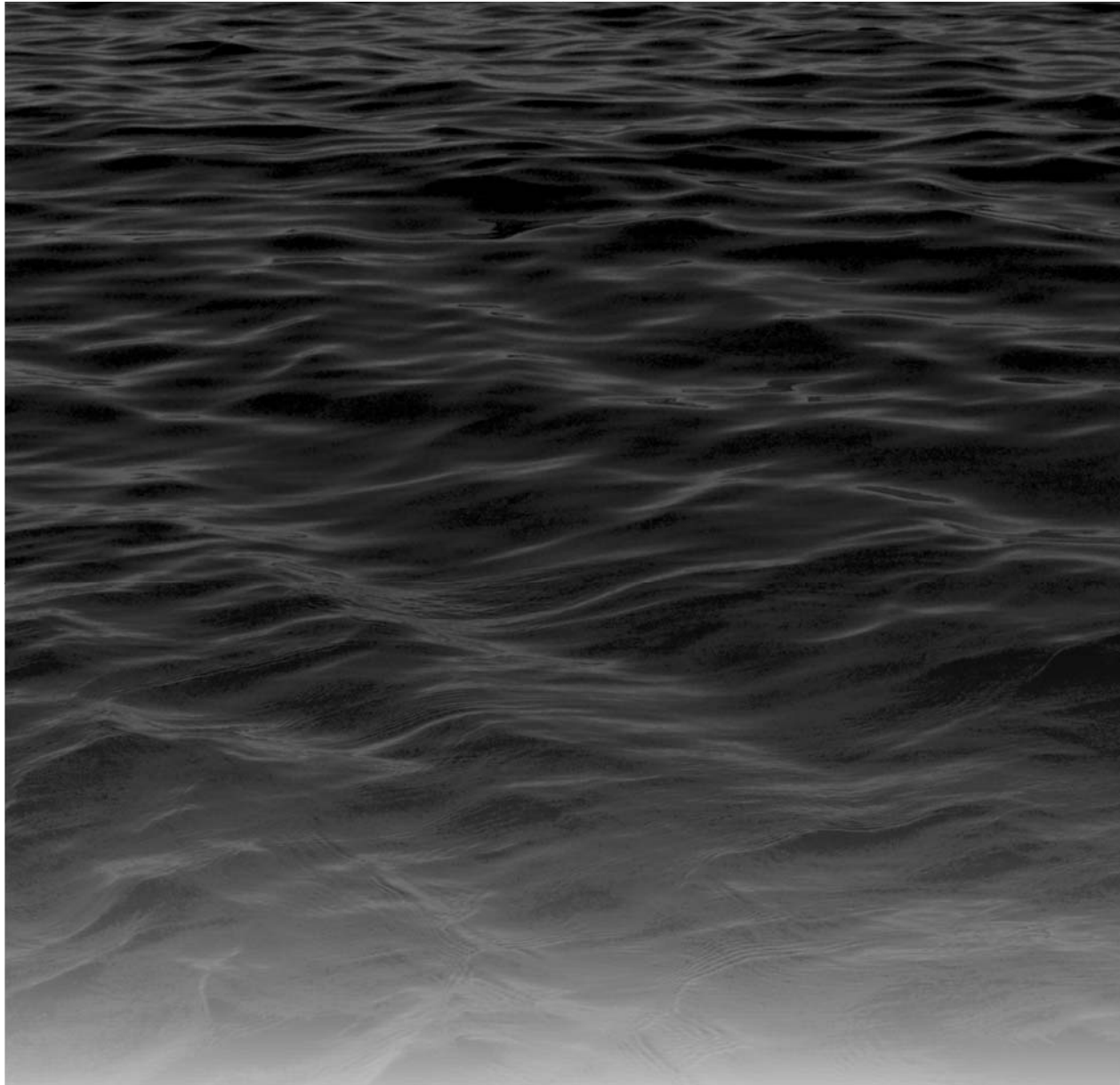
In the end, this was my leading, and the gift I was given. I did not sojourn to learn from the still small

voice within, but to learn from fellowship. A limping sojourn at Pendle Hill was exactly what I needed to see that we can lose touch with grace and yet still see it working its magic in the world.

