

Community Companion

QUAKER MEETING HOUSE
3960 WINDING WAY, CINCINNATI OH 45229-1950

In This Issue

Page 1	Query Fourth Month
Page 1	Query Fifth Month
Page 2	Paulette Meier Releases a New Album of Chants.
Page 3	Quaker Bites
Page 4	State of the Meeting
Page 5	Business Meeting April
Page 8	Called Meeting for Business: March 22
Page 9	Meeting Officers
Page 10	Earth Day 2020 at CFM
Page 10	Publication Information

Fourth Query

*What spiritual disciplines
enliven my spirit? How does
our meeting facilitate spiritual
growth?*

Fifth Query

*What binds me to my meeting
community? What fosters mutual
love and communion in our
meeting? How does our meeting
resolve conflicts when they arise?*

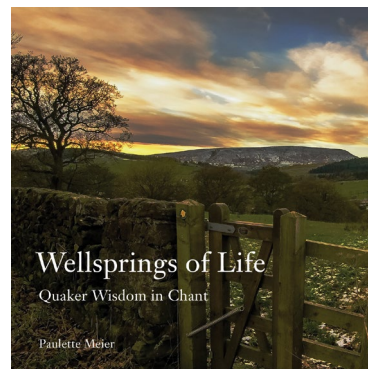
O Spirit of that early day,
So pure and strong and true,
Be with us in the narrow way
Our faithful fathers knew.
Give strength the evil to forsake,
The cross of Truth to bear,
And love and reverent fear to make
Our daily lives a prayer!

~John Greenleaf Whittier





Paulette Meier Releases a New Album of Chants.



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

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

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

This album was prompted in large part by students of Cynthia Bourgeault, a well known writer and teacher of the contemplative Christian Wisdom Tradition, who, after hearing her first Quaker CD, initiated working with Paulette to "bring the Quaker and ancient Christian Wisdom streams together," recognizing their immense resonance. Paulette has since taught her Quaker chants to hundreds of Cynthia's Wisdom students, and co-led several "Quaker Wisdom Schools" with Marcelle Martin at Pendle Hill. Chanting, or repetitive singing of simple spiritual texts, is an ancient Christian practice, that helps open the body and heart for silent meditation and worship, and



Paulette, Andrew, Nick and engineer Sean T Kelley in silent meditation together before recording

and Paulette has been happy to help introduce this to Quaker communities. Cynthia wrote that "Paulette's chants are creating a whole new musical and spiritual art form, introducing mainstream Christian contemplatives to the pearls of transformative wisdom waiting to be discovered in the Quaker mystical tradition, and introducing many Quakers to these treasures as well! This new album adds nineteen new chants to the repertoire and two talented instrumentalists to the mix. The results are lively, inspiring, moving and deeply practical, all at once. Concepts as subtle and challenging as surrender, inner stillness, non-attachment and the indwelling Christ spirit come powerfully alive through these mystical chants!"

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

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

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

Quaker Bites

Got half an hour to spare and feeling a little spiritually hungry? "Quaker Bites" provide a weekly snack of Quaker history. Each segment is about half an hour - 20 minutes of presentation and 10 minutes for questions and discussion.

The series started with a brief look at the life of George Fox up to the time he climbed Pendle Hill - his early spiritual formation. The next session, looking at the life of Margaret Fell Fox, will be at 8:30 on Tuesday morning, April 27.

The series will continue on future Tuesdays for the immediate future.

Paul

Please call Paul Buckley for more information.



Margaret Fell and George Fox at Swarthmore

2019 Community Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report

In the past year, Community Friends Meeting has experienced an upwelling of living energy in our spiritual community. While tending to the spiritual nurture of our members, we have experienced opportunities to use our gifts to minister to the great needs in the world. In the words of Sara Beth Terrell, the leader of our fall renewal, “Our gifts are an inborn expression of divine energy, to be given to others for the healing and transformation of the world, to mend what separates us, in partnership with God.” We also shared our caring support with members experiencing serious illness or major life transitions, and in November we mourned the death and celebrated the life of our beloved member Alvin Jose.

