

# THE CANADIAN FRIEND

Autumn 2019 Volume 115, Number 3



Reconciliation & Decolonization at Yearly Meeting

ABOUT

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## Greetings,

I was delighted by my reunion with Penni Burrell at last year's Representative Meeting, which Penni wrote about in the last issue of *The Canadian Friend*.

I am always amazed at how Friends' lives weave together – again and again – in the most unexpected ways. Penni and I have not connected since being roommates – just over fifty years ago. Neither of us were Friends at the time, and we have both woven our path to opposite sides of the country. What an amazing surprise then when one of the CYM Reps greeted me as her early-teen roommate, and to have the opportunity to catch up on (at least a bit of) 50 years.

Hosting Representative Meeting is a delight and treasure in so many ways – especially for us Western Friends – but all the more so when old connections are discovered and revived. It also reminds me that our world is growing smaller and smaller (re: various kinds of distances between us); and yet also that this 'community' of overlapping variations of ethos is actually a very small part of our (populated) world. How graced we are!!

**Sincerely,**  
**Pashta MaryMoon**  
**Victoria Monthly Meeting**

## Greetings,

While I was in Winnipeg this summer, attending Yearly Meeting in Session, I had the privilege of touring the Canadian Human Rights Museum. I came across a display in the Nelson Mandela area which moved me.

There in front of me was a photo of a beloved Friend, who has spent her life in working for the human rights of others.

Not only was this a photo of Anne Mitchell, but she was beside it as a staff person from the Museum talked about how her photo was chosen to be part of this exhibit.



(Photo: Laurel Beyer)

Anne explained that the 1987 photo shows her (on the right, above) speaking to Joe Clark on the steps of the House of Commons, asking him to intervene on behalf of political prisoners in South Africa. At the time she was the director of the Canadian chapter of the International Aid and Defence Fund.

In the photo, she is holding a framed photograph of Theresa Ramashamola, one of the Sharpeville Six, sentenced to death by hanging in 1985 by the apartheid regime. The convictions were widely condemned by the international community as unlawful and racist, and in particular by the United Nations Security Council in Resolutions 610 and 615.

In 1988 the death sentence was commuted to a jail sentence of eighteen years. Then with the fall of apartheid, Theresa was eventually released in December 1991.

This recognition of Anne's work was well-deserved. I am deeply grateful for her dedicated service.

**In Friendship**  
**Laurel Beyer**  
**Saskatoon Monthly Meeting**



This issue's cover is by Gabriele Paradis, a two-spirit Indigenous teen who attended 2019. The image shows how "this year at CYM a big focus was teaching others and spreading knowledge about colonialism and its effects," as Gabriele put it. Gabriele has original art for sale and accepts commissions; you can reach her at [gabriele\\_paradis@yahoo.ca](mailto:gabriele_paradis@yahoo.ca).

## Yarmouth Monthly Meeting

*by Jane Zavitz*

Ministry during a Meeting for Worship this fall brought the global climate crisis into fuller focus for those gathered in Yarmouth.

After silent worship and peaceful sense among us, a Friend rose and spoke of thankfulness for the shade and comfort a great maple tree had given the Meeting House since it was built in 1865. Now a danger from decay, it was to be cut in the coming week.

We will be warmed by the maple wood in our stove. We have planted new trees for the future.



(Photos: Neil Hubert)

Worship continued. Another Friend rose to speak of the joy that came that week as she and her grandson saw a tree by Lake Erie's shore with branches weighed down by monarch butterflies on migration to Mexico.

Thinking of the beauty of their colours, she learned such a gathering is called a kaleidoscope of butterflies – and further that the caterpillars are called an army of worms. In the chrysalis worms are transformed into beautiful butterflies. We witness this miracle with joy, as did the young boy.

Before Meeting closed, the thought emerged that a human chrysalis forms when we find ourselves caught in a box of difficulty. It may allow us to evolve as we respond to meet circumstances with love and care, as goodness, beauty, and truth emerge for those involved. The current world climate crisis creates a chrysalis for each of us.

We each have unique gifts and skills to respond with. Let us support and care for one another in our Meeting communities. 🌱

## Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting

*by Ro Fife*

Peninsula Friends continued their August tradition of meeting in each other's homes, rather than gathering at our rented meeting space.

As a Meeting that started off as a preparative meeting which met in homes, we enjoy the strong level of fellowship and connection that house meetings create.

To mark World Quaker Day on October 6th, our Meeting hosted a pre-meeting coffee time drop in and an 'ask a Quaker' session before settling into worship.

We circulated poster invitations throughout the Saanich Peninsula and Sidney area, as well as sending invites to any local social justice and service groups to which we donate as a Meeting. As one Friend said about this outreach opportunity, "Friends are not always very good at shining our light beyond our existing circles of connection."

While we did not have any visitors new to us attend, we welcomed the opportunity to share coffee, stories, and worship with fifteen members and attenders that day. It turned into a meaningful time of fellowship followed by enriching ministry. We learned that sometimes we are in need of in-reach as much as outreach.

Finally, we note that several of our members have had significant health challenges over the past few months. We are planning some future worship sharing sessions to explore ways to best support each other as our health and age impact our lives. 🌱

## Bloomfield Worship Group

*by Bert Horwood*

Blomfield, in the heart of Prince Edward County, Ontario, was the centre of a large Quaker pioneer community in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. Today, only a small informal worship group meets there, with support from Wooler Monthly Meeting.

On July 7, 2019, Friends from Thousand Islands Meeting in Kingston visited. The fifteen Friends who gathered in Bloomfield that day are the largest group to worship together in 'the County' in over 80 years. 🌱

## St. Lawrence Area Regional Gathering

The Power of Enough  
by Sybil Grace, Ottawa Monthly Meeting

St. Lawrence Area Regional Gathering joyously met in Ottawa the first weekend of June, gathering fellow Quakers from Peterborough, Kingston, and Montreal. Jackie Stillwell, of [Right Sharing of World Resources](#) and New England Yearly Meeting, was our guest as she renewed a personal friendship here in Ottawa.

Many know Jackie through the workshops she gives at Friends General Conference (FGC), a large international Quaker annual gathering held in the eastern United States. For us she successfully distilled her workshop series "The Power of Enough" from five days to a series of exciting questions that we considered in small groups.

Challenged and stimulated, we asked ourselves:

- What do I need in my life?
- What is lacking in my life?
- What does too much or too little or just enough feel like?

We each chose a future mini-step and then we were free to play with beans and dice, stumbling cooperatively. All was seasoned with laughter and enlightenment, good food, and walks!

This weekend provided more than the regular joy in meeting new and old faces, with the unexpected addition of two guests. The first was CYM Secretary Cameron Fraser, who was in town meeting with staff and clerks. Cameron shared possible futures for CYM that they are studying and

explained how we could play a discernment role in August at the annual gathering in Winnipeg.

And perhaps the icing on the cake was a presentation by David Bucura, our second addition. David is part of Friends Peace Teams in Africa, and coordinator of the [African Great Lakes Initiative \(AGLI\)](#). He showed the successes and scope of conflict training for children and neighbouring African delegates through ongoing workshops supported by our [CFSC \(Canadian Friends Service Committee\)](#), [AVP \(the Alternatives to Violence Program\)](#), and international NGOs.

AGLI is growing rapidly through various African countries. And it was a delight to hear a group of primary students enthuse about their new children's peace library and how they are mastering the switch to English from French, begun in 2009 in Burundi and Rwanda. David is returning to Africa after two months visiting in Canada and the States where he reached out to AGLI supporters.

Over the years Regional Gathering has ranged through rural residential and country camping but this year we chose an urban setting, billeting visitors. It was successful

and we will meet in Ottawa again next year. Catered meals instead of potlucking allowed for a more relaxed time. We even managed to have a productive Meeting for Business.

There was a great deal to ponder as the weekend closed and we said our goodbyes. 🌿



Jackie Stillwell (in back) of Right Sharing of World Resources and New England Yearly Meeting. (Photo: Claire Adamson)

## Atlantic Half-Yearly Meeting

That of God in Everyone and Every Thing  
by Maida Follini & David Millar

Over sixty Friends and friends of Friends gathered at Camp Geddie, on the North Shore of Nova Scotia, over the Victoria Day weekend, filling the main lodge, the accessible A-Frame, many of the cabins, and a number of tents brought by some families. The theme for the gathering this year was "That of God in Everyone and Every Thing: A Call to Quakers for Environmental Action."

Clerk Ellen Helmuth opened by reminding us of the Mi'kmaq placename Merigomish and the thousands of years in which our Indigenous allies lived and preserved this land and water.

Saturday morning started off with Friends from Meetings and Worship Groups reporting on what they are doing to help our Earth sustain itself. This also included hearing from Joanna Bull and Robin Tress of the Halifax-based Ecology Action Centre (EAC). Quakers were involved in the development of the Ecology Action Centre, which has initiated practices and political actions for ecojustice that have spread across all four Atlantic provinces

In all, we heard of local initiatives like PEI Meetings' "Kiss A Fish" campaign, GASP (Group Against Spraying the Peninsula) in New Brunswick, sustainable gardening and woodlots, simple living, recycling and reuse, supporting Indigenous rights, revising school curricula, and taking children on nature walks; nationally we heard about initiatives involving [Kairos](#), [ROJEP](#) (Le Réseau œcuménique justice, écologie et paix), the [people's food policy](#), the [LEAP manifesto](#), and the [Green New Deal](#); internationally, we discussed the 2012 Quaker World Conference's [Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice](#), and follow-up on it.

Guest Speaker Judy Loo presented a slide show of her global work in tree genetics, which focused on how to conserve biodiversity of tree species in countries in Latin America and Asia. Sylvia Mangalam and Nathalie Brunet gave a session on food: Sylvia on the Food Action Committee of the EAC and Nathalie on the social aspects of food. Verena Tan, a staff member from the Canadian Friends Service Committee reported on the work of the Committee in the areas of criminal justice, peace, Indigenous rights, and the environment.

We also enjoyed the company of Lucy Aphromor from Church Stretton Meeting in England, who works as a 'compassionate nutritionist.' Lucy explained that her work is grounded in the central principle that 'everyone is worthy of

love and respect' (WOLR). She talked about how we might approach nutrition as a spiritual journey and how we can free ourselves from fat-phobia, blaming, and labelling.

A highlight of the program was the session by Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) Secretary Cameron Fraser, who came with his whole family. He led us in a Human Ecology assessment that connected the personal and spiritual to networks of Friends at various levels, from Worship Groups to local Meetings, Regional Meetings, and CYM itself. He asked the question, "What is our connectedness with others?" and pointed out that the power of the group, whether local or national, has more impact than operating alone. He also raised the importance of outreach in maintaining the strength of our Meetings and our Religious Society. We have a message to share.

This was illustrated by an impromptu incident at the book display table. A Quaker teacher in education at the St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish picked up a copy of the Quaker Institute booklet *A Quaker Approach to Research: Collaborative Practice and Communal Discernment*. She explained that a student in her class had brought a copy of that booklet to her and said excitedly, "This is how I want to do research – collaboratively and not competitively." The teacher read it and understood immediately how the Quaker process of collaborative discernment can be an effective tool in doing research.

In between the serious sessions, we enjoyed Fun Times, organized by Maria Atony, in which our creativity was expressed using natural materials (bark, feathers, stones) and through poetry, photography, and other media. A Meeting for Readings provided us with rewarding and inspiring material. Sunday Worship gave us time to commune with the Inward Light, while Meeting for Business dealt with some practical needs.

The very energetic youth group led by Vince Zelazny and three enthusiastic teens focused on the gathering's theme in their craft activities, story times, skits, and walks in the woods, on the beach, and even in the rain, which Mother Nature provided for one day.

Family Night, with the Raging Grannies, guitar, saxophone and songs, skits, poems, and magic tricks, was as usual a big hit, with the 11 children and youth taking a big part.

All-in-all, this chance to meet and converse with Friends from near and far – from Newfoundland and Labrador, Maine, Vermont, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, British Columbia, and even from England – helped make us part of the larger family of Friends and strengthened us in our faith. 🌿

A Report in Poetry from Atlantic Friends Gathering

by Lucy Aphramor, Church Stretton Local Meeting, UK (visiting Halifax Local Meeting)

Originally presented at AFG’s Family Night.