At about the same time that I found my equilibrium again, the American election left many others in a place of despair. Today it's my turn again to hold hope, to take action. Yet I understand more viscerally now how vital it is that we hold fast together - we must carry the Light together, for each other. It is in unity that we can shine for those who struggle to find hope.

*November 28, 2016*





## Ocean of darkness and death - A negative metaphor?

*LLynne Phillips, Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting with Victoria Friends*

I recently read a letter of sympathy sent by Friends General Conference (FGC) to a black church that suffered death from the gun of a racist white man. My attention was caught by the final words of the letter: an oft-used quotation from our founder, George Fox. Quakers of any tradition know the familiar metaphor Fox used to describe his mystical vision on Pendle Hill of God's presence over an "ocean of darkness and death; but an infinite ocean of Light and Love...."

Friends General Conference is an umbrella organization for some yearly meetings of US and Canadian Quakers with more liberal practices and theology. I was a delegate to FGC for seven years at the turn of this century. I experienced the beginning of FGC's determination to raise awareness of racism within the Religious Society of Friends and, if possible, to change minds, hearts, and practice. During those continuing conversations, I heard a few African-American Quakers express concern about

the use of George Fox's words of "darkness and death" to imply negativity, in contrast to the use of "Light" as the metaphor for the mystical experience of the Spirit which is enlightening, sacred, loving, and transforming.

Here's the catch. Darkness has been a theme in human languages for thousands of years and often associated with peril, given the lack of night time lighting for most of our evolutionary history. There is no escaping it! But now, what should we do with the metaphors of darkness that imply depression, despair, and death? Should we avoid the terms and the quotations using such metaphors? Or is it time to wage a campaign to educate people about the subtle and often unconscious use of light, white, etc. as a positive metaphor in contrast to darkness as only negative?

**It's time to teach more about the power of darkness to play an important role in our human lives as well as on Planet Earth.**

The relevance of Light comes from the totally universal human dependence on light for practical activities that sustain life and the power of sunlight to grow plants. It's time to teach more about the power of darkness to play an equally important role in our human lives as well as on Planet Earth. Even though I know some of the gifts of darkness, I am still unconsciously influenced by the overwhelming negative use of "darkness" and the positive use of "light." I need to practice the belief in my heart of hearts that both Darkness and Light as metaphors have meaning only in the context of our human cultures. Meanings and metaphors can be changed.

One of the greatest allies in my transformation has been the power of amazing metaphors in poetry. There are many poems that use light in the typical positive manner, and often in contrast to darkness as the negative opposite. However, there are a few poets who see the yin and the yang of life and the positive power of the dark. Below are a few excerpts that have appeared in my life.

John O'Donohue: "Steady yourself and see/ That it is your own thinking/ That darkens your world,/

Search and you will find/ A Diamond-thought of lights,/ Know that you are not alone/ And that this darkness has purpose;/ Gradually it will school your eyes/ To find the one gift your life requires/ Hidden within this night-corner." - from the poem *Courage*, in *To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings* (Harmony, 2008)

T.S. Eliot: "But the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting./ Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought:/ So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing." - from the poem *East Coker*, in *Four Quartets* (Faber and Faber Limited, 1968)

May Sarton: "Help us to be always hopeful/ gardeners of the Spirit/ who know that/ without darkness/ nothing comes to birth,/ as without light, nothing flowers. - from the poem *The Invocation to Kali*, in *A Grain of Mustard Seed* (W.W. Norton, 1981)

Leonard Cohen: "Ring the bells that still can ring/ Forget your perfect offering/ There is a crack in everything/ That's how the light gets in." from *The Lyrics of Leonard Cohen: Enhanced Edition* (Omnibus Press, 2009)

John O'Donohue: "Eventually, what you call the negative side of yourself can become the greatest force for renewal, creativity, and growth within you. Each one of us has this task. It is a wise person who knows where their negativity lies and yet does not become addicted to it. There is a greater and more generous presence behind your negativity. In its transfiguration, you move into the light that is hidden in this larger presence." - from *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom* (Harper Perennial, 1998)