Our fall renewal, with the theme of Nurturing our Spiritual Gifts to minister in the hurting world, provided support and inspiration to our meeting members who are engaged in many kinds of ministry. Two of our members continue to travel in the ministry with the ongoing support of the meeting, each sharing the Quaker message in their unique ways. We continue to offer a monthly home-cooked meal to adults with mental illness who have experienced homelessness at Tender Mercies, which brings great joy to all who participate. Our meeting is a member of the Sanctuary Congregation Coalition, and we are currently participating with other congregations in supporting a Congolese family that is fleeing torture. This family has many needs, and one of our members has provided a powerful ministry in sharing support and friendship with them.

This year we again offered Inreach Groups, which provided opportunities for Friends to get to know one another at a deeper level, and to share our insights, longings, and leadings. Some of the topics this past year included book studies, Advanced Quakerism, and “Something Green.” Inspired by one of these groups, funds were raised for a tree-planting project to help heal the earth, and a sassafras tree was planted at Walnut Hills high school. Blackberry bushes and fruit trees are flourishing on the meetinghouse grounds. The FCNL lobbying group has met with several elected representatives, and found that there was a great deal of interest in the Quaker approach to addressing climate change.

Outreach has been another theme for our meeting this past year. Outreach committee held an Intro to Quakerism event in September that was widely advertised in the local community and at the Festival of Faiths at Xavier University. Our web clerk has updated our website to be more inviting to those who are searching for a faith community with Quaker values. We have been overjoyed in recent months to experience a large influx of visitors and new attenders, especially families with children! In January and February, we had eight to ten children, plus several babies, attending every week!

We continued our focus on the Sexual Harassment Minute that was approved last year by holding two second hour sessions for Friends to share and consider our feelings and actions around this sensitive topic. We held separate men’s and women’s groups in July to share concerns and feelings, and then a held a worship sharing session together in September. This has been a long but important process as we struggle together toward healthier and more respectful relationships.

In March of 2020, we entered the new and difficult terrain of learning to worship and connect with one another while maintaining “social distancing” due to the coronavirus pandemic. This new challenge will surely ask us to create new ways to sustain our spiritual connections with one another. We may find that instead of closing us down, the spirit is waking us up to new ways of living on the earth. We pray for guidance and for new light in these difficult times, but we feel secure in knowing that we remain connected in the holy stream, in the power of love that connects us all. This trying experience has deepened the spiritual life of our community as we grow and adapt to these challenging times.



Community Friends Meeting

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Fourth Month 12, 2020

Present via Zoom: Doug, Lisa, Paul, Sue, Eric, Deborah, Bill, Lynn, David, Eira, Wilhelmina, John, Don, Mary Anne and Frank.

