A RITUAL CELEBRATION OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT

Darkness covered the land; a pestilence of deceit and cruelty. Malignant malice menaced the bodies of our people, grasping us, shaking us like a blackened sea of vultures exposing the emptiness of our value-free venal hedonism, laying bare the bleached bones scattered helplessly from sea to sea as in the ancient vision of Ezechiel from his all-seeing chariot in the sky.

As a people we are prokaryotes, no center, no nucleus, no core image of what we might become, mindless pleasure-pain machines numbly reacting to the Pavlovian nightmare that would reduce our passions, weaken our alertness, minimize our understanding, make us sick of ourselves and our neighbors, lay waste our hopes and our loves. Defy our spirit.

But something happened. A Quadrennial ritual broke out in song and words reminding us who we have been and who we may become. We were thrown into history, ancient and modern, reminding us of the constant struggle to remain a democratic republic, while noise aiming to destroy our hopes was defeated in songs of grace by Garth and J-Lo.

Grace itself was showered upon us by Amanda Gorman’s glistening yellow coat, blazing red headband, resplendent black face, and shimmering words of struggle and hope to move us out of our gloom and into the middle of our story, a story we dare not forget to live out in its full glory.

A poem, by Tim Leonard

J-Lo

CONSIDERING MEMBERSHIP IN THE MEETING?

If you are an active attender who is nourished by your involvement in the Meeting and who feels spiritually attuned with Friends’ basic beliefs and practices, you are encouraged to apply for meeting membership. Becoming a member is an outward expression of an inward experience of the living God and of unity with other members of the meeting, and includes additional responsibilities of faithful living and engagement in the life of the meeting.

A request for membership should be sent to Lisa Cayard, clerk of Ministry and Counsel (M&C). A clearness committee will then meet with you to discern if membership is in good order, and if so, it is brought to the monthly meeting for approval.

Members of M&C welcome inquiries if you are considering this next step in the Quaker way!

Lisa Cayard

QUERIES FOR FOURTH MONTH:

What spiritual disciplines enliven my spirit?

How does our meeting facilitate spiritual growth?

-OVYM Faith and Practice

Children’s Queries for April:

1) How do we care for those around us?
2) Can we show respect to all people even when we don’t agree with them?
3) When we disagree with someone, what can we do about it? How can we end arguments quickly, in a spirit of respect? Do we try not to stay angry?
4) Do we keep our promises? Are we fair with others?

-Pittsburgh Friends Meeting

COMMUNITY COMPANION

APRIL 2021
THE CANNON FUND

Community Friends Meeting was the recipient of a gift from an attender in the 1970's, Josephine Cannon, which led to the establishment of a special fund for use by the Meeting. The trustees of Friends Garden that belonged to member Beulah Arndt—the organic farm gifted to the Meeting and the sale of which was the source of initial income for the Cannon Fund—led the Meeting in developing guidelines for use of the income from the fund. The 3 categories for disbursement are:

1) Peace and Social Concerns—dedicated to social action projects in the larger community outside the Meeting;

2) Spiritual Growth, Ministry and Sufferance—dedicated to strengthening the spiritual life of the Meeting community;

3) Discretionary—For either of the purposes above when those funds are depleted or for some other worthy purpose not foreseen.

In 2021, the current trustees report there is $7,907 available in each of the 3 categories. Friends are encouraged to text Rich House to request a grant 513-226-5591.

SANCTUARY REPORT

In February, 2017, an ad hoc committee with a concern for the welfare of immigrants was formed at Community Friends Meeting (CFM). Under this concern, members began attending meetings of the new Cincinnati Sanctuary Congregation Coalition, initiated by the Amos Project. At the March, 2017 meeting for business, CFM approved becoming a Sanctuary Support Congregation for them, allocating $500 and volunteers to help set up the new sanctuary housing at Clifton United Methodist Church. When our Congolese immigrant family arrived in Cincinnati in October 2019, CFM stepped up with volunteer and financial support for the family on a rotating basis. CFM’s next week to provide help and $200 to the Congolese family is April 11-17, 2021.

In May, 2019, CFM also became a supporter congregation for the Immigrant Dignity Coalition, convened by IJPC, which shares news and resources between groups throughout our region.