Brené Brown: "Embracing our vulnerabilities is risky but not nearly as dangerous as giving up on love and belonging and joy—the experiences that make us the most vulnerable. Only when we are brave enough to explore the darkness will we discover the infinite power of our light." - from *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are* (Hazelden, 2010)

## Quaker Activist, Companionist and other tribes within one Community or Nation

*Dennis Cressman, Calgary Monthly Meeting*

During my university days while living in Virginia I was told: “you are an American!” I gasped and said: “No way! I am a Canadian!” I was told that I live in North America and therefore I am an American. I insisted I was not and asked what the American flag and the American dollar looked like, what the American foreign policy was and who the American president was. Sure I am a North American, but I am not an American. In the same manner, in my way I am an active Quaker, but I have a very clear and deep awareness of not being an activist.

One way of understanding this difference might be to think of there being Activist Tribes, Companionist Tribes and other tribes within the Creator’s Community or Nation of Quakers. The Old Testament speaks of a time of there being tribes before there were kings. Like those tribes at that time, we could think of ourselves now as being a Community or Nation of Quakers called to be a theocracy, a community of various tribes all of which are committed to being in submission to the Creator as their Guide, as individuals, as tribes and as a Nation.

Within this Quaker Nation there are various Activist Tribes, various Companionist Tribes and other tribes. Some tribes are geographically based, some are based on involvement with a specific concern and some tend to be ideologically based, but all are following their felt leadings of the Creator. All individuals in all of the tribes are walking an inward and an outward journey. All are to some degree contemplative and active.

Members of the Companionist Tribes sense a calling to actively be a companion to others, but very clearly know they are not Activists within the Quaker Nation.

Members of the Activist Tribes sense a calling to respond to injustice and perceived pain in a unique manner and know they are not Companionists. The various tribes have their own language, their

own unique beliefs, their own culture and their own spirituality.

