

**GRASS VALLEY
FRIENDS MEETING**

*Of the Religious Society of Friends in the Truth,
College Park Quarterly Meeting,
Pacific Yearly Meeting*

13075 Woolman Lane, Nevada City, CA 95959 @
The Sierra Friends Center, off Jones Bar Road,
Nevada City, CA 95959

Website: www.grassvalleyfriends.org (NEW)

Email: grassvalleyfriends@gmail.com

First Days: 9:00am Singing at the Meeting House (in-person and zoom)
10:00 am Silent Meeting for Worship (in-person and zoom)
To receive the zoom link, grassvalleyfriends@gmail.com.

Newsletter, 12th Month, 2023

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MEETING CALENDAR

First Sunday

- Program to be announced.

Second Sunday

- Hybrid Silent Meeting for Worship Meeting, Potluck and for Worship on the Occasion of Business.

Third Sunday

- Program to be announced.

Fourth Sunday

- Spiritual Life

Fifth Sunday

- On Fifth Sundays we hold a Family Meeting for Worship. *Children and adults gather and spend 20 minutes in storytelling, 20 minutes in singing and 20 minutes in silent worship.*

- + 1st First Day: Bible Story and Song
- + 2nd First Day: A Story and a Craft or Activity
- + 3rd First Day: A Story plus Time for Silent Worship
- + 4th First Day: A Creative, Topical Curriculum
- + 5th First Day: Family Worship (a story, singing and silent worship)
- + **Online Worship:** every [Wednesday evening, 7:00-7:30 pm](#) (See page ___)

HAPPENING NOW

- Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023, 11:15a.m.: Frank Lawrence, pro bono attorney for CHIRP will join Grass Valley Friends to present information about CHIRP and the Nevada City Nisenan.
- Sunday, Dec. 24, 2023, 11:15a.m.: Birthing the Christ Within: Gordon Starr
- Friday, Dec. 29, 2023 – Monday, Jan. 2, 2024- [Western Friends Annual Young People’s Gathering](#)

HAPPENING LATER

- Thursday, January 18, 2024, 11:00a.m. – 1:00p.m. – GVFM hosts InterFaith Nevada County
- January 18-21, 2024: Friends General Conference “Gathering Anew”. See page 11 for details.
- Sunday, January 21, 2024, 11:15a.m.: Gordon Starr: Singing from the Center
- Sunday, January 28, 2024, 11:15a.m.: Quaker Seminary – Details to follow (1st of 6 sessions)
- Saturday, February 24, 2024: PacYM Representative Committee Meeting
- Saturday, March 2, 2024: PacYM Representative Committee Meeting
- Sunday, March 17, 2024, 11:15a.m.: Worship Sharing on the State of the Meeting

GLOSSARY- Abbreviations and terms used in the GVFM newsletter.

SFC: Sierra Friends Center

M&O: Ministry and Oversight

PacYM: Pacific Yearly Meeting

PHP – Pendle Hill Pamphlet

FGC: Friends General Conference

QUNP: Quaker United Nations Project

FASE: Friends Association for Services to the Elderly

CPQM: College Park Quarterly Meeting

RSWR: Right Sharing of World Resource

UwN: Unity with Nature

Threshing Session: A meeting at a separate time specifically not for decision-making; normal practices of a Quaker meeting for business are relaxed so that Friends may speak more than once to an issue, speak to a point just made, or ask a question of a previous speaker.

Query: The Friends practice of examining our souls and seeking clarity. These questions & exercises help to give time to seek truth about us and our spiritual condition and to tap into Divine insight.

[Grass Valley Friends Meeting Facebook link](#)

If you use Facebook, follow the Grass Valley Friends Meeting page, or join the Facebook Grass Valley Friends Meeting group. If you share a post from the page, your friends will see it, and it helps our visibility.

MINUTES AND RECORD: Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business, December 10, 2023

We met on Zoom.

Present: Dorothy Henderson (clerk); Gordon Starr (elder to the clerk), Jennifer Smith (recording co-clerk), Amy Cooke (recording co-clerk), Mary Starr, Don McCormick, Anita McCormick, Reed Hamilton, Doug Hamm, Dianne Marshall, Judy Hamilton, Chamba Cooke, Peter O'Rourke, Stuart Smith.

The Meeting opened with silent worship.

Clerks' Remarks and Query:

Dorothy Henderson has been practicing calling this Meeting *for Worship* for Business. From John 3: We don't know where the wind comes from, and we don't know where it's going. It is the same for Spirit.

Our plans get washed away by life. What would it be like if we let Spirit come into our Meeting for Worship for Business and let Spirit be the guide.

Have you experienced Spirit coming into the room for Meeting for Worship for Business? What does it mean to you?