-Mary Anne Curtiss for Peace & Social Concerns

DATES AND TIMES

Mar 17 Monthly worship sharing—10:30 am via Zoom, email Paul at bucklpa@earlham.edu

Mar 21 “Remembering Old Friends (past members of CFM), 11:45 via Zoom, Sunny and Jim Rhein

Mar 26 & 27 “Weaving a Wider Welcome”, OVYM Retreat, registr. info soon

Mar 28 Spiritual Journey, 11:45 via Zoom, Paulette Meier


Apr 5 Quaker Book Group, 10:30 am via Zoom, email Paul to join bucklpa@earlham.edu

Apr 8 Tender Mercies, text David (513) 317-8201

Apr 11 Business Meeting 11:45 on Zoom. All invited

Apr 18 Regeneration: Re-weaving the Unraveling Web of Life, Unity w/ Nat. Com., 11:45 via Zoom

Apr 25 Video: Walk in the Light, A History of the Waynesville Quaker Historical District, 11:45 via Zoom
**Friends General Conference and Gathering**

“Friends General Conference (FGC), with Divine guidance, nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers.” (Minute of Purpose)

One of those programs is an annual gathering, usually held on a college campus in North America. **The Gathering** is a week of Quaker worship, workshops, and community for all ages. Friends come together from across the US and Canada (and sometimes further) to deepen our connection to one another and the Spirit.

Over the years, many, many members of CFM have attended this week of “building the blessed community.” And some have led workshops or offered other opportunities available to attendees.

This year, like last, will be a Zoom event. Early registration begins on **April 15 at 10:00**. Get ready now by going to the website to see the schedule and workshop offerings.

https://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering

**Resurrection**

“When Mary the Magdalene discovers Jesus’ own tomb empty in John 20, she runs to tell the disciples, ‘They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.’ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ‘Jesus’ grave clothes are already off when his followers arrive at the tomb, and laid neatly. For both Jesus and Lazarus, the return to life means the stripping off of the old, bloody, stinking, stained burial wrapping and shroud. What clings to us as we are renewed? What do we need to remove for our spiritual freedom? Normal, everyday people are transformed by the power of God and are then able to transform the world. Going half way doesn’t do it. It requires a full surrender.” - excerpt from Bible Half Hour at 2020 FGC Gathering, Day Four, “Resurrection” For full text go to https://www.fgcquaker.org/sites/default/files/attachments/BibleHalfHoursDays1-4%20by%20Carl%20Magruder.pdf

**Earth Day 2021**

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is a national, non-partisan, Quaker organization, founded in 1943, that lobbies Congress for peace, justice and environmental stewardship. Their advocacy flows out of the Quaker belief in the inherent dignity and worth of each person.

- We seek a world free of war and the threat of war
- We seek a society with equity and justice for all
- We seek a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled
- We seek an earth restored

Every year on April 22, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern US environmental movement in 1970. This year’s theme reflects that FCNL goal which Friends have been holding as a priority these many years. Please join Friends and others as we attend to this concern.

https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2021/
Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are currently meeting remotely on Sunday mornings at 10:00 for unprogrammed worship, lasting about an hour, followed by announcements and conversation. A second hour program may follow. Please see contact info below on how to join us.

As weather permits, outdoor meeting for worship is held at 4pm Sundays on the meetinghouse lawn, 3960 Winding Way, 45229. We follow safe distancing practices, and wear masks. Join us if you are able to comply with this guidance, and please bring a chair.

Donations to the Meeting may be mailed to the meetinghouse, or:
Community Friends Treasurer, 4 Rowley Court, Cincinnati, OH 45246

Deadline for submissions to the newsletter is the 15th of the month. Send to: peggy.spohr@sbcglobal.net

For further information about Community Friends Meeting, please leave a message at (513) 861-4353 or visit our website at www.communityfriendsmeeting.org

“It has become commonplace for Friends today to talk about Quaker values, a term drawn from society at large to describe a secularized version of religious faith commitments. Values are projected ideals or goals which are rationally determined, whereas Quaker testimonies are derived from religious faith and experience fashioned out of a life of prayer, devotion and worship, joined with which seems more appropriate to Friends to espouse than an emphasis on values as a basis for Quaker faith and practice.”

-Wilmer A. Cooper, 1991, PHP #296

“Simplicity is not about being simple-minded, but being single-minded; not about doing without, but about doing.”

-Christine H. Snyder, 1991, FGC Gathering, Boone, NC

Community Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
3960 Winding Way
Cincinnati, OH 45229