To the people to whom this land belongs, who belong to this land  
Praise be, and deep apology.  
Praise be for the energy gathered here flowing in torrents, eddies, currents within and between and beyond us to the spirals of life. Only Connect. Praise be.  
Hello Mary in tartan I’m sorry that we’ve barely spoken yet.  
Jane, the same, although that’s part corrected since I started writing this.  
For ministries beat and thrum and music, ham on the bone, whole-grain muffins, coffee’s aroma and slightly strange black currantish berries  
that duped me cosied cuckoo-nested in a jar that read “roasted cashew” on its outdated label.  
For Bruce’s gluten-free pancakes that outlandishly sizzled in the grizzled morning with a smell redolent of homesteads, prairies, breakfast plenty, seasonal contingencies, hearth and stove  
Whatever gods we worship thank you for the now of Love’s common language, addresses, tastebuds  
Nathalie’s stewardship of food and need and being a whiz psychologist, sociologist, nutritionist with her citizen-science scholarship — wow! — let’s hear it for her synthesis of sympathies far out, and holy crap, you got all that?!!  
Praise be. Amen. For bread and poetry. Praise be.

For burrs on seats, a long lead microphone, for wobbly eyes and glues and palm-smooth stones,  
and oh! The appetite for acronyms, the ginger snaps, a fridge as big as a fisher’s hut, and home-made hats.  
For edgy haircuts, safety knives and slatted lines and baking sheets and the glorious relief of an empty washroom when you need a tinkle, wrinkles facing a head wind stood on the shingles.  
Shalom. Rave on. Praise be.

Great Spirit of grass blades, basketball, personnel committees, grace: Welcome and Praise be.  
Great Spirit of the collective silver sunset, the nugget shared ’bout kissing fishes,  
we offer our polished appreciation for driftwood and the fact that Jocelyne pointed out the beaver’s teethmarks newly to me, for the gift of caring, detail, conversation, Praise be  
to ocean’s foaming, sand angels, pebbles whittled through with whistle holes,  
a plenitude of heart-shaped stones, the things we scribble-scrabble on the iPhone,  
fat bladder rack and kelp and scalloped fronds of God-knows-what other seaweeds, also  
let us reflect on the men who got back intact because of brilliant fluorescent polystyrene,  
beacons and for what we navigate with grounding hugs as anchor when we feel washed up.

Amen to the children’s cursive missives beach-inked with sticks  
and blimey hallelujah for the thought behind the Cosmic Walk  
y’all Praise be, AFG, Praise be.

Great Spirit of waves ridden and made, of ripples and tears, brine and ginormous sticky-lidded pickle-jars from the kitchen,  
seeking different biceps,  
for calcium channels and the miracle of muscle,  
let’s hear it said for the action potential behind the yellow-handled pull-up wellies, jumping, salt air, instructional times and perimeters crossed in disobedient protest  
for Quakers muddling through to strategy, letters, by crafting timeless calendar boxes, for the picturesque ensemble of kettles and diverse kinds of tea, for the electrifying comforts,  
Praise Be, oh yes, Praise Be.

Also let’s keep faith with everyone who’s wearing red with Daphne, the annual statistician. And Eleanor, Joseph, Aia, Piper, Liv, Nadia, Tabiha, Kai, Julie, Ilya, Joanna, Ian, Bryn. [the kids!]

Daily programmes, potluck, words like hodgepodge and collage and sign-up rotas.  
For obstacles, separation, fusion, distance, centering, the Guide within.  
& the list, my Friends, the list, felt-tip pens as centerpieces, waiting, finding, minding, silence, epilogue and worship-sharing.  
The wisdom of the Bee Hunter and the Guatemalan rug maker, Helen’s panoramic hangings, three varieties of melons.  
You got it. Rave on. Praise be.

And then there’s Joel, who said *let’s improvise with poetry and the saxophone tonight how about we risk three minutes, see how it goes, all right?*  
Well Friends maybe you’ll weave the telling of this song spinning from his question, through your archived folklore and set some store by the parable of golden needles, edelweiss and haystacks, a mattering of stones, plucky notes, moreish cookies, stories spinning forth  
brought to you in shovelfuls of blessings via smatterings of motorhomes, an A-frame, tents  
and mosquito meshes on the air vents in the bedrooms  
also via the travel plans of Carol Bradley, thank you -  
and the fancy dance of some considerable logistics bringing in encircled kin from Vermont, Victoria and Maine  
also St. John and Montréal by train and not to mention  
via a tortured oxymoron  
yet again  
Church Stretton bordering Wales in Little England

Friends:  
we are called to breathe through our days expansively as peace.  
Shalom. Rave on. Praise be.  
AFG. Shalom. Rave on. 🌿🕊

(Photo: Bruce Dienes)



# An Overview of Canadian Yearly Meeting 2019

by Judith Brown, Tim Kitz, and Dawn Rolke

Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) met from August 3rd-10th on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Manitoba. We were grateful to the Mennonites for renting us their beautiful spiritual space, where we could meet comfortably, sleep in dorms or tents, and eat in a cafeteria or in an outdoor food co-op. A total of 125 attended, with an encouraging number of Young Adult Friends.

One of our pre-CYM retreats was led by the gentle and unhurried universalist Friend John Calder and the topic was our relationship with scripture. We returned to the teachings of Jesus and looked at the development of Christianity and different readings of the Bible over broad historical periods.

John positioned Friends as anabaptists, a people wishing to return to the origins of Christianity. John encouraged us to let the scriptures reach us and feed us. He helped us reclaim our relationship to scripture by facilitating deep sharing between participants.

A second pre-CYM retreat was a gathering of Young Friends and Young Adult Friends. There was plenty of time for fun, music, and games at this retreat, but also serious conversations about navigating the job market, coping with school pressures, Quakerism in the 21st century, LGBTQ2+ realities, healthy relationships and sexuality, and “the coming ecological apocalypse and how to dismantle capitalism,” as one popular discussion group topic put it.

When the CYM sessions opened, we acknowledged we were on Treaty 1 territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Dakota, and Métis nations – and then we were welcomed by Cree Elder Betty Ross. We also acknowledged the water from Treaty 3 territory and the electricity from Treaties 1, 3, and 5 territory.

CYM’s keynote Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture was given by Pastor Etienne Paul Mungombe of the evangelical Friends

Churches United in Quebec. It was called “African Refugee Journeys: Listen, Love, Learn, and Act.” In plain speech, Paul told of his journey as a refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is a story of hope in the face of near-unimaginable loss.

Paul spent a total of twelve years living in two refugee camps – one in Nyarugusu, Tanzania, and the other in Kakuma, Kenya – as a result of the First and Second Congo War. Paul gave some context on these wars, noting that while they have been neglected by Western media, the Second Congo War in particular occurred on the scale of a World War, involving nine

countries, twenty-five armed groups, five million casualties, and two million refugees. While Paul lost family members in the camps, he also married and began a family.

Sustained by a deep faith, Paul also developed a community-based organization for disabled refugees, began an Alternatives to Violence programme (AVP) called Healing

and Rebuilding our Communities, and started two Friends Churches. Paul described the profound challenges that refugees face during and after camp life. He spoke of their humanity, the trauma they experience, and the great need for support. He called on us to listen, to learn, to help, and to act.

The Quaker Study session was led by Steve Heinrichs, who is an activist and the director of Indigenous-Settler Relations for Mennonite Church Canada. His presentation was on “The Cost of Colonialism, the Joy of Jubilee: Re-Imagining Christian Identity and Practice in Canada.”

Steve began by reminding us of Quaker Benjamin Lay’s passion for justice and his love of the Bible. Steve detailed the connections between the Bible, settler-colonialism, and the oppression of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Steve proposed that we take the practice of Jubilee from Mosaic law (Leviticus 25:3-18) as a possible model for redistributing land wealth



Relaxing on the lawn at Canadian Yearly Meeting 2019. (Photo: Sheila Havard)

and resetting societal (especially settler-Indigenous) relations.

An evening session organized by LGBTQ2 Friends featured the ever-brilliant, funny, and tender Lara Rae. Lara’s topic was Gender Transition as a Spiritual Journey. Two other Friends performed as Drag Queens. It was an evening of celebration, joy, and awakening.

CYM business meeting were held every morning and ably clerked by Beverly Shepard. Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting (CYFYM) was held over the course of several evenings.

Both Yearly Meetings addressed the need for structural change and transformation within CYM as a result of reduced numbers and financial pressures. Young Friends said that they want to “change together.” General Secretary Cam Fraser noted that CYM was born out of the efforts of Young Friends and we have been challenged to make sweeping changes at various points in our life as a Society. YFs reminded us that change requires both “laying down and lifting up.” This “would be difficult, and at times even painful, but Spirit will strengthen us. They encouraged CYM and YFs to “be brave together.”

In line with these leadings, Business Meeting held three breakout sessions on financial sustainability, to develop a sense of potential avenues of change among Friends. These workshops will be duplicated in Monthly Meetings in the coming year. At our next gathering, again in Winnipeg, our theme will be ‘hope’ and we expect to set a new direction. This year God is challenging us to transform, simplify, and refocus our Society – and to do this in collaboration with Young Adult Friends and Young Friends.

We approved a minute re-asserting that the illegal Israeli settlements are a serious barrier to peace and that we have confirmed that neither CYM nor Canadian Friends Service Committee holds any investments in companies that profit from the occupation. We also agreed to ask the Canadian government to meet and exceed the commitments that were made on our behalf at the Paris Climate Accord and we expressed support for public, peaceful climate activism. 🌱

# Cree Elder Betty Ross’ Welcome

Reflection from Day 1, CYM 2019

by Caroline Balderston Parry  
Ottawa Monthly Meeting

Cree Elder Betty Ross graciously welcomed Canadian Yearly Meeting to Winnipeg at our first formal Meeting for Worship for Business early Monday morning.

Elaine Bishop of Winnipeg Monthly Meeting introduced this Elder as her friend and long-time co-worker through the Winnipeg Regional Health Centre, which they both have served. She presented Betty with the traditional offering of a gift of tobacco and Lilia Fick offered her a further present of tobacco.

Betty spoke in flowing Cree initially and as she drew to a close. This reminded me of the famous story of the Indigenous leader

who sensed “where the words came from,” even though he could not literally understand Quaker John Woolman (1720-1772). Betty’s Cree speech seemed to wash over us and I felt very grateful. Elaine recently alerted me to this important way for members of a non-dominant culture to bring their languages into our privileged awareness.

Betty went on to say her culture was torn from her when she was forced to attend a residential school at age five, then later flown in from Cross Lake to a residential high school here in Winnipeg.



Cree Elder Betty Ross, with Elaine Bishop. (Photo: Matt Legge)

She told us, “I didn’t learn anything but abuse in that system,” but that she gradually did a lot of healing and forgiving. She affirmed “each of us has gifts, but first you have to take care of yourselves,” and appealed to us, saying we need to work together, but “first you have to have that trust with the community members, be on their level.”

Betty also explained that the sacred tobacco comes from the east direction, where new beginnings happen, and we are born in the east, “the place of the white eagle and the origin of our seven teachings,” of which the most powerful teaching is Love.

Betty realized with the birth of her first grandson that she had to heal, take care of herself first, and use the sacred teachings and tobacco. She concluded, “It’s all about healing and the connection with the Creator... To have that good voice and stand strong, let’s work together, taking baby steps, each and every one of us.” 🌱

## Babies in Worship & the SPG Lecture

Reflection from Day 2, CYM 2019

by Sarah Owocki, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting

It is my first time attending Canadian Yearly Meeting and also my daughter's. She's eight months old and very excited to be here, not in the least since Pass the Baby is a favourite game among Friends. She is a sociable baby, and I know that part of her baby brain will be imprinted with these memories, which gives me joy.

For me, attending CYM as a new parent is an interesting experience. I am still practicing trusting others with my child – not just that she will be safe with them, but that she will be accepted and not an imposition. I am finding the balance between togetherness with my child and trusting her to the community here.

As an example, take babies in Meeting for Worship. Many of my non-Quaker friends and family assume that silence holds a rather exalted status for us. I have been asked if sneezing during Meeting for Worship is allowed! Of course, the thinking goes that children couldn't possibly be welcome in such a setting. They must go off somewhere else.

But for us as Quakers, silence isn't something to be protected or guarded.

It's a tool in the way we worship as a community.

So my baby was in Meeting for Worship this morning and it was wonderful. She made baby noises, which I later heard referred to by multiple Friends as baby testimony. Then she went on a walk with a caregiver – sometimes babies need to move – but was back and asleep on the caregiver's shoulder by the end of the hour. Later in the day, she snoozed on another Friend. I think she will find a few other human nap sites by the week's end.