1. **Opening worship:** The meeting opened with centering worship during which the presiding clerk, Doug, read the following:
"All that dwell in the light, their habitation is in God, and they know a hiding place in the day of storm; and those who dwell in the light, are built upon the rock, and cannot be moved, for who are moved or shaken, goes from the light, and so goes from their strength, and from the power of God, and loses the peace and the enjoyment of the presence of God." ~Edward Burrough, 1634-1663
2. **Clerk's Report:** Doug welcomed Friends to the meeting, and invited Friends to share any documents they are referring to.
3. **Ministry and Counsel & Counsel Committee:** Lisa d reported that the committee met by Zoom on March 29. They developed guidelines and advices for Zoom meeting for worship to be shared with the Meeting. Names for Nominating Committee were considered, and it was decided who would make contacts. They reviewed and revised draft State of the Meeting report to be presented at Business Meeting. Responses to the survey regarding Coronavirus outreach were reviewed. Sunny and Sue are coordinating connections between those who are willing to reach out with those who are requesting outreach. The committee also considered Friends receiving and needing pastoral care. The report was accepted.
4. **State of the Meeting Report:** Ministry and Counsel presented the State of the Meeting Report for 2019. After a few revisions, the report was **approved**.
5. **Proposed Names for Nominating Committee:** Ministry and Counsel brought the following names for approval to the 2020 Nominating Committee: Rich House, Tim Leonard, Wilhelmina Branson, Frank Huss, Beth Rosen, and Sue Brungs. This slate was **approved**. Sue will convene the committee.
6. **Adult Religious Education Committee:** Paul Buckley reported that the committee has exchanged email, but has not met. They are discussing activities that would best serve the meeting. Second Hour discussions are being scheduled using Zoom. One volunteer has offered to do a presentation in May. There may possibly be an event for Earth Day. Short presentations on Quaker topics to be called "Quaker Bites" will be offered. There was discussion of options for scheduling Second Hours immediately after Meeting for Worship with the new challenges of spending so much time on the computer. Some Friends enjoy socializing after meeting for worship, and some Friends feel the need for a break between meetings. Ministry and Counsel was asked to discern how to best meet these differing needs. There was also discussion of coordinating the use of Zoom accounts for various purposes. The report was accepted.

7. **House and Grounds Committee:** No report
8. **Peace and Social Concerns Committee:** No report
9. **Religious Development Committee:** Lisa reported that the committee met by Zoom on April 5. They confirmed that child care staff has been paid up to date, and discussed the possibility of having a First Day School class meeting on Zoom to keep children and families engaged. This is being discussed with potential teachers. The report was accepted.
10. **Community Committee:** Lynn reported that the committee met, but they are at a standstill regarding how to move forward with the current situation. The report was accepted.
11. **Outreach Committee:** No report
12. **Unity with Nature Committee:** Bill reported that the committee held a Zoom meeting on Saturday, April 11. The Zoom process was a challenge, but they managed to figure it out! They heard an update on the Ohio Rivers Guardians. It was noted that the ecological crisis is slowing down temporarily due to the shut down, but it will continue. Committee members shared that they continue to feel led to work on this issue. They are planning a second hour on "Dialoging with Sacred Nature", a film by David Suzuki. They may also plan a Second Hour outdoors at the Meetinghouse. The report was accepted.
13. **Stewardship Committee:** David reported that Stewardship committee ascertained that Meeting has no immediate pressing financial needs. We were fortunate to have recently transferred our annual designated proceeds from the Meeting Reserve Parnassus Fund 1727 to Trupartner Credit Union. Rather than setting up an electronic payment system, it was decided the simplest process for donations to the meeting would be to invite Friends to mail checks to Treasurer Lynn at her home address. The treasurer will need to pick up checks and bills that arrive at Meetinghouse. The new format for the Treasurer's Report was a great success. Updated Parnassus figures will be shared in the July Treasurer's Report to prepare Friends that we are not expecting to get any balance transfer to General Fund from Meeting Reserve fund next year due to the downturn in the stock market. Planned giving was also discussed. The committee will find out how other nonprofits are handling this issue during these times. Stewardship will not be sending out a fundraising letter at this time of emotional stress. The committee asked the Treasurer to decide which bills and funds to pay and when, based on resources and needs, including payments from General Fund to Building Reserve, charities, and Parent Bodies. She will clearly report this at every Business Meeting so that Friends can address the situation in a timely manner. The report was accepted.
14. **Sanctuary Inreach Group:** Mary Anne reported that this week our meeting is again responsible for the Congolese family. She will transfer \$300 from the Sanctuary Fund and from individual donations to support their needs. More will be needed ongoing, but Clifton United Methodist is reaching out to support congregations that have not yet stepped up. Mary Anne will attend the next Zoom Steering Committee meeting on April 16. Now there is only one liaison, and contact is more limited. Mary Anne sees or texts the family about every two weeks. They have enough money from the congregations, and have learned how to use the buses, so they are better able to meet their own needs. Community Friends has done a great job donating money for clothing and Mary Anne has provided support ordering needed items online. A maternity clothing drive from our Meeting last month was very successful. The family's immigration court date was scheduled for this upcoming week in New York City, but it's been postponed indefinitely. They have a lawyer and are prepared. Congolese people in Cincinnati are not necessarily supportive of the human rights issues that resulted in the family's exile, and talk here can still be dangerous to family members left in Congo. Mary Anne feels that these are really good people and we are doing good work. If more donations are needed, she will let us know. The report was accepted.