Friends shared out of silence:

- When there is conflict during Meeting for Worship for Business, we can go back into silence and allow Spirit to guide us.
- A friend shared a wonderful experience of how a contentious meeting could be turned around to a meeting full of worship and awe.
- Another friend expressed gratitude to the members in Meeting who remember this is a Meeting for Worship.
- When someone speaks from the Spirit, and through silent waiting, weighty concerns can become clear.
- One friend hopes to feel the same "quaking" when they speak out of worship, as when they speak during Meeting for Worship for Business. She mentioned the qualities of compassion, confidence, courage, creativity, curiosity, clarity, and calmness (from Internal Family Systems, Richard Schwartz) - indicators of being in the True Self/God.

ITEMS SEASONING or CARRIED OVER (see Committee sections below)

- Clerks Meeting report

COMMITTEE REPORTS

(see reports appended, committee clerk is noted in bold)

Spirit and Witness: Amy Cooke, Stuart Smith, Reed Hamilton, Sharon Davisson, Dean Olson, Dorothy Henderson (ex-officio, GVFM Clerk).

Amy Cooke gave the report, as well as the Clerks Meeting report (see appendices)

- A question was brought up about the Quaker "Seminary." It will be an educational program about how we are all "ministers," along with Quaker information and education.
- A concern was raised about archival documents going fully digital. There is a problem relying on digital copies with changing technology. Paper copies are able to be read without the concern of changing technology.
- A proposal was raised to create a committee to discern best practices / create a task force on how to archive paper copies that may be needed in the future. The committee should report to Stewardship.

MINUTE 2023.12.01: The Meeting approves delegating the issue of how to manage the paper and digital archives to the Stewardship Committee, with the recommendation that a task force be formed to work on best practices.

Stewardship: Mary Starr, Pat Phillips, Reed Hamilton, Gordon Starr, Doug Hamm, David Bowman. Dianne Marshall (ex-officio, Newsletter editor), Fosten Wilson (ex-officio, Treasurer), Don McCormick (ex-officio, Librarian).

Mary Starr, clerk, gave the report (see appendices).

- A question about the ongoing costs of the website hosting was raised. Clarification was needed if the ongoing costs are budgeted.

Minute 2023.12.02: Grass Valley Friends Meeting approves reimbursing Amy Cooke for the \$1200 she spent on rebuilding the website, with the admonition that this should not be a precedent for the approval of expenditures.

Welcome Committee: Peter O'Rourke, clerk (ex-officio, Website and Facebook coordinator), Kathy McCreery, Don McCormick, Pat Phillips, Cheryl Hendrickson, Cindy Bliss, Lo Hamm, CJ Patterson, Hailey Wilson (ex-officio, tech support), Judy Hamilton (ex-officio, email coordinator).

Peter O'Rourke, clerk, gave the report, appended.

- A question was raised about the Facebook page having the testimonies displayed as the "SPICES" (Stewardship, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Simplicity) in the logo, including the word "Stewardship." Has PacYM approved "Stewardship" as one of the testimonies? This question will be directed to the Welcome Committee.

Judy Hamilton gave the organization report on the Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC) (appended). Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), represents Quakers around the world.

Children's Program: Keely McDonald and Doug Hamm, co-clerks, Dorothy Henderson, Gordon Bishop, Judy Hamilton, Dean Olson, Reed Hamilton, Don McCormick, David Cowan, Lo Hamm.

Amy Cooke, recording co-clerk, gave the report from Keely.

- Anita McCormick, along with Stuart and Jennifer Smith, offered to help with 5th Sundays.

Nominating Committee: (*terms as noted*) Judy Hamilton: 2022-2024, Gordon Starr: 2022-2024, Dean Olson 2023-2025, Sharon Davisson 2023-2025.

There was no report.

OFFICER REPORTS and REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

- **Treasurer:** fosten wilson. *No report*
- **Interfaith Nevada County:** Dianne Marshall gave the report, appended. In January the meeting will be hosted by GVFM at Sierra Friends Center.
- **Sierra Friends Center:** Gordon Starr. No report given due to Gordon Starr acting as Elder to the Clerk. We are being informed through other ways.
- **Pacific Yearly Meeting:** Doug Hamm gave the report, appended.

- The **2023 Annual Session Wrap-Up page** is now live, where you will find all the epistles, the minutes and reports packet, and other information to close out Annual Session:
<https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/wordpress/2023-annual-session-wrap-up-page/>
- **College Park Quarterly Meeting:** Doug Hamm. *No report.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- If you use Facebook, follow the Grass Valley Friends Meeting page, or join the Facebook Grass Valley Friends Meeting group. If you share a post from the page, your friends will see it, and it helps our visibility. Follow this [link](#).
- The 2023-2024 PacYM General Directory is available! It can be found on the Yearly Meeting Website at: [pacificyearlymeeting.org > Resources > PacYM General Directory and Database > Obtaining the Directory](https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/resources/pacym-general-directory-and-database-obtaining-the-directory)

The Directory is available for use by members and attenders of monthly meetings and worship groups within Pacific Yearly Meeting and by Friends serving on Pacific Yearly Meeting committees. It is not to be shared beyond this community. Dorothy, Doug and Don have the new password for the PacYM Directory.