While baby was snoozing in the afternoon, I went to Memorial Meeting for several Friends who died in the past year. I contributed vocal ministry regarding one Friend who was a long-time member of my Meeting (Yonge Street Monthly Meeting in Newmarket, Ontario).

There was a sense of losing a generation of elders at Memorial Meeting – and needing to mark what that means for the

community. Friends expressed hope and faith that those being remembered will be with us in the lengthy Meetings for Business we have scheduled for the coming days.

On a personal level, it was lovely to hear of so many Friends remembered who had lived long, rich lives. I reflected on losing my brother David to suicide in 2014, when he was just 25 years old, and how little I was able to cope with what my family was able to throw together for his memorial service in the days after. I hope to have my memorial in the manner of Friends when I die, and I want truth spoken there, tender truth of love as well as sorrow and even pain.

Finally, I attended the Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture by Etienne Paul Mungombe, which was called "African Refugee Journeys: Listen, Love, Learn, and Act." Etienne Paul travelled to Winnipeg from Montreal, where he is a Quaker pastor with the evangelical Montreal Friends Church, which he helped found with other African refugees.

Etienne Paul's lecture was grounded in history,

as well as his personal story as a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, living in two refugee camps in Kenya, and eventually coming to Canada. He noted that profound challenges faced by African refugees, but also but also described the amazing work he had done while living in a refugee camp. He started a Friends church, did trainings on alternatives to violence and healing from trauma, and started a community-based organization called Voice for Disabled People's Association to stand up for people with disabilities living in refugee camps. He ended with a clear charge calling for concrete action to help refugees, and calling us to remember that refugees are human and have triumphs and resilience.

After a brief closing period of worship, the event ended with the shaking of hands, in the manner of Friends, and everyone going downstairs to have cake (a more recent innovation). For me, it was time to leave and pick up my baby. ☁



Sarah's daughter on a human nap site (bottom right) while Friends (re)connect at the first group activity of Yearly Meeting. (Photo: Matt Legge)

## A "What-If-Minute" on Climate Urgency

Reflection from Day 3, CYM 2019

by Colin Stuart, Ottawa Monthly Meeting

The following is a WIM – a "What-If-Minute" – a Quaker whim, if you like, but not really whimsical at all. It is a piece written by one person, written as if it might be minute, but definitely not tempered or seasoned by the Quaker community as all minutes should be.

This particular WIM was written by a participant after, and as a consequence of, discussion in a Special Interest Group at CYM 2019 on ecological action and the climate crisis.

- The need for a global and peaceful response to the climate and biodiversity crisis is urgent: the scientific evidence is unequivocal about this. Indigenous Peoples and Elders on Turtle Island and around the world, today and for centuries, have told us that we are on a path which is destructive and impossible to sustain.
- For at least eighteen years, Friends in various minutes and testimonies have expressed, however insufficiently, their concerns about the crisis we face.
- The task now is to act firmly with discernment and faith.
- We need not fear being a witness to the truth of the crisis we face. In our witness of words and deeds, corporately and individually, we strive to be faithful to our calling of peace, recognizing that the climate and extinction crisis are inextricably bound to the evil and violence of weapons and war that require the extraction of fossil fuels and minerals from the earth for the idols of growth and profit for the few. Such is contemporary capitalism.
- Grief at what we have lost or destroyed of Mother Earth, which will not soon – if ever – be recovered, is a real, understandable, necessary response to the crisis.

- However, building the peaceable kingdom calls us to live past grief and work together with Indigenous Peoples and those most affected, in order to restore and protect the world and its diverse life, especially for our children and future generations.

- We recognize this will be a difficult task and we will suffer.

It will also be a joyful task because it will be the right task and one in which we can work as a community for the common good of all.

- As we resist the further extraction of fossil fuels and minerals from the earth, we can use all possible technical and material alternatives which reduce and eliminate the emission of greenhouse gasses. Reforestation and regenerative agriculture which extract carbon from the atmosphere and promote biodiversity and resilience are key, as are renewable, solar, wind and geothermal energy.

- As we resist the use and production of war and weapons, we are called to build diverse, self-reliant, and resilient communities which have cooperation, reconciliation, and compassion as their foundation. Many such communities, democratic in substance, already

exist and are built on the experience of those who have been most affected by the crisis. We can learn and become part of that experience and build a new history together: we think especially but not only of displaced, stateless, or property-less people.

- Spiritually, in all our diversity, we are called to reflect on our current dire situation and share with all our relations, the struggle and pain, the solidarity and joy, of building a new world from the old. ☁



Colin Stuart at the Hiroshima Day ceremony in Winnipeg. (Photo: Matt Legge)

## Hiroshima Day in Winnipeg

Reflection from Day 4, CYM 2019

by Caroline Balderston Parry  
Ottawa Monthly Meeting

While an LGBTQ+ social evening was being held on-site at Canadian Yearly Meeting, I was among several Friends who went to the Winnipeg Hiroshima Day celebrations in front of the Manitoba legislature. The August 6 evening events were organized by a very multicultural coalition of groups, of which Winnipeg Monthly Meeting is simply one of many co-sponsors – so that it struck me that there was a bigger pool of the public present to participate than in Ottawa, where I’ve attended Hiroshima Day ceremonies for years.

There were a good number of families with small children and I appreciated how the organizers had set up tables with all the craft materials needed, not only for making the lanterns but for folding paper cranes. The organizers had prepared standard-sized, heavy paper strips to be painted and then glued together to make the lantern shape on a square base, but the paper was too opaque for the lanterns to really glow from all sides. I was interested in the variety of images that people drew and the constant messages of world peace they wrote on the lantern papers.

The speeches and readings of the formal program were made by a large group, with a high proportion of literal descriptions of the bombing itself, but no real political commentary. Over the years of observing Hiroshima Day in Ottawa, we have always had group singing, or even a mini-concert, so I missed having any songs or music – until a single saxophonist played some haunting music while people set their lanterns afloat around the big fountain.

Hiroshima Day is a fascinating celebration to me because each year we are remembering and commemorating a huge, horrific tragedy with beautiful lights and creativity, and I found myself wondering what the young children there will understand about what we were doing. 🌸



Decorating lanterns at the Hiroshima Day ceremony.  
(Photo: Matt Legge)

## The Committee of Joy

Reflection from Day 5, CYM 2019

by Jeffrey Dudiak  
Edmonton Monthly Meeting

Editor’s Note: *Jeffrey Dudiak delivered these remarks to open the Evening with Continuing Meeting of Ministry & Council at Yearly Meeting.*

Last year at CYM, on an evening devoted to listening to our Young Friends, one of their number, (who will remain nameless, but whose initials are David Summerhays) suggested the convening of a Committee of Joy. This proposal was, of course, offered half tongue-in-cheek. But that doesn’t mean that it shouldn’t be taken entirely seriously. What were Young Friends telling us that we need to hear?

Young people these days, and our Young Friends along with them, find themselves crushed under the weight of a world gone wrong. In addition to ongoing wars and rumours of wars, in addition to an economy whose ‘success’ appears to

coincide with an ever-deepening income inequality (with all of its attendant perversions and poverties), in addition to stalled efforts to address sexism and racism – in addition to all of this, our young people are reminded daily that we face near-certain climate catastrophe. That is, of course, unless certain extreme actions are taken almost immediately.

But there is next to no reasonable prospect that any of them will be taken soon enough to avoid the frighteningly imminent tipping points from which return will be impossible.

As the power brokers on both sides of the political polarity bounce rule and privilege back and forth in a self-reinforcing system that pits people against one another rather than encouraging true community – and as the “powers and principalities” of trans-national capital run their course beyond the control of anyone at all – there seems little, if anything, that we can effectively do that would actually make a difference.

We try to stay hopeful, but we all feel it. We are all of us exhausted by an ever-increasing number of exigent calls to which we have no real, or at least realistic, answers. We feel it on a global scale, and we feel it in our Meetings.

This is the world that our young people are inheriting from us and in which they will have to live – whatever bleak prospects for life remain. There seems little cause for joy.

And, indeed, in the face of our current situation, perhaps joy is inappropriate. The German social critic Theodore Adorno once commented that writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.

Perhaps feeling joy in the face of impending climate disaster is obscene – a cheap pair of rose-coloured glasses, a distraction from the impossibly difficult task at hand, a task that demands a persistence that can only be born of panic. Perhaps joy is for some distant tomorrow; for now, we need grief, and – as motivation for the requisite iron resolve – maybe even a healthy dose of collective hyperventilation.

No one who takes up such a stance should be criticized. Our issues are serious to the point of death – we face the potential end of life on our planet, and our approach to such issues must be deadly serious too.

But perhaps Adorno was wrong. Perhaps writing poetry after Auschwitz is not barbaric, but – as the effort to reconstitute the lineaments of language and meaning itself – the only appropriate, the only holy response to the barbarism that was Auschwitz. And perhaps joy in our time is not obscene, but precisely the energizing force we need to sustain us in the face of our overwhelming challenges.

Addressing the distress felt at a disintegrating Jerusalem, the administrator Nehemiah, charged with the daunting task of the rebuild, instructed the people as follows:

“Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is our strength” (Nehemiah 8:10).

Indeed, the Hebrew word for strength here implies safety, protection, a stronghold. Perhaps joy is precisely the strength we need today, in our day that too is holy to the Lord.

And that is why the Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Council decided, at this Yearly Meeting, to use our evening with CMM&C to convene the first meeting of the Committee of Joy. In response to our Young Friends, yes, but also for the love of us all. We are so pleased you have chosen to join the committee. 🌸



(Photo: Matt Legge)

## A Journal of Business Meeting

Reflection from Day 6, CYM 2019

by Caroline Balderston Parry  
Ottawa Monthly Meeting

*After trying to get my journal writing time in each morning this week, I finally just brought my tablet into the morning Meeting for Worship for Business today. I typed notes (somewhat sequentially, but also a bit at random) as the morning unfolded.*

I am feeling the depth of worship and the sense of the meeting very strongly today. We *are* such wonderful – yet imperfect – human beings, aren’t we, dear Spirit?

Sometimes Spirit surges through us all and many feel it; sometimes it is very hard to discern ‘that of God’ speaking through one of us. Always we have the option to choose joy in creation, in our diversity, in our hearts’ ability to grow in love over so many years and generations.

At the same time, I am mindful that early this week a Friend cautioned us to check whether, when we feel led to stand and speak on the floor of these sessions, the leading is truly of the Spirit or ‘of coffee.’

There are so many wide-ranging gifts this body of people carry, and I love how often one f/Friend will see or hear of feel some piece of the whole that others have missed. This makes our corporate work rich and full – and also humbling, because on occasion we make mistakes, are angry or hurt, or are diverted from truly listening for guidance.

It *is* hard to step back at times, or step up (especially if one is introverted or reluctant for other, likely complex, reasons).

Cameron Fraser gave his [Secretary’s Report](#) and framed it with ministry calling on us to: allow space to lay things down... take risks, commit to change, embrace our mistakes, that’s how we are gonna grow... all to the glory of god. 🌸



Etienne Paul Mungombe delivering the Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture by , "African Refugee Journeys: Listen. Love. Learn. and Act." (above), while Friends listen and look on (below). Photos by Matt Legge



## How a Senior Introvert Survived CYM 2019

by Anne Trudell, Peterborough Monthly Meeting

"Hello, my name is Anne Trudell from Peterborough Monthly Meeting." I introduced myself like so to the person scurrying to the registration table in the Administration building of Canadian Mennonite University, site of 2019's Yearly Meeting. I had arrived at 11:30 AM

Central time on Sunday, having been in travel mode from 5 AM Eastern time by car, plane, and bus. My name tag was found, and I was assured my key was awaiting me on the desk in my dorm room.

It had been five years since my first CYM in Winnipeg and this 71-year-old memory bank couldn't summon up a coherent map of the campus, so a Young Friend volunteered to show me the way – through the heat wave Winnipeg was experiencing, to the dorm that also housed the cafeteria. The lounges and cafeteria were air-conditioned, but the dorm sections were not. I was glad I had packed light as I huffed up the stairs to my second-floor room. The door was locked.

I left my bags outside the door and went back to registration. With apologies the registrar called guest services for a person with a master key. I went back to my bags and within five minutes a staff member with a key and another apology showed up.