15. Treasurer's Report: Lynn reported that March income exceeded expenses, and the budget is in good shape thanks to the Parnassus fund transfer. Income in March included a check from Kroger and for use of the meetinghouse. Meetinghouse expenses were all paid, as well as child care expenses, parent body contributions, and charitable contributions. It was clarified that donations to the COVID emergency fund will be reflected in the April treasurer's report. About \$500 has been donated so far to that fund, which is enough to meet current needs. The meeting approved the creation of the COVID emergency fund. The report was accepted.

16. Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting: Eric reported from Executive Committee that there will be no face to face yearly meeting this year, which will be the 200th Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions. Planning Committee made this recommendation and also Earlham College cancelled all programs this summer. A one-time donation of up to \$5,000 to Earlham College was approved in recognition of the loss of income the College is experiencing. OVYM also approved paying the three childcare workers \$595 each in recognition of the Yearly Meeting's usual commitment to them and of their long and faithful service to the Yearly Meeting. Planning Committee is engaged in alternative sessions planning and they welcome input and help with technology. Funding for the virtual Annual Sessions will not be a problem, since there will be no room and board expenses. A new registration form is being developed. The issue of tracking race and ethnicity in the Statistical Report was discussed. Not every meeting has responded with input on the FGC request, plus FGC has since made a more specific request. Friends lifted up several individuals among Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends who are equipped to lead discussions about race, racism, and white supremacy. Friends noted that several monthly meetings have had deep discussions about these concerns. The Youth Secretary will be leaving her position at the end of June, but she is working on several ideas for youth activities this spring. The report was accepted.

17. Miami Quarterly Meeting: Deborah reported that there will be an online Quarterly Meeting in May with sharing of State of the Meeting reports. The report was accepted.

18. Friends General Conference: Eric reported that the Gathering will also be online this year. The report was accepted.

19. FCNL Lobbying Group: Doug reported that the group met with Senator Rob Portman's office, and had a good discussion on the environment. The upcoming meeting with Representative Steve Chabot's office will be on asylum and immigration in the time of the COVID crisis. The report was accepted.

20. Paulette Meijer's Music Ministry Support Committee: Mary Anne Curtiss reported that Paulette's Support and Oversight Committee met with her and approved reimbursement of some of her expenses. The music on her new CD is available online at Bandcamp. She is being faithful to her ministry to share the Quaker message, primarily among non-Quakers at this time. The report was accepted.

21. Tender Mercies: Doug reported that the real homemade food was greatly appreciated by the residents. Thanks were expressed to David and Lynn for their work in keeping this ministry going, as well as to everyone who contributes food and support. The report was accepted.

22. Approval of Minutes: The minutes were approved.

23. Closing: The meeting closed with silent worship.

**Community Friends Meeting
Called Meeting for Business
March 22, 2020**

Present: Doug, Lisa, Paul, David, Eric f, Deborah, Bill, Eira, Jim, Sunny, Lynn, Rachel, Paulette, John, Tom, Pam, Beth, Sue