- Carl Magruder: You can follow Carl's healing journey on the CaringBridge.org website [HERE](#). Friends have also set up a daily Meeting for Healing from 7:30 to 8 am (Pacific) on Zoom [here](#) or contact Amy Cooke at amylisette@gmail.com for the link.
- Please remember Grass Valley Friends Meeting in your year-end giving. You can give by mailing a check to fosten wilson or through Tithely on the website.
- December 24: Birthing the Christ Within: Gordon Starr
- January 21: Gordon Starr: Singing from the Center
- January 28-June 23 (4th Sundays): Quaker Seminary: Amy Cooke

ITEMS SEASONING or CARRIED OVER

- There were no items carried over.

READING OF THE RECORD AND MINUTES

The record and the minutes were read, corrected and approved.

If you are giving a report to GVFM, please send the actual report to the recording clerk at grassvalleyfriends@gmail.com THE FRIDAY BEFORE MEETING FOR BUSINESS.

GVFM Newsletter Reminder: Please have items into Diane Marshall by Tuesday at 10 am.

The Meeting closed with silent worship.

Respectfully recorded by Amy Cooke, recording clerk (outgoing) and Jennifer Smith, recording clerk (incoming).

APPENDICES:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Spirit and Witness Committee report | 1. Interfaith of Nevada County report |
| 2. Stewardship Committee report | 2. Pacific Yearly Meeting Monthly Report |
| 3. Welcome Committee report & FWCC organization report | 3. Clerks Meeting Report |

ADVICES AND QUERIES: TWELVETH MONTH: THE MEETING COMMUNITY

Meetings for Worship and Business are the center of our spiritual community. There, as we come to know each other in the Spirit, we build the “beloved community.”

Mutual respect and care in the Meeting form the foundation from which we can test, support, and exercise leadings of the Spirit. At its best, the Meeting community provides a framework for us to learn and practice mutual care, which strengthens us as we act in the world.

All members of the Meeting community should share in the care of one another. While respecting privacy, we must be aware of and sensitive to each other’s needs. We must also be willing to ask for assistance when we are in need.

Do I strive to be inclusive in my relationships within the Meeting?

Do I care for the reputation of others, refraining from gossip or disparaging remarks?

Am I committed to the difficult work of forgiveness, and affirming God’s love for the whole community?

How are love and unity maintained among us?

Do we practice the art of listening, even beyond words?

How have we been sensitive to the personal needs and difficulties of members and attenders, young and old?

Do we visit one another in our homes and keep in touch with distant members?

INTO THE DARKEST HOUR by Madeleine L’Engle

**It was a time like this,
War & tumult of war,
a horror in the air.**

**Hungry yawned the abyss-
and yet there came the star
and the child most wonderfully there.**

**It was time like this
of fear & lust for power,
license & greed and blight-
and yet the Prince of bliss
came into the darkest hour
in quiet & silent light.**

**And in a time like this
how celebrate his birth
when all things fall apart?
Ah! Wonderful it is
with no room on the earth
the stable is our heart.**



GRASS VALLEY MEETING of the RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

13075 Woolman Lane, Nevada City, CA 95959

ANNUAL APPEAL, 2023

December 8, 2023

Dear Friends

Pausing for a moment to think about the second decade of the 21st century, one could say the Grass Valley Friends Meeting (GVFM) has demonstrated great resiliency. The World Health Organization declared covid-19 a pandemic in March of 2020. In September of 2021 the Jones Fire swept through the Sierra Friends Center's campus, burning many acres of land and affecting numerous lives. During this time the Grass Valley Friends Meeting House contents were packed into a storage container and Meeting for Worship relied on Zoom technology. In 2022, the Meeting moved back into the Meeting House and returned our Library to its shelves.

Throughout all these challenges, our Meeting has remained intact. While mourning the loss of three dearly beloved Friends, we have welcomed four new members and sustained an active group of worshippers both in-person and via Zoom.

Our Meeting is resilient because you are a part of our Friends Community. Your participation in Meeting for Worship and Friends' activities is our strength. Your financial support allows our Meeting to take care of basic expenses (paying rent, the Meeting's webpage, our newsletter, three publication subscriptions¹, committee needs, and liability insurance). Funds also go to the greater Religious Society of Friends including memberships in College Park Quarterly Meeting, and Pacific Yearly Meeting. This year included three scholarships to Friends General Conference in Oregon.