Into my room I went with its bunk bed (lower bed made up), wide window with open curtains, key and sundries on the desk – and heat. I stared up at middle upper pane that could be opened by either a tall person or a short me standing on a sturdy desk chair, which I resolved to do that evening. I closed the curtains, which only made a psychological difference. Once the window was opened, I never closed it.

In the interest of frugality, I had opted for a non-A/C room; in the interest of my introvert psyche, I had opted for a single room. I snore and am sometimes up in the night for an hour or more, so I didn't want to bother a roommate. And having a roommate means scarce respite from communal meals, communal meetings, communal activities – all of which I enjoy, but only if I can bathe myself in a couple of hours of wakeful, aware, solitary quiet time every day. I opted out of breakfast for



Members of Publications & Communications Committee meeting over lunch: Maggie Knight, Catherine Novak, Anne Trudell, Tim Kitz.

one of those hours, and later out of bible study for another.

There were no hangers in the closet and I had not packed any, but there was plenty of shelf space for my rolled clothes and personal items. There was only the big overhead light, so I was glad I had packed my fold-up LED lamp. Set up on the shelf at the

head of my bed, it gave enough light for reading in the middle of the night or a foray to the hallway to the communal washroom.

When I wedged the wastebasket in the doorway so the door wouldn't slam as I exited, I found the room a few degrees cooler and the air fresher on my return. The door gap allowed the night air to move through the room – ventilation! And a room temperature I could sleep in. The wastebasket lived in the doorway most of the week.

Unpacked, with the room key joining the name tag around my neck, I went to my first lunch and my first reunions with Friends from past gatherings. Later I opted for the intergenerational singing in the chapel (A/C! singing! a string band with drum box! Friends!). Then the midday slump hit, and a nap seemed appealing. But Alice Preston and babies and their moms were in the first-floor lounge. I wanted to reconnect with Alice, as we had enjoyed each other's company at Carry On Discovery camp at Neekaunis. It was a joy to hang out with the two young families as well, in our own little Celebration of Life.

In further celebration over the week, I attended six business sessions, two Meetings for Healing, four chanting worship sessions, three Special Interest Groups, the first Bible Study session, the SPG lecture, the Delegates Meeting, the Yearly Meeting of Ministry and Counsel session, Family Night (where I read an original poem), the LGBTQ2 social, the Experience of Spirit in Our Lives, three evening singalongs, my last Publications and Communications committee meeting, and the Committee of Joy session.

I sang more that week than I had all year. I got my needed daily respites. Sometimes I was tired, but I was never exhausted. I went home happy. I think I'll be back next year. 🌿

# The Cost of Colonialism, the Joy of Jubilee

The CYM 2019 Bible Study  
by Sheila Havard, Coldstream Monthly Meeting

Our Bible Study lecturer was Steve Heinrichs, a settler, a Mennonite, and Director of Indigenous-Settler Relations at Mennonite Church Canada. Steve presented a five-part series on “The Cost of Colonialism, the Joy of Jubilee: Re-Imagining Christian Identity and Practice in Canada.” Steve’s Bible Studies will be on quaker.ca.<sup>1</sup>

Steve’s work has a personal aspect: he has had to contend with what it means to be a settler – who has benefited from stolen land – with an Indigenous daughter. On the first day of his Bible Study, Steve and his daughter Abby reflected on this in powerful and sometimes-hilarious ways.

Steve opened by inviting us to consider the “idol of settler colonialism” and asking us to wrestle with the following questions:

- “Can the Bible become a tool of liberation in the cause of the oppressed?”
- “Can we transform this old word to a living word to address the suffering of this world and dismantle the idols of our day?”

As the week continued, Steve explored Canadians’ erroneous tendency to discuss colonialism as a problem of the past. It is still ongoing in many forms. Most fundamentally, Indigenous land is still in colonial hands; the total land base of the 2,267 First Nations reserves comprises just 0.2% of

Canada’s territory. Also, these colonial effects are well-known to those who open their eyes to them:

- 40% of children in care are Indigenous.
- First Nations children on reserve receive less funding than those off reserve.
- One out of four prison inmates is Indigenous.

As of January 2018, there were 91 long-term water advisories on public systems supported by Indigenous Services Canada.

According to Art Manuel, settler colonialism is the root of First Nations impoverishment.<sup>2</sup> Settler colonialism is not colonialism in the traditional sense of controlling land and exploiting resources, while ruling over Indigenous peoples.<sup>3</sup> Settler colonialism displaces and eradicates

the original peoples of the land occupied. This reality is what we must come to terms with. As settler Canadians, we benefit from and are complicit in settler colonialism and therefore are responsible for its continued functioning.

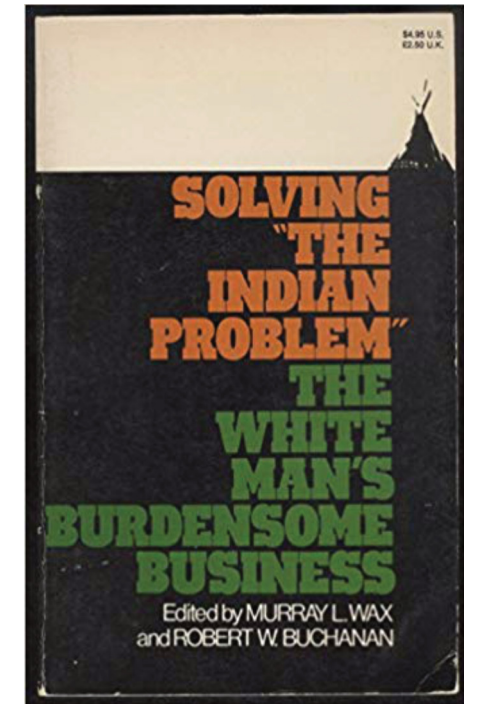
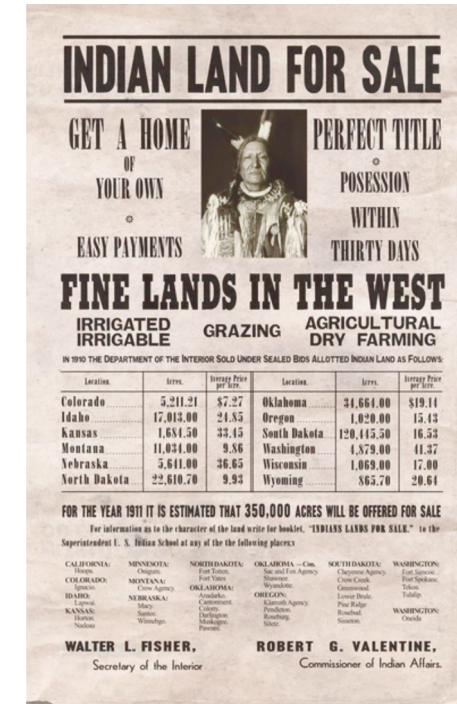
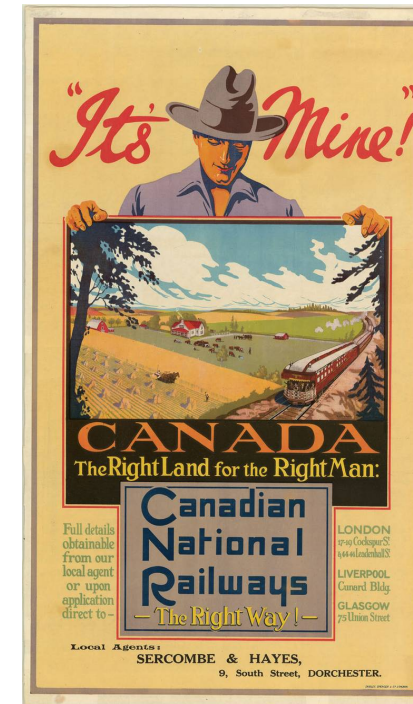
Steve challenged us to grapple with the ways settler colonialism is rooted in the biblical and Christian tradition. He said,

We can trace [the Doctrine of Discovery and] the history of these supremacist logics back to the Crusades of the Middle Ages, but they also go right back to the Bible.



Steve Heinrichs, presenting one of the Bible Study sessions at CYM 2019. (Photo: Matt Legge)

1. **Editor’s Note:** Posting Steve’s study is still in process, as there are copyright issues with some of the pictures and media that formed a part of his multi-faceted presentation.
2. See Art Manuel’s excellent books *Unsettling Canada* and *The Reconciliation Manifesto*.
3. **Editor’s Note:** This is the sort of colonialism generally practiced by the European powers in Africa and the Middle East, for example. Note that in contrast it is settler colonial states – South Africa, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Israel/Palestine – that tend to have the deepest and longest-lasting problems.



Some eye-popping images Steve Heinrichs showed during the CYM 2019 Bible Study.

For those of us who care deeply about reconciliation and those of us who care about the biblical tradition, this is something we need to grapple with. We need to bring the colonial teachings of the Bible out of the darkness and into the light. We need to face this head-on and publicly denounce those harmful biblical traditions.

Steve moved on to outline two visions for dealing with the injustices of colonialism. The reformist vision of an inclusive, equal-opportunity Canada entails including Indigenous people in mainstream society, with greater equality and respect for Indigenous histories and cultures. This is fine, Steve argued, but not enough. We must embrace a radical vision, returning enough land and power for Indigenous nations to be self-sufficient, changing our government and economic structure to create a more just country.

The biblical basis for the return of land is the ancient Hebrew vision of land return of Jubilee, Steve explained.

“And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your [ancestral] property and every one of you to your family.” (Leviticus 25:10)

“Friends, we have subversive resources within our tradition that can help us live radical reconciliation as settlers,” Steve concluded. 🌱🗨️

## GLEANINGS & QUOTATIONS

“Providence has been pleased to provide us with one nation, unbroken from sea-to-sea, to be peopled by one people, with one common heritage, and a common religion.”

— John A. Macdonald

“Can things go well in a land where freedom of worship is a lie, a hollow boast? To each nation is given the light by which it knows God. . . . Why has the white man no respect for the religion that was given to us, when we respect the faith of other nations?”

— Peyasiw-awasis, a Plains Cree chief, speaking in 1897, after being imprisoned for participating in a traditional Give-Away Dance, under a law introduced by Macdonald, who called Indigenous ceremonies “debauchery of the worst kind”

“We are convinced by our study, and especially by our Kenora visit, that the longstanding grievances and sufferings of the native people amounting in effect to genocide, must be recognized and responded to now at last, with speedy positive action and not with attempted containment by force. . . . We believe that protests against arms-bearing and threat of violence are hypocritical in the white society.”

— Bert and Irmgard King (Toronto Monthly Meeting) in “An Open Letter About Kenora, Ontario” on p.11 of *The Canadian Friend*, October-November 1974.

## Themes & Concerns at CYM 2019 from Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

by Sheila Havard, Coldstream Monthly Meeting

*“The purposes of [Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business] is to build community.”*

— Deborah Fisch, then of Friends General Conference

*“Cheshire Puss”, said Alice, “Would you tell me which way to go from here?”*

— Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland (1865)

Yo-yo-like, one theme constantly recurs at CYM: we try to do too much with our limited financial and human resources. We receive a large donation: we expand. Things get tight: we shrink. Obviously major structural change is required.

This August at Yearly Meeting, we heard from Friends General Conference’s Barry Crossno about that body’s successful restructuring. Despite the pain and the lay-offs, he counselled us to follow the same path. The CYM Secretary once again urged us to listen to our hearts and joyfully lay down activities not spirit-led. He stressed we could not continue to bear the cost of a secretary position. Our response to these warnings was the breakout sessions on financial sustainability.

In small worship sharing groups, we attempted to discern the Spirit’s leading for the way forward. Overall there was agreement we tried to do too much and that committee positions are vacant for lack of Friends willing to fill them, but there was no clear indication of how we can remedy the situation and consolidate our activities to bring them into line with our income or how we can re-energize Friends to serve the Yearly Meeting.

The importance of communications was stressed. It has been repeatedly pointed out that only a minority of Quakers donate to CYM because of widespread ignorance of what it has to offer.

What does CYM do for us? It provides:

- the annual gathering
- online courses
- visitations by Friends knowledgeable in certain areas
- *The Canadian Friend*, three times a year
- the Quaker pamphlet series
- the website
- the directory of Friends

In one of the groups I attended, we shared what we thought were the vital functions of CYM. These included communications and bearing witness to what others are doing across Canada. Despite our carbon footprint, it was thought



Listening during Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. (Photo: Matt Legge)

there was great value in coming together for the yearly gathering.