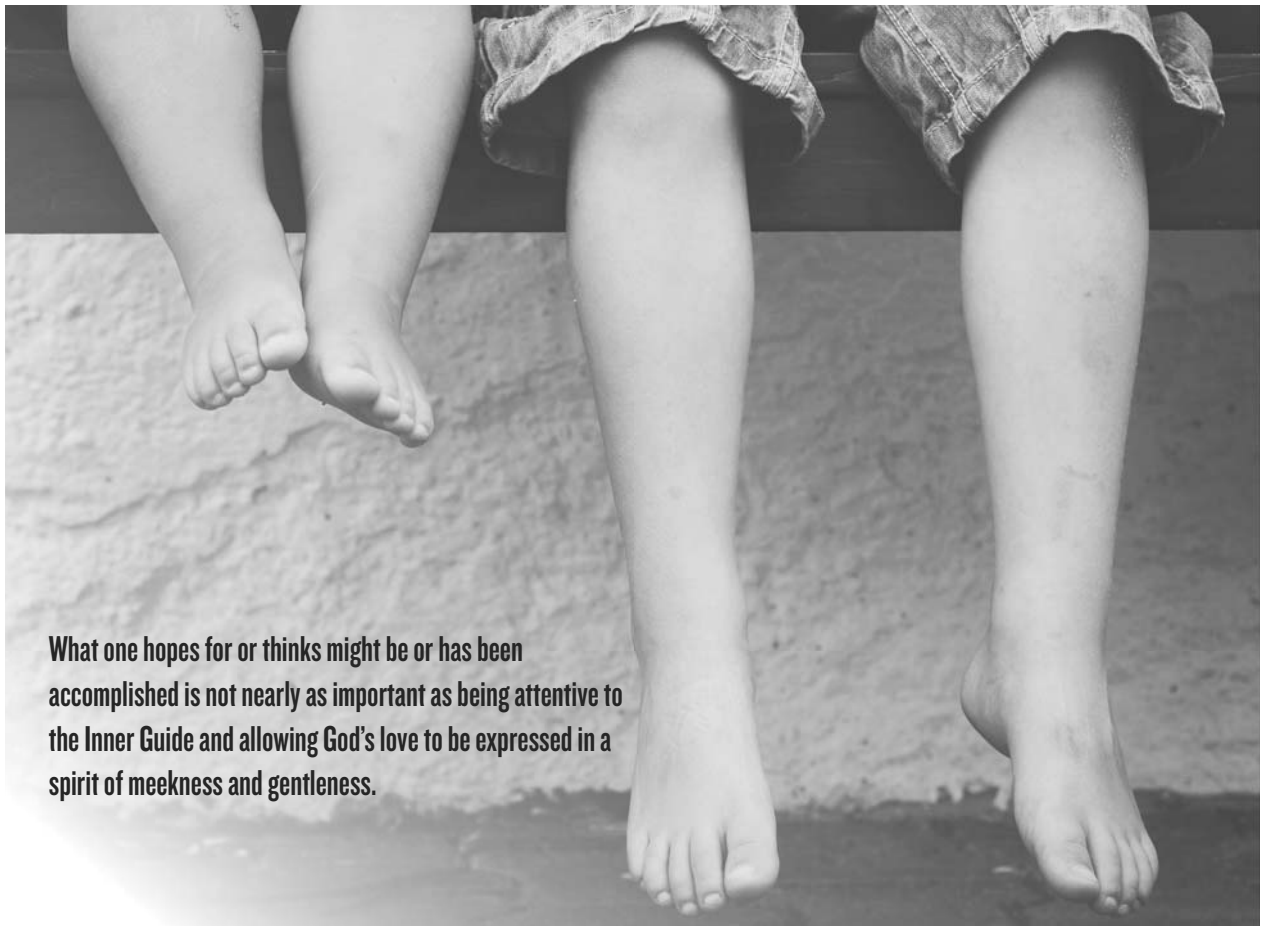
Quakers within the Activist Tribes of the Quaker Nation believe they are called to be committed to and primarily focused upon directly bringing about change. Sometimes this leads to declaring what others must do, sometimes demanding and at other times commanding those doing an injustice to radically change their behaviour. Victories are celebrated and endurance in the struggle is encouraged. This is the way of the Activist Tribes, but it is not the way of the Companionist Tribes.

Companionist Tribes desire to live out an example of being f/Friendly companions to all. There is a hope that others might see something of that which is divine in their example, be curious, sense something of deep value and be drawn to this way of living. When asked, they are very open to sharing their convictions, desires, and spirituality. They will invite others to experience their way of life, but they feel no compulsion to engage in any form of attempting to demand that others live as they do and sense no calling to attempt to pressure others to adopt their way of life or to change their behaviour.

Although they might see and feel huge negative implications of observed unjust behaviour, they do not want to interact with others with a fierce spirit attempting to force or even begin to pressure another to do things differently. They do not see themselves involved in a physically non-violent holy war against evil, being in a fight against injustice or involved in a struggle against perceived wrongs. They believe that it is only when one experiences being deeply accepted as they are that they become free to be guided by the Light within to a more whole way of living. This is a very different orientation to that of the Activists.

When an injustice in the world is keenly felt, the Companionists’ response will be guided by first being deeply open to sensing the core issues and personal





**What one hopes for or thinks might be or has been accomplished is not nearly as important as being attentive to the Inner Guide and allowing God's love to be expressed in a spirit of meekness and gentleness.**

realities which maintain the injustice. They want to know how it is they themselves live with these same realities and how they have come to discover that of God within these realities. They then want to gently and very sensitively hear the stories of those involved in doing the injustice, hoping for a confirmed empathic connection while knowing they too live with very similar desires which are present within the unjust behaviour.

While being present to and in dialogue with those involved in the injustice, an invitation will be given for the other to begin to hear their own inner witness to the pain that is being caused and for them to feel within their own desire for things to be different.

What one hopes for or thinks might be or has been accomplished is not nearly as important as being attentive to the Inner Guide and allowing God's love to be expressed in a spirit of meekness and gentleness.