The approved budget for FY 23-24(\$15,235) is a slight increase over FY22-23's actual expenses (\$14,352).

With your financial contributions, Grass Valley Friends Meeting can meet its costs of service and operations. **Your contribution of \$40/household each month allows us to meet the Meeting's budget goal for FY 23-24. A contribution of \$50/household each month would allow us to restore several items that have been greatly reduced or eliminated from our pre-Covid budgets².** We honor and respect the level of generosity you can share.

(1) You may donate to the GVFM online: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/. This link also appears live in the GVFM Monthly Newsletter. (2) You may authorize a regular withdrawal from your bank account (look for "bank account" at bottom of page when Tithely asks for amount) or (3) mail your contributions to Fosten Wilson, Treasurer, 15719 American Hill Road, Nevada City, CA 95959. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience in the letter sent to you by U.S. mail. Your contributions are tax-deductible.

Forever listening to the Holy Spirit and acting in hope and faith of the good will of all, we rejoice for the resiliency of our Grass Valley Friends community. We value all who join us in-person or via zoom. Let our fellowship and worshipful silence guide you in deciding your support for the Grass Valley Friends Meeting this year. ***Thank you for being a part of our Meeting's inner strength and Light.***



Mary Starr, Clerk, Stewardship Committee

¹ Friends Journal(monthly), Western Bulletin (monthly), Pendle Hill Pamphlets (5/year)

² E.G. Hospitality House, Committee and Travel Expenses, donations to AFSC, FCNL, Sierra Friends Center and more.

Your donation makes this Friends Meeting possible. Thank you!