A weakness is that we have hang-ups about money and apologize for asking for money instead of offering donations as a joyous opportunity to give to our community. There was a sense that we need clearer information about the annual gathering and that some in a better financial position might contribute more if the shortfall were common knowledge.

Why attend Yearly Meeting? You can:

- affirm your faith by mixing and worshipping with Friends nationwide
- be inspired by the social activism of individuals and Meetings
- laugh, rejoice, and cry together
- make F/friends
- reunite with F/friends
- learn about our faith and social justice issues
- advance the business of the Society
- work to ensure the voice of Canadian Quakers is heard at the national level
- study clerking at its best and how to make business meetings truly worshipful

*An earlier version of this article and the previous one appeared in The Coldstream Friend (September 2019). Anyone interested in being on the newsletter’s mailing list can contact Sheila Havard at [havard\\_translations@hotmail.com](mailto:havard_translations@hotmail.com).* 🐼

## Creating an Abundant, Sustainable Canadian Yearly Meeting

by Penni Burrell, Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting, Contributions Committee Clerk

*“If Friends avoid engaging with values around money, spending, and investing, we lose an important opportunity for witness in the world... Quaker values can be perfectly consistent with long-term business success.”*

— Jeffrey W. Perkins, Executive Director of Friends Fiduciary Corporation, in the October 2018 issue of Friends Journal ([www.friendsjournal.org/quaker-values-money](http://www.friendsjournal.org/quaker-values-money))

Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) and its various elements are often referred to as “our beloved community.” Through participation in our broader Canadian Quaker community, we can meet parts of our essential selves in ways that we experience nowhere else.

As well as being a beloved community, Canadian Yearly Meeting also has financial responsibilities. As the quote above indicates, we can make our Quaker business a long-term success using our Quaker values.

Contributions Committee invited Harold Penner of Abundance Canada to speak at a Special Interest Group session at Yearly Meeting in August, on the topic of “Creating an Abundant CYM.” Abundance Canada is a faith-based public foundation that helps Canadians to connect their resources and values with their philanthropic goals, and is located in Winnipeg, where the session was held.

Abundance Canada’s approach to establishing the connection between our values as a faith-based organization calls on us to live our faith consistently in all aspects of our lives, by living generously. Harold Penner invited us to recognize that living generously is not just about sharing whatever financial resources we have. It is about sharing all the gifts we have with those who would benefit from those gifts. He showed pictures of people in awful circumstances, then receiving generous support, and how this prompted a profound change to their circumstances. This approach resonated with me – it reflects the Quaker desire to ‘walk the talk’ and live our lives based on our values.

For many of us, aligning our Quaker values and finances for both ourselves and our Quaker organizations is not easy to talk about. Harold shared a variety of tools they have developed to enable us to discern how to live generously, including booklets for our Committee. These use an approach based on queries and questions for discussion, rather than instructions – the Quaker way!

For example, one of the booklets is titled *Managing in our Culture*. Topics in that section are titled “Thinking Counter-Culturally,” and “Countering Consumerism,” and feature questions such as:

- “How do you decide what you need?”
- “How do you decide what you can do without? The motivation for living a simpler life is further fueled by a concern for the needy and the dwindling non-renewable resources of this planet.”

Harold answered many specific questions from the participants about how to make decisions about their individual finances with a view to giving to CYM and other charities. Using a trusted financial planner is one option; one member who attended the workshop has since decided to use Abundance Canada in his decision-making process. Their services can be found at [abundance.ca](http://abundance.ca). They charge a small fee to administer your wishes. Harold made his presentation free of charge and gave us many resources to use for CYM, consistent with their vision of living generously.

As our previously quoted Friend Jeffrey Perkins put it,

*“Friends are called to seek right action regarding our use and stewardship of all our resources, including money. Given our rich history, our practice of seeking God’s will for our lives and communities, and our desire to live lives of integrity, Quakers are uniquely positioned to do this. Only by doing so can we hope to achieve the peaceable world envisioned by early Friends and desired by Friends today.”*

Contributions Committee is developing a plan to connect with members to share the tools we received at this workshop and other resources, to follow that call to find ways to help ourselves and CYM to achieve the peaceable world. This workshop was one concrete step our Committee and other members took to plan responsibly and in right ordering with our leadings.

As Maggie Knight stated at the end of CYM: “Think of how much you’ve benefitted from your experience here and through other Yearly Meeting activities. Think of what is needed to give this opportunity to the next generation. Please consider digging a little deeper into your pocket to help this happen.” 🐼

## Excerpts from the 2019 Report of Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting



Young Friends presenting their report to Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. (Photo: Rose Marie Cipryk)

We, as Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (CYFYM), continue to find joy, hope, and community in the new life of our Yearly Meeting. Our new structure [which is streamlined and involves CYFYM Representatives rather than Clerks] continues to serve our community well. Thank you for your support in this journey. ...

Cameron Fraser, in his role as CYM Secretary, has been invaluable in supporting the CYFYM Representatives and the Gathering Committee. Many Friends expressed thanks for his mentorship and advocacy on behalf of Young Friends and Young Adult Friends. We feel that the support of a staff person such as the CYM Secretary is crucial to CYFYM being able to hold retreats and to function in general.

CYFYM acknowledges CYM is undergoing a process of transition. Change is hard, but there is joy in transformation and in resurrection. As Young Friends we want and need

CYM to be here, because we need it to survive out there. We recognize and deeply appreciate that CYM does its best to meet our needs as we bring them forward. How do we meet the needs of CYM in its process of transformation? Changing is hard. We need to be brave. We need to be brave together.

A call to Monthly Meetings: we want to be at home in you. Education and mentorship should start in Monthly Meetings. If we want to uphold everyone and lift up spiritual and non-spiritual gifts, Friends need training. There is much intergenerational learning to be had. ...

The kind of change Canadian Yearly Meeting requires both laying down and lifting up. This will be difficult and at times even painful, but we believe the Spirit will strengthen us. We believe we can be brave together.

Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting names you to the Committee of Hope. We don't feel like we're dying out. Be brave with us. 🙌

The full report is available from the Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting page ([yf.quaker.ca](http://yf.quaker.ca)).



"First-time attendee Cali," who was made by the teens using only tape

Young Adult Friends at play

Doing dishes at food co-op



## Gleanings from Canadian Yearly Meeting 2019



Playtime begins – the end of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. (Photo: Matt Legge)

It's a long-standing tradition at Yearly Meeting for Friends to collect gleanings – snatches of dialogue that are particularly funny, poignant, or insightful. These gleanings are then presented at Family Night, an open-mic-style event on the last night of Yearly Meeting.

Below are a selection of these gleanings – the gleanings winnowed, if you will.

“CYM: where this imperfect person meets with other imperfect people whose company I can enjoy.”

“Most of us Friends here are settlers: called to seek truth and live into reconciliation.”

“Guilt should work in every religion, right?”

“I'm not a Quaker, but I am Quaker-adjacent.”

Quaker photographer to group: “Don't stand in the light.”

“After three years of attending CYM, you take the acronym quiz, then you can apply to get your Quaker citizenship.”

“Quakers: not just for breakfast”

“Before speaking ask yourself, ‘Is it the light speaking or the coffee?’”

“Let us trust in the work we do as collectives, that a word here and there will not impact our ability to go forth and live spirit-filled lives.”

“If Friends will wait for the microphone, then everyone will be able to hear the first time, which will be delightful for all of us.”

“Your house is burning down and you're arguing about particular words?”

During Minute Review Committee: “My attention span is shorter than this sentence.”

“Sometimes we think we are the kind of good people who would do this kind of thing – but there is no upswelling of energy to do the work.”

“I want to be brief – and I find that really difficult.”

“We spend a huge amount of time and resources administering ourselves and reporting to ourselves.”

“Supporting our faith community is a great way to spend our money.”

“The kind of change required for CYM involves both laying down and lifting up – but we believe the Spirit will strengthen us.”

“My resurrection faith teaches me not to fear death but to trust the promise. What I hear is an invitation to embrace death to receive new life.”

“If you see a job someone needs to do, that someone might be you.”

“If you want to say something critical, you're automatically on the committee.”

While circling up to eat at food co-op, Day 2: “the circle is too small, and too hungry!”

While circling up to eat in food co-op, Day 5: “There's a food coop meeting tonight... is that why nobody's here?”

Mary Oliver: “The only ship there is, is the ship we are on, burning the world as we go.”

The most popular suggestions for discussion at the Young Friends Gathering:

- “dismantling capitalism”
- “healthy relationships and sexuality”
- “the coming apocalypse”

“We cannot know everything before we do anything.”

“In a healthy relationship, when you fight, you're really fighting to get back to each other.”

“If reconciliation requires anything, it requires courage.”

“What can we do to bring joy into the lives of the next generations? Give them the space to find their own way.”

Defining ‘pacifist-aggressive’: “I'm a pacifist, so if we're fighting you started it!”

“Being on Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Council is a service that rewards as much as it requires.”

“Young Friends don't say ‘no’ to things because they're lazy or don't care. They say no because they want to be here and don't want to get burnt out.”

“I have a talent for singing along enthusiastically with songs I don't know.”

“That's why people should not learn by osmosis; often osmosis is nasty rumours.”

One Friend to group: “Friends, what do you think about CYM getting a patreon account?”

Another Friend trying to join the conversation: “What? What do you think it will take to stop the patriarchy?”

(Laughter)

“No, Friend, we're thinking of giving Jordan Peterson a run for his money on patreon... but maybe the two are related?! That was quite an inspired mishearing.”

“Yes, I must have had the Spirit blocking my ears.”

“The only place to get a job in Ontario is in Alberta.”



“We put the fist in pacifist!”

“There is no downside to justice.”

“Are we willing to listen? We are – it's what we do!”

“Nothing should be done about us or for us without us.”

“We are living epistles. Our lives are sacred text.”

“We are not called to be safe, we are called to be faithful.”

## Look Upon Our Treasures

### Quakers, Equality, and Capitalism (Part II)

by John Samson Fellows, *Winnipeg Monthly Meeting*

Part 1 of “Look Upon Our Treasures: Quakers, Equality, and Capitalism” presented an abbreviated Quaker economic history, using the three-period schema from Steven Davison’s book *Quakers and Capitalism*.<sup>1</sup>

First, as the Quaker movement was birthed during the era of the Lamb’s War (1650s to 1695), Friends understood themselves as engaged in a disruptive and sometimes theatrical opposition to established order and authority, having revived ‘primitive Christianity’ during the end times – or at least revolutionary times. With the restoration of the monarchy, Quakers faced persecution and exclusion. In order to survive, Friends turned inwards, organizing the society for collective discipline and pivoting towards private trade rather than public confrontation.

This led directly to the quietism of Davison’s second period, the Double Culture period (1695 to 1895). Friends withdrew from virtually all spheres of mainstream social and political engagement, expressing their piety in sober living and hard work – and pioneering many aspects of industrial capitalism. As time passed, specific Friends like John Bellers began to criticize the exploitation of capitalist production, while Quakers generally started to abandon more insular practices like disownment. They seemed ready to engage with the world on the basis of the testimonies they had developed, leading to the third and final period...

#### The Second Transition (1895-1920)

Concerns about business practices were always present in the Double Culture period, especially when Quakers turned against the practice of slavery and had to contend with the blinkered and evil economic arguments that were used to prop it up.

John Woolman, starting in the 1750s, spent thirty years travelling to American Meeting Houses to convince Quakers to reject slavery, and saw these business falsehoods with unusual clarity. Friends eventually followed his lead by refusing to buy goods made with slave labour, taking a materialist approach to activism long before boycotts became the standard and occasionally successful activist tactic we know today.

But real structural Quaker analysis of the economic world didn’t come until 1901, near the start of what Steven Davison calls the Second Transition, with the publication of *Poverty: A Study of Town Life*, by the industrialist Quaker Seebohm Rowntree.

Rowntree was a remarkable figure in a remarkable position. As a member of the Quaker Rowntree family, who helped develop a chocolate industry to aid the temperance movement and encourage sobriety – and also grow enormously rich – Seebohm had a unique insider perspective on capitalism.