As Quakers we could think of ourselves as being one Community or Nation, but abiding within different clusters of tribes. Some of us are Companionists. Some of us are Activists. Some identify with another tribe. We are all Quakers called to live in contemplative communities, allowing the Creator to be our Guide. Many times we seem to have significant difficulty deeply hearing one from a different tribe, but is it not good to acknowledge and accept our differences while knowing we are one Community or Nation?

*Note: Personally I tend to think of myself being a member of the Barefoot Tribe of the Creator's Nation of Quakers. For me the Barefoot Tribe is a Companionist Tribe which desires to live out Friendly Barefoot spirituality.*

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## Our disconnect from money

Sheila Havard, Coldstream Monthly Meeting

Some churches seem to be embarked on a permanent fund-raising campaign. You must have seen those huge posters outside church buildings indicating the target and the amount raised. The taboo of places of worship being freely open to all has been broken in England at least, with many of its glorious cathedrals now charging an entrance fee. We probably rightly deplore the intrusion of commercialism into a previously inviolable sphere.

Quakers are generally uncomfortable with the concept of filthy lucre (Titus 1.11). Yet it has not always been so. For 17th century Quaker theologian Robert Barclay, the concept of giving came from Jesus's teachings. Barclay quotes Matthew 10:8: "Freely ye have received, freely give."

A matter-of-fact attitude prevailed amongst early Friends and many became successful business people, known and respected for their integrity - no eschewing money there! Successive versions of Friends' Disciplines in the 1800s stress the importance of conducting one's business affairs justly and prudently. For instance:

*Seventh Query. Are Friends careful to live within the bounds of their circumstances, and to keep to moderation in their trade or business: Are they punctual to their promises, and just in the payment of their debts; and are such as give reasonable grounds for fear on these accounts timely laboured with for their preservation or recovery?* (1806 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Book of Discipline)

Similarly, the fifth query reads, in part:  
*Do [the] children [of poor Friends] freely partake of learning to fit them for business?* (1806 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Book of Discipline)

Such a realistic attitude to money applied not only to individual affairs but also to collective Quaker business matters. Our old Canadian Quaker minute books dutifully record the quota imposed by the Yearly Meeting on the Meeting concerned and the successful raising of the required amount. Early 20th century Friends certainly didn't shy away from

**It is possible to regard money as simply a neutral tool, not something that is morally suspect. It's easy: to do what our community wishes to do requires money.**

the topic of giving either. For instance, each weekly edition of the British Friend for 1914-1919 contains several pages listing all the contributions to the World War I Friends Ambulance Unit, from donations of several thousands of pounds by Cadburys and the like, right down to donations of a few pence. Unthinkable nowadays, but nevertheless perhaps an incentive to induce Friends to do their part!

So our shyness about money is relatively new. Quakers rejected tithes from the outset, but we are asked in Query 20 whether we "give a right proportion" of our money "to support Quaker work."

Given current trends in income and expenditures, Canadian Yearly Meeting's finances will have declined considerably in less than a decade. Our membership is stable; members are aging and either retired or not too far away from retirement, with the resulting need for personal financial prudence. Bequests to the Yearly Meeting provide momentary financial relief, but cannot be relied on indefinitely. This will inevitably mean cuts to some or all of CYM's activities, such as the educational programs, publications, committee activities and/or the gathering.

Perhaps part of the problem is that, in rejecting money as a desirable end in itself, we reject money, period. But it is possible to regard money as simply a neutral tool, not something that is morally suspect. It's easy: to do what our community wishes to do requires money.

When and why did it all change? And, more importantly, how can we foster a more practical attitude to funding? If we can't get more realistic, our days are numbered. As Barack Obama nicely put it, "Money is not the only answer, but it makes a difference"!



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# The Canadian Friend

Editor: Manuela Popovici

Layout: Adam Newlands

View *The Canadian Friend* online at:  
[quaker.ca/resources/the-canadian-friend](http://quaker.ca/resources/the-canadian-friend)

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO.  
40012338

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

The Canadian Friend,  
C/O Canadian Yearly Meeting  
91A Fourth Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1S 2L1

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