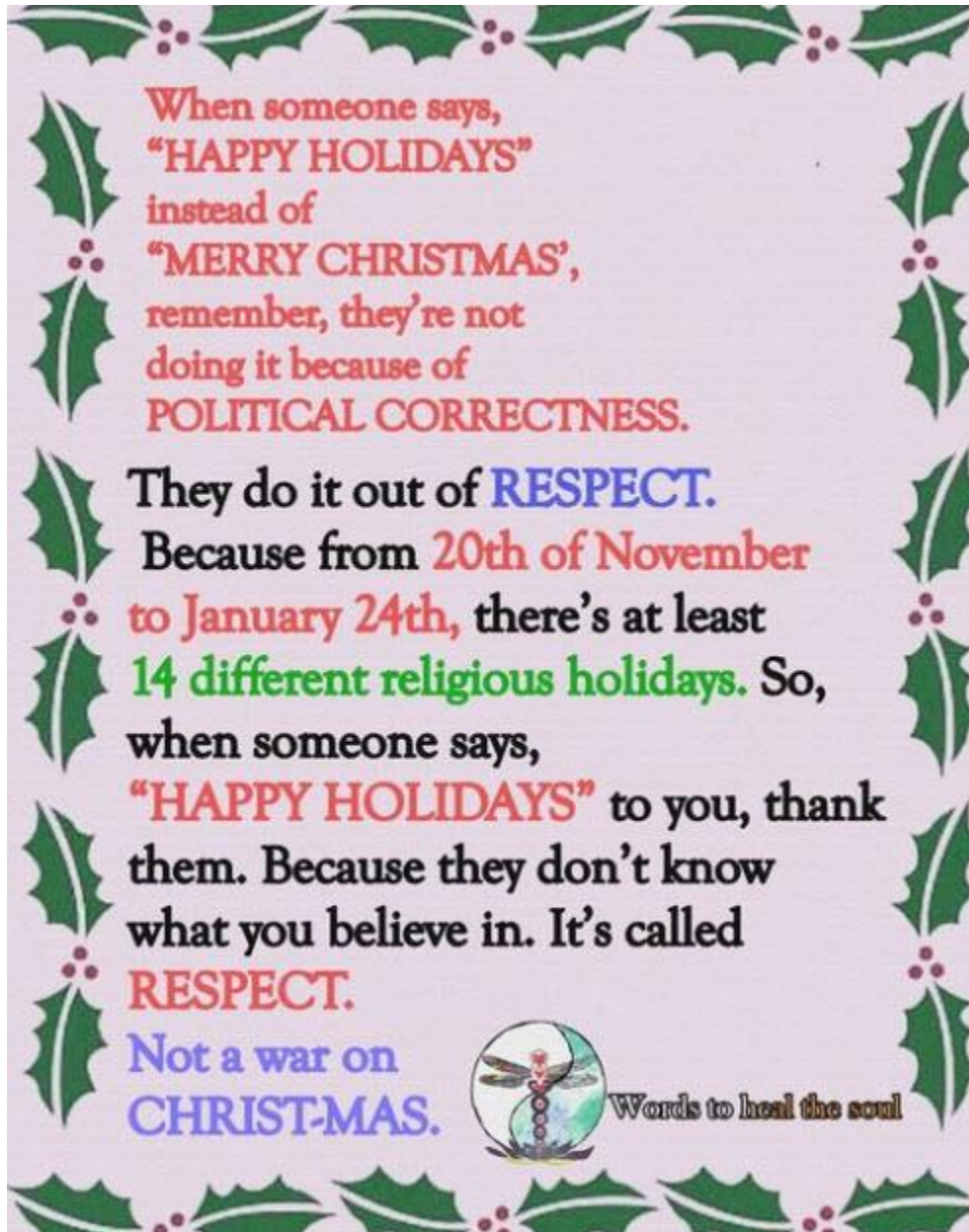


Give

← This button will take you to a secure site.

- It's easy to give to Grass Valley Friends Meeting! Click on the Give button above or go to grassvalleyfriends.org and click on the "GIVE" button. You'll go to a secure site for donations. Your monthly contribution keeps our Meeting viable. *Tithely* now allows the user to change the dollar of their gift without making a new donation request.

Thank you.



MID-WEEK MEETING for WORSHIP

Dear Friends,

In case you are not aware, there is an [online meeting for worship](#) for PacYM, that meets every Wednesday evening from 7 to 7:30. It was created a number of years ago by the Eldering Subcommittee of the Ministry committee of Yearly Meeting to support the wellness of the Yearly Meeting. Over time it has mostly been attended by the PacYM clerk, assistant to the clerk, their elders, and a few others. However, it is open to all. It can provide a rewarding mid-week experience of worshipping with friends and allow us to support the spiritual health of our yearly meeting. Give it a try!

Love, Dorothy Henderson

What, If Anything, Are We Doing To Stop Injustices Having To Do With Race And Hispanic Origin? Submitted by Don McCormick

I was struck by something I read in an article in the March, 2017 issue of *Friends Journal*—"Stumbling Forward toward Racial Justice among Friends" by Lucy Duncan and Noah White. One of the authors, Noah White (who is African American) wrote:

I grew to understand that Quaker spaces were places for people not of color to prove how much they weren't contributing to the injustices affecting people of color by showing how good they are. It was not a place where anything was actually going to be done to stop the injustices from happening. As my consciousness grew, I found myself in Quaker spaces less frequently until I stopped attending altogether.

I think one of the many reasons this issue concerned me was that I was recently told that Nevada County is the whitest of all counties in California. I found this hard to believe until I looked at the census data. Nevada County **is** the whitest county. Also, it was interesting to realize that African Americans make up one of the smallest groups. They make up only 0.7% of the people in the county. American Indians and Alaska Natives make up 1.3%, Asians make up 1.7%, people of two or more races make up 3.5%, and Hispanics or Latinos make up 10.4%.

The Population of Nevada County Broken Down by Race and Hispanic Origin

White alone, percent	92.6%
Black or African American alone, percent(a)	0.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent(a)	1.3%
Asian alone, percent(a)	1.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent(a)	0.2%
Two or More Races, percent	3.5%
Hispanic or Latino, percent(b)	10.4%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	83.6%

- Source: U.S. Census

Two queries occurred to me—queries I don't have an answer to. They are

1. What injustices having to do with race and Hispanic origin exist in our community, that is, Nevada County?
2. What, if anything, are we doing to stop these injustices from happening?

Pacific Yearly Meeting Announcements

1- Save the Date! Representative Committee (RepCom) 2024

The 2024 meeting of the PacYM Representative Committee (RepCom) will be taking place on Saturdays, February 24 and March 2, online.

Meeting representatives to PacYM, as well as Yearly Meeting Officers and Clerks of Committees and Subcommittees are asked to attend RepCom, and all interested Friends in our community are invited and welcome to attend.

2- Opportunities for service working with a small group of Friends

The PacYM Nominating Committee shares the following:

a. **Children's Program Committee:** They provide high quality programming for Friends ages 0-12. We are also exploring innovative ways to support our Monthly and Quarterly Meetings to make families feel welcome and supported. Most meetings are virtual until late spring. Contact Molly Bishop for more information

mmollyb@gmail.com

b. **Registrar(s):** Design and implement the registration forms and processes for Annual Session in July. This could be done as volunteers or for pay, by an individual with an assistant, a team of two or three, or a meeting as a fundraiser. Contact Julie Harlow for more information fhmus@sbcglobal.net

c. **Techies:** Several committees would like to have a regular or an adjunct member who is tech savvy: format documents and flyers, manage a website, update a Facebook page, etc. Tell us what skills you have and what time you have available, and we can find the right spot for you. Contact Julie Harlow for more information

fhmus@sbcglobal.net

3- Social Concern Minute from Central Coast Monthly Meeting

The PacYM Peace and Social Order Committee shares the attached Social Concern Minute from Central Coast Monthly Meeting:

Statement Supporting Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary

This minute can also be found on the Pacific Yearly Meeting website [HERE](#)

The PacYM Peace and Social Order Committee has developed a method for preserving and distributing social concern minutes passed by our Monthly Meetings. If your Meeting passes such a minute, the procedure to share your minute is attached and can also be found [HERE](#)

4- Request to set up a Scholarship Fund

We share the following:

2023.11.01. Meeting approved: La Jolla Monthly Meeting asks that Pacific Yearly Meeting set up a Scholarship Fund for Post-secondary Education.

To further that end, we ask that the Ministry Committee set up an Ad Hoc Committee to investigate the possibilities for either the creation of such a scholarship fund or the re-wording of the parameters of the dormant Student Conscience Fund.

(Note: This minute has been read by the Clerk and Incoming Clerk of Pacific Yearly Meeting and is under consideration.)

5- Friends General Conference (FGC): In these changing times, how is Spirit moving among us?

January 18-21, 2024 online

In these changing times, how is Spirit rising among us?

Friends General Conference Gathering Anew

The FGC Gathering Anew virtual consultation we imagined last year, led by Spirit and the input of many Friends, has become something larger... an online conference. There is rich content. We hope you'll attend and that you'll share this event with Friends in your monthly and yearly meetings.

The dates are January 18-21, 2024 online only.

The program includes four main components:

- **Connection to Spirit**
- **Becoming an Actively Anti-racist Faith Community**
- **Changing Structures for Changing Times**
- **The Future of the Religious Society of Friends.**

Thursday night: We open worship and an opportunity to explore what our hopes are for the conference. We'll meet in reflection groups, which will meet daily. Reflection groups offer an opportunity to process the conference on both a personal level and a structural level. How do the ideas you are hearing apply to your yearly meeting, monthly meeting, or other Quaker groups?

Friday: We will explore ways to connect with each other and deepen our connection with Spirit and focus on both personal and communal aspects of this connection. **Our plenary speaker will Francisco Burgos** followed by workshops with Christopher Sammond, Nikki Mosgrove, Chuck Schobert and more. (A full day)

Saturday: Two tracks. Each track includes a plenary followed by workshops. Friends may choose between:

- ***Next Steps in becoming an actively anti-racist faith community:*** **Vanessa Julye, plenary speaker,** followed by workshops with David Etheridge, Janice Domanik & Beca Haines Rosenberg, Clinton Pettus and additional Friends.
- ***Changing Structures for Changing Times:*** Plenary speakers are **Paul Buckley, Rashid Darden and Barry Crossno** followed by workshops with Emily Provance, Susan Loucks and ***Your Turn, Your Story: a chance to share across Yearly Meetings***

Sunday: “**Speak and Be Heard: Voices of Younger Friends.**” Several younger Friends will speak about Quakerism, Quaker structure, or their sense of belonging followed by discussion groups to reflect on the messages we've heard.

We will join in worship as we close the conference.

Registration Costs: [In these changing times, how is Spirit moving among us?](#)

Registration form will be posted on this webpage in mid-December.

We are asking that all Friends who are able pay \$125 for the conference. Friends whose income is more limited are asked to pay a minimum of \$75. If this amount is still too much, we hope your monthly or yearly meeting might be able to assist. If you or another potential participant still needs aid, please reach out to (Ruth Reber ruthr@fgcquaker.org). We do not want anyone to stay away because of a lack of funds. Additional donations towards our programs are always welcome and appreciated.

In Friendship, Barry Crossno, General Secretary

**Shared via Pacific Yearly Meeting
Peace and Social Order Committee**

Social Concern Minute

**Central Coast Monthly Meeting
Statement Supporting Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary
October 2023**

CCFM 2023-10-A Central Coast Friends Meeting approves submitting a statement of support to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in favor of creation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.

STATEMENT SUPPORTING CHUMASH HERITAGE NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

The Central Coast Friends Meeting (Quakers) offers this statement of support for the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. Our principles of harmony with nature and of right relationships with Creation bring us to make this statement. We support the establishment of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary using the largest possible contiguous sanctuary boundaries, as shown in the Initial Boundary Alternative combined with the Gaviota Coast Extension (Sub-Alternative 5b), because it would provide the most protection.

Our beloved coastal and offshore waters in San Luis Obispo County would be subjected to drilling, dumping, and desecration of sacred sites in alternative boundaries 2, 3, and 4 proposed by NOAA. We request that any cables laid in sanctuary waters have permits from the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Migrating marine animals need safe passage through our waters.