Using the town of York, where much of the population was employed by the Rowntrees, Seebohm set out to discover why poverty exists and what we might do to eliminate it. In the process he helped popularize the term ‘poverty line,’ and lobbied the British government to enact what was to become the modern welfare state. But the most important and fundamental and revolutionary thing he did was to clearly and scientifically prove that poverty is not the fault of the poor – and present it in an accessible way. Davison states:

“Rowntree concluded that poverty resulted, not from bad character... but from low wages. The traditional Quaker virtues that had helped make Quakers so successful, like prudence and thrift, simplicity and moderation, and Puritan abandonment of the world’s pleasures, would help these people hardly at all. And philanthropy could hardly touch their condition, let alone change it. Poverty and its ills were inherent in the character of capitalism itself, not in the character of its workers. The poor were victims, not causes, of their suffering. And paternalistic attempts to solve the problem by morally elevating the poor were ill conceived and failed to address the causes of the problem.”

So fifty years after Marx turned the economic world upside down, aided in some small way by a Quaker (John Bellers) from fifty years before that, Friends began to tip it over, too. It represented a massive change in thinking for both Quakers and the wider society, and it also ended the Quaker understanding that religion could be a private affair.

Then the First World War definitively closed all hope for a quietist Quaker religion forever. The long agreement Quakers had with the state that it would respect our objection to military service was abruptly broken with the introduction of conscription in 1916, where men between the ages of 18 and 40 were liable to be called up for military service.

1. This book is available for free at his website, *Through the Flaming Sword*: [throughtheflamingsword.wordpress.com](http://throughtheflamingsword.wordpress.com)

While there was a clause for conscientious objection to service which allowed potential draftees to plead their case before a tribunal, the tribunal did not always believe or respect objectors, and tried to press many into service. Conscientious objectors were often required to serve, even if they wouldn’t technically use violence, in positions that assisted the war effort. Some found this intolerable and were jailed, often in solitary confinement, for the duration of the war. Others were sent to the front where they received ‘field punishments’ and were sentenced to death for refusing to obey orders. These sentences were commuted to hard labour, and they were imprisoned in camps until 1919.

The terrible betrayal of the British government in trying to force service in a senseless war that decimated an entire generation of Europe, and led to the catastrophes that followed, shook Friends in a way that still reverberates.

In the midst of this dispiriting period, Quakers were seeking a way to reorient our society towards economic justice and peace. British Quakers, over three years of meetings, developed a remarkable document, approved by London Yearly Meeting in 1918, called “Foundations of a True Social Order.” As the *British Quaker Faith & Practice* says, “they were not intended as rules of life but as an attempt to set forth ideals that are aspects of eternal Truth and the direct outcome of our testimony to the individual worth of the human soul.”

The language of it is gendered in an antiquated way, but the revolutionary potential of its content still sounds radical today. I’m going to quote all eight points:

1. The Fatherhood of God, as revealed by Jesus Christ, should lead us toward a brotherhood which knows no restriction of race, sex or social class.
2. This brotherhood should express itself in a social order which is directed, beyond all material ends, to the growth of personality truly related to God and man.



Seebohm Rowntree

3. The opportunity of full development, physical, moral and spiritual, should be assured to every member of the community, man, woman and child. The development of man’s full personality should not be hampered by unjust conditions nor crushed by economic pressure.
4. We should seek for a way of living that will free us from the bondage of material things and mere conventions, that will raise no barrier between man and man, and will put no excessive burden of labour upon any by reason of our superfluous demands.

5. The spiritual force of righteousness, loving-kindness and trust is mighty because of the appeal it makes to the best in every man, and when applied to industrial relations achieves great things.

6. Our rejection of the methods of outward domination, and of the appeal to force, applies not only to international affairs, but to the whole problem of industrial control. Not through antagonism but through co-operation and goodwill can the best be obtained for each and all.

7. Mutual service should be the principle upon which life is organized. Service, not private gain, should be the motive of all work.

8. The ownership of material things, such as land and capital, should be so regulated as best to minister to the need and development of man.

While some Friends argued this was not a document endorsing socialism and revolution, I think it is. While couched in Quakerly language, much of it mirrors the best revolutionary anarchist, socialist, Marxist, and progressive theories of the day. For the rest of the 20th century, and into our present one, the work for this true social order flickered on through the rapid and drastic changes in our own society and the wider one. ➡➡➡

### Comrade Friends

For the most part, Quakers haven't embraced explicitly revolutionary leftist movements, despite sharing many understandings with them. Our concern about tactical violence is often cited, as many revolutionary groups advocate or condone its use.

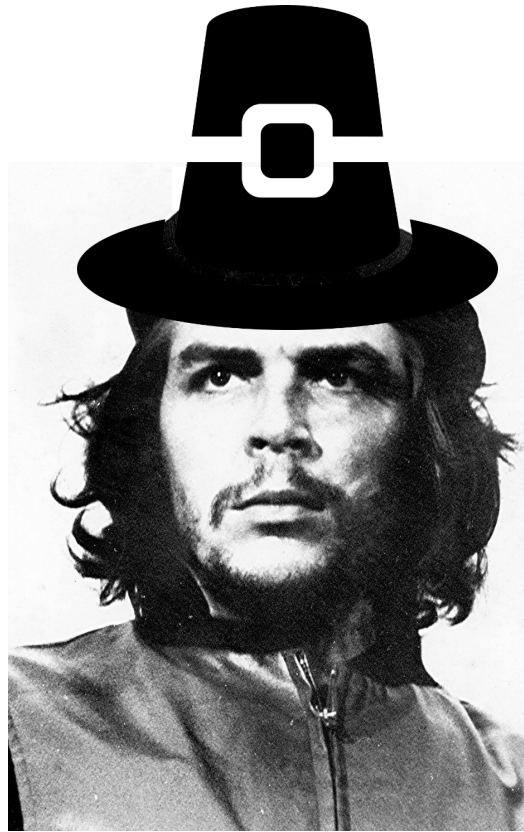
This is certainly an important issue, but it should be tempered with the fact that our implicit support of capitalism is an act of violence, too. If we don't shun working for progress within existing capitalist structures, then we shouldn't shun working within revolutionary ones. On the contrary, our presence could offer valuable insights drawn from our history and spiritual practice. It could also allow new perspectives into our Society, show us fresh ways to see ourselves and our wider purpose as Friends, and welcome real-life practical challenges to our sometimes too-theoretical beliefs.

I believe two other big reasons for the divide is the organized left's perceived disdain for religion – though I think that is a bit of a cliché – and religious people's fear of a society that might not require organized religion. I think this is an irrelevant concern, especially when it comes to Quaker Christianity.

Marx's most famous comment on religion comes from his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*:

“Religious suffering is at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness.”

“The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people” is exactly the kind of Christianity early Quakers promoted, though with a different vernacular. Quakers of the Lamb's War were all for the abolition of the kind of religion which comforts the comfortable and maintains the status quo.



(Original Photo: Alberto Korda's *Guerrillero Heroico*  
Messing with an icon: Tim Kitz, with a hat from 'bthurnher')  
land and water.

Quakers might have proposed that the solution is a direct relationship with God in a gathered community, and Marx would probably say the solution is a direct relationship with the means of production in a community of solidarity. Both perceive the same injustice, and both want to tell the same kind of truth about it.

Remember that the apocalyptic vision of early Quakers was exactly that: the word 'apocalypse' is from Greek, and translates literally as 'an uncovering,' the first goals of both Quakerism and socialism.

### Discerning Next Steps

To situate this within the unique context of Canada, we ought to be alert to the distinct kind of capitalism we live under here, which is built upon the historical and contemporary oppression of Indigenous people, and the theft of

Winnipeg writer Owen Toews usefully points out that,

“Canadian capitalism *is* settler-colonial capitalism, and settler-colonial capitalism *is* racial capitalism. To be clear, this is not to say that capitalism is the sole cause of racism or colonialism, only to say that capitalism can't do without them.”

So any serious attempts to decolonize our settler lives in Canada will also ultimately be anti-capitalist. Otherwise, while we may ameliorate problems and make ourselves feel a bit better, we will always be maintaining a system that requires the very evils we are trying to abolish.

So testing if an action benefits capitalism or not should be part of the criteria we use to judge if it is truly Spirit-led. If an action aids capitalism – whether by encouraging competition, reinforcing colonialism, increasing the possibility of war, or denying our radical sense of equality – maybe we should set it aside.

How to consciously make direct, positive Quaker action towards the elimination of capitalism is more difficult to see. It is always easier to say what we should not do. But here are some glimpses I have and I would love to hear your own.



(Photo: Bob Simpson)

- Our path forward will be signalled by our testimony to equality. Not in the contemporary capitalist senses of the word, where it is too often either used to envision an imaginary world of equal opportunity for everyone to make as much money as possible, or treated as a synonym for electoral democracy, but rather in finding and answering that of God in everyone. The only way to truly do so requires us to change the way society is structured.
- We will need a more developed analysis of the violence. We need to “look upon our treasures,” like John Woolman says, that we may find whether the seeds of violence have nourishment in our possessions. We should continually expand our Quaker Peace Testimony to include every action and item in our lives and our communities.
- We will need an increased alertness to the tactics we already use, and how they intersect with the struggles of others. To avoid the traps of paternalism that have run through our history, we should look for leadership from those who bear the brunt of inequality in our society. In this regard, our worshipful decision-making process will not always transpose properly into larger activist spheres. Some will find it off-putting, ineffective, and alienating – and we should recognize that, adapt to secular situations, and resist the colonizing impulse to impose our faith on others through an insistence on ‘consensus.’
- We should increase our solidarity as progressive religious people with other progressive religious people, especially Indigenous and overtly anti-capitalist ones. This will require a revived understanding of our own complex histories, so we will know who we are and where we come from, and therefore be better able to organize with other people of faith.
- We should reclaim the radical spirit of our formative years. The first Quakers envisioned a new society, and then did everything they could to enact it. They were uncompromising in their belief that a better world is not only necessary to work towards, but possible right now.
- Finally, we will need to be directed, as every true movement is, by young people. All revolutionary movements, including Quakerism, have been generated and led by the young. The burden we place on them is enormous, and one way we may help is by modeling a developed spiritual practice that supports leadings and sustains love.

I believe Quakerism makes this unique offer, especially if we can strengthen our theology and orient it in the context of the entire history of our faith. Together, we can help build the True Social Order our religious ancestors longed for, which our world desperately needs. 🌱

## Change and Transition in Canadian Yearly Meeting

by Virginia Dawson, Yonge St Meeting

In the past at different times, we have attempted to plan a restructure of CYM. In 1998 I participated in a working group who presented “A Bold and Imaginative Model for Restructuring and Revitalizing Canadian Yearly Meeting.” In 2004 the Consultation and Renewal (CnR) group began their work; they presented their final report in 2007. More recently (2013-2014) the Determining Priorities and Envisioning Change (DPEC) group was formed and we had the simulation exercise about splitting into two Yearly Meetings.

I know there were other iterations, but I have failed to find those names. Now we have the Ad Hoc Committee for Financial Sustainability.

We see patterns and themes emerging. There have been concerns before about financial support for the organization. We do not seem to be self-supporting, but have been blessed with large one-time donations and bequests, which have enabled us to continue without making hard choices about sustainability. Our Contributions Committee has found only 23% of Friends donate directly to CYM.

However, looking at CYM solely with a financial lens can lead to false economies and unintended outcomes, which affect the health and efficiency of the organization. A major recent change was to cancel the printing of CYM minutes. There is now a large gap for Friends in the corporate memory. Monthly Meeting libraries do not have an accessible reference tool. Since 2013, there has been no index for the minutes posted on [quaker.ca](http://quaker.ca), though one year recently, there was a table of contents.

I say this from direct experience of recently researching CYM minutes for the Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN), in order to find the history of our discernment about sustainability and environmental concerns. The task was so much simpler up to 2013, by being able to read the printed minutes.

There were voices who suggested that the Yearly Meeting offer print on demand for minutes. Those Meetings and Friends who preferred a printed copy could then purchase such. These voices were ignored and the printed record is no longer available.

However the opposite has happened with *The Canadian Friend*, by continuing to send the printed journal free to all Friends on the directory list. We could generate some savings, if those who preferred a paper copy paid a subscription, just

as Meetings and individuals do for other Quaker periodicals.<sup>1</sup> I would venture that many of those now receiving the printed journal, would be happy to read it online, and also contribute to saving the cost of printing and postage.

CnR recommended, and CYM approved, hiring a Quaker Education Program Coordinator and a Youth Secretary. Those decisions also had unintended outcomes, in that we did not have an adequate personnel structure to support the positions. It relied heavily on committed volunteers without training and HR expertise to support the employment relationships. Friends were volunteering to serve on committees because of their interest in the program work of a committee, not realizing that they would then be asked to supervise an employee.