1. The meeting, held using Zoom, opened with centering worship.
2. The clerk opened the meeting, and asked Friends to wave their hand if they would like to be recognized. The agenda items were reviewed:
 - Whether meeting for worship should continue to be held in person at the meetinghouse during the coronavirus pandemic,
 - How we can protect our caretakers during this time, and
 - How can we provide outreach and support to one another during this time.
3. Discussion regarding the first item included the need for extreme measures to prevent the spread of the virus, and support was expressed for suspending in-person meeting for worship for the time being. It was noted that Friends without a computer can participate in Zoom meetings using a regular telephone. There was a suggestion that perhaps Ministry and Counsel could create some guidelines for conducting Zoom meetings for worship. It was noted that using electronic communication was also a way to reduce our environmental footprint. Concern was expressed for our caretakers, that having people coming into the meetinghouse would result in more work and more risk for them. It was acknowledged that the safest decision would be for no one to attend worship in person, but some felt if we could take appropriate precautions, perhaps there could be a way for those who prefer to keep coming to restrict themselves to only entering the foyer and the meeting room. Some felt we shouldn't let fear stop us, following the example of early Friends who continued to meet in spite of threats to their safety. Others felt that we need to be good stewards to safeguard our health and err on the side of caution. It was also noted that it is a spiritual issue to take action to care for one another, and there is not a compelling reason for us to meet in person when we have electronic options. A suggestion was made that this could be an opportunity for spiritual deepening, worshiping separately and reaching out to care for one another. It was pointed out that we are not being persecuted in the present time as Friends were in the past. It is not wise to endanger one another, we have a moral and social obligation to protect one another's health. It was also pointed out that 18% of asymptomatic people are carrying the virus and could inadvertently spread the contagion. It was suggested that those who want to meet together could meet at another location, rather than at the meetinghouse. The clerk proposed that the sense of the meeting is that Community Friends Meeting will suspend face to face meetings at the meetinghouse until the health crisis is resolved, and Friends who want to meet in person should meet at other locations. Friends **approved** this minute with two Friends who standing aside.
4. **Caretakers:** There were no additional concerns regarding the needs of the Caretakers.

5. **Outreach to those with limited contact:** A suggestion was made that Ministry and Counsel could provide check-in calls to those who are house-bound or do not have access to technology. A survey was offered to use as a way to assess each member's needs. A request was made to set up an electronic way to send contributions to the meeting. A suggestion was made that outdoor worship and taking walks together while maintaining social distance could be another way to maintain contact. All Friends were encouraged to reach out to one another, especially to those who are vulnerable and living alone. It was suggested that Ministry and Counsel should develop a survey to send out to members both by email and phone contact to determine needs for support. This suggestion was **approved**.
6. The minutes were **approved**.
7. A question was raised regarding the plan for the meeting work day scheduled by House and Grounds. It was suggested that outdoor tasks could be sent out to Friends by email, and people could come in individually to work on those tasks.
8. The meeting closed with silent worship.

Meeting Officers

Presiding Clerk: Doug Burks

Assistant Clerk: Mary Anne Curtiss

Recording Clerk: Lisa Cayard

Assist. Recording Clerk: Deborah Jordan

Treasurer: Lynn Funk

Web Clerk: Eira Tansey

Archivist: John Sniegocki

Directory Editor: David Funck

Statistician: Eugene Marquis

Assistant Statistician: Paul Buckley

Earth Day 2020 at CFM

Four Friends of the Something Green in reach group celebrated Earth Day. Peggy Spohr, Jim Rhein, Paul Buckley, and Sue Brungs (while practicing social distancing) gathered on the front lawn of our Meetinghouse to celebrate being one with the Creator and Creation. They reminded us that climate change and environmental degradation are still with us and that we need to act and pray for Earth healing.



Publication Information

The Community Companion is a monthly publication of Community Friends Meeting of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Materials for the publication are due by the Wednesday of the last week of the Month.

Materials received after that date will be published in two months if appropriate.

Announcements, events, articles about CFM members, committees and concerns of Friends are invited and welcomed. The Community Companion is not possible without your submissions.

Publication every first day of the Month.

Editor:

Douglas Burks

burksdouglas@msn.com

Assistant Editor:

Tim Leonard