Lisamu, which we call Morro Rock, needs protection so that never again will we take rocks from this sacred site. Our indigenous neighbors have wisdom to share based on 10,000 years of living in harmony with the land and waters. We support strong collaboration among local agencies and tribes in regulating and managing the sanctuary to include all interested local tribes.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Lovett-Adair
Presiding Clerk
Central Coast Friends Meeting (Quakers)
San Luis Obispo



Friends World Committee for Consultation
World Office

The Friends World Committee for Consultation encourages fellowship and understanding among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends.

We bring Quakers together in multiple ways to celebrate God in our lives, to gather the Quaker voice, build networks to address issues of our time, and to unite Friends within our diversity.

FWCC is hosting George Fox's 400th Birthday Celebrations in 2024



Celebrations for the 400th anniversary of the birth of Quaker co-founder George Fox will take place throughout 2024. Many of these events can be joined online, from around the world.

Although Fox was born in July, celebrations will take place throughout the year, including an all-age party at the historic Arch Street Meeting House in Philadelphia, a special exhibition at the Quaker Tapestry Museum, celebrations at Yearly Meetings, and many online courses and events.

[View all George Fox 400th Birthday Events](#)

You can download a birthday pack designed to support Quaker meetings, Friends churches, schools and other bodies to organise events & activities. The pack, which is available in English and in Spanish, features children's stories, a dramatic monologue, Bible study and prompts for worship sharing, as well as ideas for possible songs, meditations and courses.

- [George Fox 400 Birthday Pack](#)
- [George Fox 400 Paquete de Cumpleaños](#)

If you are planning an event in 2024 that could incorporate George Fox's 400th birthday celebrations, or you are organising an event to mark the occasion, please let us know by [emailing us](#) or you can [complete this form](#). A list of planned events will be published in due course.

A Quaker Christmas Message [George Amoss Jr.](#) / [December 24, 2009](#) [NOTES](#)

[Christ Climbed Down](#)

from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
there were no rootless Christmas trees
hung with candy canes and breakable stars

Christ Climbed Down
from His bare Tree
this year
and softly stole away into
some anonymous Mary's womb again
where in the darkest night
of everybody's anonymous soul
He awaits again
an unimaginable
and impossibly
Immaculate Reconciliation
the very craziest
of Second Comings.

Those are the first and last stanzas of Lawrence Ferlinghetti's poem, "[Christ Climbed Down](#)."¹ The poet's understanding of a particular (and peculiar) dogma may have been off — the "Immaculate Conception" doctrine refers to the conception of Mary, not to that of Jesus Christ — but that's not the worst of his heterodoxies, at least from broadly accepted Christian perspectives. For many Christians, the implication that the more important birth of Christ is that which he awaits "in the darkest night of everybody's anonymous soul" is something one might expect to hear from an incorrigible heretic — from, say, a Quaker.

Our Quaker tradition reads stories in scripture as pointers to inward events. In a Quaker reading of the annunciation narrative,² each of us is an anonymous Mary in whose dark heart-womb the seed Christ abides. Christ, the seed promised to Abraham³ and the image — Gk. *eikōn* — of God-who-is-love,⁴ is the promise, or "principle," of divine life, waiting within to re-animate us with its own life and thus to be born into the world. But, as Isaac Penington has warned us, that living seed is easily missed or rejected.

For though this principle be all life, yet it is at first but as a seed, and the appearance of the Lord in it is but as in a seed; very little, low, weak, hard to be discerned, easy to be overlooked and despised, and some greater and more undeniable appearance expected.⁵

We don't recognize the seed because we don't expect to find the most powerful truth of our lives in something small and frail, almost invisible, apparently worthless or even undesirable. Our expectation is that a divine epiphany will be awe-inspiring and self-validating. But a tiny, seemingly powerless seed of sacrificial love? Not what we're looking for.

Yet that despised seed, covered by our inner darkness, is the "secret virtue [*i.e.*, hidden power for good] and stirring of the life in [the] heart."⁶ And when at last we feel that seed; and when, understanding its nature and offer, we respond with our "*fiat*,"⁷ allowing it to grow to fullness in us: then is the birth of God in human flesh — in *our* flesh. Then is the coming of Christ in power,⁸ "the very craziest of Second Comings."