The Determining Priorities and Envisioning Change group recommended there be staff support for personnel matters. Although it was not in the original job description, the CYM Secretary's help and coordination have become an essential part of the work to ensure consistent implementation of the personnel policy and legal compliance.

At the time of writing, I am not sure what themes emerged from the three breakout sessions at CYM in Winnipeg about financial sustainability. However in the report from Young Friends, we were exhorted to “lay down and lift up” in order to preserve the Yearly Meeting.

Monthly Meetings will soon have an opportunity to share their views. We need to hear from those Friends who did not attend the gathering in Winnipeg about what they feel can be laid down and what should be lifted up.

What will be the long-term consequences of proposed changes?

We do seem to want to continue as a national organization. Let us think carefully about what this implies for Friends in CYM, whether they come regularly to the annual gathering – if indeed it should be an annual gathering – and those whose active participation is within their Monthly Meeting or Worship Group.

What will keep Friends connected to this spiritual community?

What will nurture Friends?

What are Friends prepared to offer in terms of time, but also finances, in order to sustain Canadian Yearly Meeting? ☺

1. **Editor's note:** Some do pay a subscription, which is \$20 Canadian, though it's true it's not mandatory. Subscriptions and donations to defray costs are, of course, most welcome. See the inside front page for payment details.

## Introduction to Quakers and Friends' Ways

A free on-line course  
from Education & Outreach Committee

“Introduction to Quakers and Friends' Ways” is a *free online course* that explores the origin of Quaker testimonies, such as the traditional peace testimony and testimony of equality, in Canadian Friends' history and beyond. It also invites participants to deepen their understanding of the role of Monthly Meetings in Quaker life.

Course topics include:

- experiencing the Spirit;
- early Friends in Canada and the world;
- Quaker decision-making; and
- living the Spiritual community.

New attenders as well as experienced Friends will find opportunities to grow in this course. Write us at [onlinecourse@quaker.ca](mailto:onlinecourse@quaker.ca) to be notified of the next offering.

### How do the courses work?

A short reading will be provided before each session. The weekly online sessions will use telephone or video or audio conference, depending on the technology available to those who sign up. It will include worship, exercises, reflections on readings, and opportunities to apply the learning to our own lives.



### Courses are free of charge!

However, we warmly welcome any donations you are able to give, to support future courses and other work of Canadian Yearly Meeting. You can donate by using the form on the back of *The Canadian Friend* or by going to [quaker.ca/contact/donate](http://quaker.ca/contact/donate)

### Facilitators

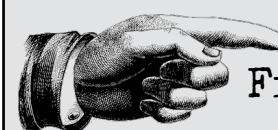
Arwen Brenneman, an experienced facilitator from

Vancouver Monthly Meeting, will lead one course. Previous participants have said:

- “Arwen did a helpful, insightful, sensitive job!”
- “She was attentive to the needs of the group and individuals and very respectful of differences in opinions and experiences.”
- “Arwen was awesome. Her experience and values/approach were a perfect fit.”

### Contact us with questions or for more info

For more information, contact the organizing team at [onlinecourse@quaker.ca](mailto:onlinecourse@quaker.ca). We look forward to meeting you! ☺



### A Tip for Searching Electronic Documents From Your Friendly Neighbourhood Editor

I definitely relate to having a preference for print over electronic. Electronic resources are also simultaneously more *and* less accessible in some ways and for some people. Without getting into an extended discussion of the pros and cons, I just wanted to point out that an electronic PDF or DOC file is actually very easy to search, with a little know-how.

So, some Friends might find this tip self-evident, but...

- If you open a file of minutes (etc.) from a page like [quaker.ca/business/cym-minutes](http://quaker.ca/business/cym-minutes);
- then you can select Edit>Find in the menus (Ctrl-F or command-F on your keyboard);
- and then search for any word.

This search can then take you to any occurrence of a word like 'sustainability' or 'environment' in the document. It's like a more powerful and convenient version of an index, built right into the software we use to read these files.

Hopefully this tip helps any Friends struggling to find things in electronic minutes.

—TK

## “Brexit, the EU and You”

### A Study Tour with the Quaker Council for European Affairs

by James M. Turner, Vancouver Monthly Meeting

From 26 to 31 March, 2019, the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA, [www.qcea.org](http://www.qcea.org)) offered a study tour entitled “Brexit, the EU and You.” The event took place in Brussels and was attended by about thirty participants, mostly from the UK, with a few from Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Germany, as well as Terry McEachern and me from Canada.

I joined the tour because on June 23, 2016, the night of the referendum vote in the UK, I found myself unable to turn off the BBC broadcast of events, and didn’t get any sleep that night. From its

inception, the fundamental purpose of the European Union has been to prevent any more wars from happening there. Although we tend to think of the EU mainly as an economic entity today, preventing war remains the primary reason for its existence.

Thus the idea of such an important player as the UK deciding to withdraw from the EU came as a shock to me, and now, almost four years later, still seems

nonsensical. The ongoing confusion and entanglement that resulted from this vote have led to a surreal political environment in the UK today. When I saw the announcement for the study tour, the leading I felt to attend was so strong that I registered on the spot.

#### The Study Tour

The tour’s activities centred around Quaker House, located in the European Quarter of Brussels, and where the QCEA offices are located. This meant that visits to the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European Council, included in the tour, were easily accessible on foot.

There were presentations at the Quaker House on topics such as the work of the QCEA, the institutions of the European Union and relationships among them, the political trends

that led to Brexit, and how Britain’s withdrawal from the European Union affects issues of interest to Quakers. These presentations set participants up nicely for the visits to the European institutions, helping us understand their structure and organization, and the various interactions among them.

The visits themselves were rich in information, each including a presentation by someone who worked at the institution, with time for questions and some discussion. From these, participants gained a clear sense of the history and functioning of the European Union, set up in the hope of putting an end

to the frequent and bloody wars between neighbours sharing the European continent, which had culminated in the unimaginable calamities and devastation of the First and Second World Wars. The primary mission of the European Union has always been the avoidance of war, and the reminders of this throughout the study tour cemented for participants the tight connection with Quaker concerns.

A vigil was planned outside the headquarters of the

European Commission for the evening of March 29, when Brexit was to take place. This gathering was to allow a public witness for international friendship. Since Brexit did not actually happen on that date, the vigil was cancelled. However, a virtual Meeting for Worship did take place, that included the exact moment Brexit was to occur. About 75 participants from more than 20 countries were present online, using the software used to conduct online courses from Woodbrooke, with a number of Friends ministering during this Meeting.

The study tour also included a day trip to Ypres, which was of particular interest to us visiting Canucks because of the heavy Canadian casualties there during the First World War – and of interest to Quakers in general because so many were killed there during the First World War that the city has come to symbolize



Participants wait their turn to enter for a visit to the European Commission. (Photo: James M. Turner)

the utter futility of war. This included a visit to the In Flanders Fields Museum ([www.inflandersfields.be/en](http://www.inflandersfields.be/en)), which houses a number of grim displays of various aspects of the war.

We also went to the Menin Gate ([www.flandersfields.be/en/do/menin-gate](http://www.flandersfields.be/en/do/menin-gate)), an immense stone monument constructed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to remember some 90,000 Commonwealth soldiers with no known grave among the 300,000 Commonwealth soldiers killed in and around Ypres during those terrible times. Thousands upon thousands of names are inscribed in stone. The overwhelming grief evoked by such a majestic monument moves visitors to tears.

During our time together, many Friends commented on how enriching these visits were, as were our interactions with each other. The programmed opportunities for discussion – as well as the more informal moments available during the week – fostered conversations that allowed participants to learn about each other’s lives, home Meetings, preoccupations, hopes, and fears for the future of Europe and the world. The camaraderie included plans for future visits to each other’s Meetings and homes, and for activities and good works that we might undertake together.

#### The Quaker Council for European Affairs

In 2019, the QCEA celebrated forty years of existence, and today it is more active than ever. Because it is funded in large part by private donations from Quakers, the organization is not beholden to any person or group, and thus can be an independent player in its ongoing work with the European Union. It teams up with various other players to carry out lobbying and advocacy activities.

Quaker House is sometimes used as neutral ground on which meetings can take place, providing “a private, friendly space where officials and diplomats can discuss issues openly, then work out how to resolve the real, underlying problems” (QCEA Annual Report 2018, available at [www.qcea.org/annual-report-2018](http://www.qcea.org/annual-report-2018)). In this way, the reputation of Quakers as friendly folk allows the QCEA to foster dialogue among sometimes hostile parties.

In recent times, the organization has concentrated on its peace programme and its human rights programme. These act as focal points for various activities and publications. Two recent publications are of interest to Quakers far beyond Europe. They offer deep analysis and practical advice for building peace and countering hate speech. Happily, they are available free of charge as PDFs from the QCEA web site.

One, entitled *Building Peace Together*, offers 40 tools or forms of engagement for building peace ([www.qcea.org/peace/research-project](http://www.qcea.org/peace/research-project)). These are grouped in eleven sectors:

- diplomacy;
- democracy and politics;
- justice;

- security;
- communication & media;
- arts & culture;
- education;
- business;
- trade & economics;
- infrastructure & planning;
- agriculture & environment; and
- healthcare.

Each sector has several subsections, and each of these is structured so as to facilitate processing of the information, with the headings “Theory of change,” “Examples,” and “Limits and caveats.” Thus the reader gets a solid understanding of what is communicated, helpful guidance as to how one might proceed in a local situation, as well as information on pitfalls to avoid. Each sector ends with a list of publications for further reading, as well as a references section.

The other publication, entitled *Anti-migrant hate speech*, is “a call to action against the tide of anti-migrant hate speech in Europe today.” Before writing the report, the QCEA carried out a research project in order to get a portrait of online hate speech and especially of how prevalent it is. The report focusses on Europe but is also easily applied elsewhere, as the problem is unfortunately not limited to Europe.

The report’s introductory sections include definitions of hate speech, explanations of why it’s important to tackle hate speech, and Quaker approaches to hate speech. It takes a look at how significant hate speech is in Europe, followed by a section on what is being done about it in terms of legislation, policy, regulation, and so on. A section entitled “Initiatives countering hate speech” describes a number of grass-roots responses to hate speech, some of which offer online tools for combatting hate speech when it is encountered in our lives.

The report offers specific recommendations for governments, political parties, internet companies, and the media. An annex explains the methodology of the QCEA research project, which involved analysis of the comment sections of a number of European newspapers. It’s not for the faint of heart.

#### Final Thoughts

In addition to the benefits of the study tour, an important benefit of this event was the discovery of the QCEA and its work. It’s a fine example of Quaker faith and practice in action, and its website offers a number of resources, notably its [blog](#) and the [publications section](#), which offers publications in a number of languages.

These are the sort of things that can help us all to enrich our lives and strengthen our Quaker practice. The websites of Canadian Friends Meetings would do well to offer a link to this rich resource. ☺

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## REFLECTIONS & CONCERNS

### Oneness

*by Jennifer Kavanagh, Westminster Meeting (Britain Yearly Meeting)*

We live in a divided world. Human beings struggle to live together. Whether at the level of family, community, or nation, we row, we fight, we kill each other. Communities are riven by racial, political, and religious divisions. Fear, greed, power-seeking, and desperate need turn fellow human beings against each other and blind us to our common humanity. This is a reality of which we are fully aware.

And yet.

There also exists a parallel reality: of compassion, generosity, and daily acts of kindness. It is natural to help others. The reason that the obverse is news is because it is shocking and unexpected. Kindness is not news.

It may be a divided world, but it is also a small one. We are more informed than ever about what is happening in the rest of the world; we are more and more connected. But our connections are both more ancient and more profound than those facilitated by electronic media. Our lives are peopled. However much an outsider we may feel, we are part of community. Even shut behind gates or fences, we cannot hide the fact that we are dependent on circles of humanity: the postman, the farmer, the manufacturers who made our furniture and clothes.

Sometimes we acknowledge our connection. A meeting at a bus stop may result in eye contact, a smile, a comment about a common cause. In an ocean of separateness, we experience a drop of connection.

Many of us have occasional experiences of a connection of which the rest of the time we are barely conscious. It's something that we might crudely call telepathy, but is at a level well beyond party tricks. Synchronicity is a seeming coincidence – a phone call, a piece on the radio – that confirms a course of action. For many, God is connection, relationship, the linking factor in all living beings.