It is the seed of God, and it is the very nature of God; and [a person] in whom it springs, and who is gathered into it, born of it, and one with it, partakes of the divine nature. Peter speaks of the great and precious promises, whereby the saints are made partakers of the divine nature. All the promises are to the seed of promise, to Christ the Son of God, to the seed of God, to the heirs of life and salvation in Christ; and they are all fulfilled to them, and enjoyed by them, who are ingrafted into, and one with Christ, the seed; which cannot be, but by the grace, by the truth, by the light, life, Spirit, and power, which he sows in the heart; which are not many things, but all contained and comprehended in the one seed.⁹

Earlier generations of Quakers, perhaps more attuned than we are to that living inward promise, refused to erect "rootless Christmas trees," symbols of spiritual rootlessness resulting from our ignoring or despising the life of kenotic love glimmering in the depths of our hearts. And of course they refused to erect crosses and crèches, which divert our gaze from the living icon of love, the inner Christ, to physical and conceptual idols.¹⁰ As Jean-Luc Marion tells us, the idol stops our gaze at itself, occluding the horizon, and then, mirror-like, returns our gaze to us in a spiritual narcissism; but the icon inverts that process: in the icon, the invisible "opens in a face that gazes at our gazes in order to summon them to its depth."¹¹ Christ, the seed of love in the heart, is "the *eikōn* of the invisible God." Through that divine image, the invisible power and nature of God engages us and changes us into that which we behold,¹² so that we may become the *eikōn* of love for others.

Therefore we direct our attention not to an idol-symbol but to the living icon, the seed of God, the small stirring of love in our hearts. Sensing and consenting to the seed's quickening in our spiritual wombs, we become *Theotokoi*, God-bearers — truly an "Immaculate Reconception."¹³ May our Advent, the season in which we can only acknowledge our longing for the saving birth of love in and through us, come swiftly to its end: may Christ take flesh in us today. May this be the Christmas day on which we say,

*Christ
climbed
down
from His bare Tree.*

Grass Valley Friends Meeting Contact Information (9-10-23)

COMMITTEES: (convener or clerk in bold)

Stewardship: Mary Starr, Pat Phillips, Reed Hamilton, Gordon Starr, Doug Hamm, David Bowman. Dianne Marshall (ex-officio, Newsletter editor), Fosten Wilson (ex-officio, Treasurer), Don McCormick (ex-officio, Librarian), (ex-officio Tech Support).

Welcome: Kathy McCreery, Don McCormick, Pat Phillips, Cheryl Hendrickson, Cindy Bliss, Lo Hamm, CJ Patterson, Peter O'Rourke (ex-officio, Website and Facebook coordinator), Judy Hamilton (ex-officio, email coordinator).

Spirit and Witness: Amy Cooke, Stuart Smith, Reed Hamilton, Sharon Davisson, Dean Olson, Dorothy Henderson (ex-officio, GVFM Clerk), Gordon Starr (ex-officio, elder to the clerk).

Children's Program: Dorothy Henderson, Gordon Bishop, Doug Hamm, Judy Hamilton, Dean Olson, Reed Hamilton, Don McCormick, Keely McDonald, David Cowan, Lo Hamm.

Nominating Committee: (*terms as noted*)

- Judy Hamilton: 2022-2024
- Gordon Starr: 2022-2024
- Sharon Davisson: 2023-20205
- Dean Olson: 2023-2025

OFFICER HOLDERS

- **Clerk:** Dorothy Henderson (530-575-5988) dorothyjohenderson@gmail.com
- **Elder to Clerk:** Gordon Starr (530-878-1237) gstarr121@aol.com
- **Recording Clerk:** Amy Cooke (530-559-9158) amylisette@gmail.com/Jennifer Smith (916-663-3539) sewsmitharts@yahoo.com
- **Newsletter Editor:** Dianne Marshall (530-274-1922/530-263-0151) dmarshall@pacific.net
- **Newsletter Distributor:** Pat Phillips 530-913-1338 pephillips1949@gmail.com
- **Email Coordinator:** Judy Hamilton judywestonhamilton@gmail.com (530) 277-8818
- **Treasurer:** Fosten Wilson (530-265-6533) fwkm@protonmail.com
- **Tech Support:** Hailey Wilson seahorseleaf@protonmail.com
- **Website/Facebook Coordinator:** Peter O'Rourke (209-291-8211) peterorouke2001@yahoo.com, Amy Cooke (530-559-9158) amylisette@gmail.com
- **Librarian:** Don McCormick (310-597-9469) donmccormick2@gmail.com
- **Recorder:** Anita McCormick (530-446-1686) hungadungam@gmail.com
- **Directory Clerk:** Nancy Anderson(530-364-8351) ntowhee@gmail.com
- **Mail Clerk:** Dean Olson (530)270-9366 deanolson44@gmail.com

Representatives: one-year terms

Please note: Most organizations no longer have representatives from GVFM. They are held in two committees, Welcome and Spirit and Witness. The following organizations are the exceptions:

- **Interfaith Nevada County:** Dianne Marshall
- **Sierra Friends Center:** Gordon Starr
- **Pacific Yearly Meeting:** Doug Hamm
- **College Park Quarterly Meeting:** Doug Hamm



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