The natural world is an extraordinary model of oneness, not only in the relationship between individual beings but as a whole. That oneness is expressed in the overwhelming inter-relatedness of all that exist within it. Examples of mutuality

and interdependence are all around us. Insects, flowers, trees, fungi, protons and microbes – they're all at it. There is so much that we don't know about the universe that we live in, but we can say with confidence that built into its fabric is a web of connection.

Shared characteristics do not stop at the behavioural level, but stem from our genetic similarities. DNA not only connects us to those we have considered 'other' among the human population, but to nonhuman animals and non-animals too. It is not them and us. We can't separate ourselves from the rest of creation.

Most of us live an active life largely unconscious of the transcendental dimension. In periods of spiritual practice, we may experience an enhanced perception of reality, when the boundaries between ourselves and the outside world are blurred, merged into one.

We live in a paradoxical world. We are always alone and always in community. We are unique, and yet there's only a hair's breadth of DNA difference between us and not only other humans, but other species. The planet is unimaginably diverse, and yet it is one. In the variety of religions, at the mystic level it is united. And it is in the Divine, at the heart of the multitudes of creation, that unity can be found.

From religion, in science, and from our own experience, we can see that separation and division are human

distortions. We know that the universe is one and that any disturbance of any part of it will upset that fragile balance. The more we can recognise the oneness of all, the closer we will draw to the One from whom all emerges and in whom all meets. Oneness, unity, brings together all human beings, all of the created world and, in those rare moments of revelation, they can be experienced in the oneness of the Divine.

*Jennifer Kavanagh's books include Heart of Oneness: a little book of connection, published by John Hunt Publishing (Christian Alternative). She is an associate tutor at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre and currently serves on the Book of Discipline Revision Committee of Britain Yearly Meeting.* ☸



Jennifer Kavanagh

## Being Love

by Caileigh Morrison, Winnipeg Monthly Meeting

At the Young Friends' Gathering before Canadian Yearly Meeting in Session, we decided to spend an afternoon in discussion groups. I picked the discussion on sexuality and relationships because I thought it would be fun to explore the topic with other Friends going through the same stage of life.

As we talked, I realized that sexuality and relationships wasn't just a frivolous topic for me. My relationships were what set me on the path to my first Quaker meeting, and the arena where I most often find myself living my Quaker faith and practice.

In the year leading up to my first Quaker meeting, I felt particularly lost. I had issues in all sorts of relationships – romantic, platonic, familial, professional – and couldn't figure out what to do. I felt like I could never get enough love to make me whole, though I bent over backwards to make myself loveable.

Not being one to rest on my laurels, I looked for answers in a million different places. Some, like therapy, proved very helpful. Most, like daily tarot card pulls and crystals, were not.

One thing that helped somewhat was meditation. I came across a mantra that felt appropriate for what I was seeking: "I am love. I am loved. I am loving." I used it often, syncing up my breathing with each phrase, trying to visualize people I loved and who loved me, and how it felt to be loved and love back.

Yet I kept stumbling on the first part of the mantra: "I am love." Not only did it mess up the breathing pattern (I have a bit of a fixation on symmetry and even numbers), it didn't make sense. I could understand loving another person, or even creation in general. Being loved seemed reasonable – it feels good to receive another person's attention and support. Giving and receiving love was very balanced; why did I also need to *be* love?

I had come to a point in my journey where I felt the need for community. Doing work on my own for about a year had been very fruitful, but being in my own head all the time was no longer enough. I had been curious about the Religious Society of Friends for years and had contemplated giving it a try. The time finally seemed right.

It was a dreary, overcast March day when I attended my first meeting. The meeting space was very humble, just a circle of chairs in the multi-purpose room of a housing co-op. I

was handed an info sheet for first-time attenders and we settled into silence, broken by the occasional snuffle from a tiny baby (another first-time attender).

I read the info sheet, which explained how Quakers use silence to connect with the Inner Light or Truth, which is sometimes expressed through vocal ministry. I looked around at all the people in the room, sitting in expectant waiting, some calm and serene, some a bit more fidgety.



Heart Mandala by Bill McMechan (Photo: Anna Jackma)

## Quaker Quicks

Little Books About the Quaker Way

Quaker Quicks is a new series of little books about various aspects of the Quaker Way, published world-wide in English by a commercial publisher, John Hunt.

So far there are eight books in the series:

*Quaker Roots and Branches* by John Lampen

*What Do Quakers Believe?* by Geoffrey Durham

*Why I am a Pacifist* by Tim Gee

*Telling the Truth About God* by Rhiannon Grant

*Practical Mystics: Quaker Faith in Action* by Jennifer Kavanagh

*The Guided Life: Finding Purpose in Troubled Times* by Craig Barnett (November 2019)

*Money and Soul* by Pamela Haines (December 2019)

More info on the books is available at

[www.johnhuntpublishing.com](http://www.johnhuntpublishing.com).

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If you are a practicing Quaker and have an idea for a Quaker Quick book, John Hunt welcomes proposals at [www.johnhuntpublishing.com/submissions](http://www.johnhuntpublishing.com/submissions). Be sure to designate it for the imprint Christian Alternatives and mention Quaker Quicks.

The baby and his parents reminded me of my own childhood, and I thought about how our experiences of love and care as infants and children shape our adult attachments. The phrase "God is love" entered my thoughts.

As I sat in silence, I turned the phrase over and over in my head, and something began to shift in me. I have never been much of a theist, but in that moment, I perceived God as simply loving energy, a force that is present in all of us and guides us to do all things truthfully and with love.

If God is love, perhaps it follows that love is God. I realized that the mantra fragment I had been struggling with, "I am love," was the divine, the light in all of us. I had been so focused on the getting and spending of love, the words and actions I shared and received and withheld and rejected and longed for, that I had never stopped to consider that love can simply live in me.

Instead of being something I can stock up on or run out of, love is, in fact, the very core of my being. I have an infinite, renewable source of light and warmth within me, and to truly give and receive love is as simple as uncovering it and allowing it to guide me.

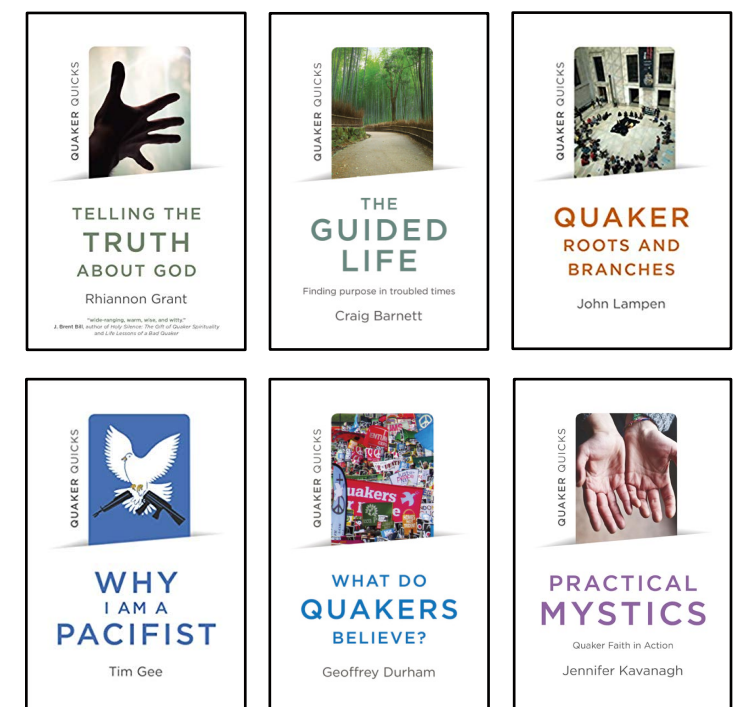
The meeting ended and I scurried away, embarrassed that all this revelation had reduced me to a puddle of tears and snot in front of a group of strangers. But I returned the next week. And the next, and the next.

I began to build relationships in the Meeting and felt myself becoming part of the community. My outside relationships began to change too. I approached new relationships with a different perspective. I healed established relationships by letting myself be led by love and inviting others to share their light, instead of falling into the same old destructive patterns.

I am grateful that I had an opportunity to recall this experience at Young Friends' Gathering, and to share it with many Young Friends who, like me, are going through the relationship turmoil that comes along with establishing yourself in the world. It reminded me that love is the foundation of my Quaker faith and practice. It is what brought me to my first meeting, what sustains me in trying times, and what brings me back to the light when I lose my way.

As William Penn wrote, "Love is above all; and when it prevails in us all, we shall all be Lovely, and in Love with God and one with another."<sup>1</sup>

1. Maxim #556 from part 1 of "Some Fruits of Solitude, in Reflections and Maxims relating to the Conduct of Human Life" (1693), in Volume 5 of *The Select Works of William Penn* (James Phillips, 1782), available from Google Books.



## Finding Peace in Troubled Times

by Jay O'Hara, Sandwich (Massachusetts) Monthly Meeting

*Editor's Note: This is a reprint of an article which was published almost exactly a year ago in BeFriending Creation (Volume 32, Number 1), the quarterly journal of Quaker Earthcare Witness.*

On Christmas Eve, I went out with my in-laws to church service in upstate New York. The big crowd gathered in the chapel on the campus of Cornell University, and the minister hit all the right notes for this presumably liberal crowd: alluding to the occupant of the White House, pleading the cause of the immigrant, and giving voice to the yearning for peace and calm.

But something felt deeply off for me. In the midst of the carols and candlelight, the minister expressed a longing for silence, calm, stability, and peace in this time of upheaval. She claimed that the time is coming where the strong and gentle people will win.

Honestly, I don't think it's going to work that way.

What can winning mean when we are exceeding multiple tipping points of irreversible cataclysm? What can winning mean when untold millions are doomed to suffer? What can winning mean when right now millions suffer the injustice of poisoned water, toxic land, and unbreathable air, often because of the color of their skin or the poverty they were born into? ...

While injustices, grinding poverty, and oppression continued unabated, much of the liberal US, much of the climate movement, and much of the Quaker world, hungers for a particular peace and calm enabled by an escapist life of privilege. This definition of peace flows from a position of privilege in which those realities don't disturb the lives of many white liberals when there isn't daily outrage spewing from the White House. It's out of sight and out of mind.

We are entering an age of increasing conflict. If the movement for climate justice is going to make the future better, reduce emissions, and reduce the harm, we are going to have to put aside any hopes for that sort of 'peace.' I believe we are going to have to cultivate an inward calm and clarity that is infectious, and invite others who hunger for justice into bold action in a world that rages further into disaster. We are going to have to nurture an inward peace that carries us into direct action confronting the juggernaut of the carbon industrial machine.

But the Quaker way, and the example of Jesus, is to put away the hope that everything is going to turn out OK. It is to know intimately the experience of a redemption that comes not from winning, not from running away, but from faithfully following the Spirit into the very depths of hell on earth.

Are we ready, as Friends, to trust God enough to step out in this way? Have we

found that place of peace that passes all understanding and allows us to bear the cross, not as a burden but as the gift that we are given to serve in these times?

I have hope that Friends may shine this light brightly this year. My secular climate work with the Climate Disobedience Center in 2018 focused on creating structures for activists to build up some of that personal and interpersonal resilience. If you're feeling a call to step out in front of the empire, and build a team to stand in the way of the fossil fuel industry in this new year, I'd invite you to check out our climate disobedience praxis groups. You can find the invitation at [climatedisobedience.org/invitation](http://climatedisobedience.org/invitation).

Many blessings for all that you did to take necessary action in these troubled times this year. I'm grateful to be on this journey together. 🌱



The streets of Ferguson in 2014.

### motion picture

Sometimes, people get up before the sun.

And, quite often, they also scale mountains at ungodly hours and they  
Bring their little cameras with them  
As if to take a piece of whatever they've found

[You know, A Photograph— when you get

fundamental about it— is just  
a way to capture light.]

And People— when you get fundamental about it— are just  
a lot of very little parts [carbon and electrons and the like]  
that all work together, all in unison, towards  
the same thing. And people know this but they Don't

know *why* yet and

Lots of people say it's because of god and lots of people say

Feelings are only chemicals and  
Although I am no mathematician or archeologist,  
I've got my own take on the matter —

*"I am also a captor of light"*

[and it is my purpose] Why else would

We have eyes meant to see and jars  
meant to hold forget-me-nots and the words meant to describe  
Evening skies  
What are we here for  
If not to cling Onto  
the Divine?

Sylvie Schellenberg, Hamilton Monthly Meeting



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