

Community Companion

Quaker House:

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Volume 20, Issue 12

December, 2014

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Submissions for the December newsletter due by:
Monday, Dec. 30, 2014 to Jean Crocker-Lakness

Calendar

All events and meetings take place at the Meeting House unless otherwise noted.

**Singing 9:45 am, Meeting
for Worship 10 am**

Second Hour or Carry in Potluck @ 11:40 am

- Dec. 7 8:45 am Adult Religious Education Committee (ARE) Meeting. Open to all members for brainstorming on ideas for a major Meeting wide event next year
- Dec. 7 Fill the barrel food drive (see page 7)
- Dec. 7 Meal Carry in after Meeting for Worship: FUN (Friends in Unity with Nature) Committee appreciates and encourages locally grown food when possible. Community Committee asks that if you bring something that needs to be heated before eating, please attach brief instructions to your container. Also, it's helpful to mention the name & ingredients of the dish - thanks!
- Dec. 14: Meeting for Business
- Dec. 21: Children's Christmas Play: Bring snacks to share
- Dec. 28: Seasonal Singing

In This Issue:

Pages 2-3	Summary of the November Meeting for Business
Page 3	MARCC Fall Planning Conference
Page 4	Justice for Keith LaMar
Page 5	White Privilege Conference
Page 6	FGC Gathering, 2015
Page 7	November Nature walk, Declaration of Interdependence, Fill the Barrel Food Drive

Caretakers: John Sniegocki and Elizabeth Groppe Childcare: Katelyn Buckman & Rachel Piepsny

Twelfth Query from OVYM Book of Discipline, 1978: Stewardship; Business Relations

Do you regard your possessions as given to you in trust and do you part with them freely for the needs of others? Are your means of livelihood in keeping with your ideals as Friends? Are you concerned that your business be primarily a service to people? What are you doing to foster upright practices in business relations?

Do you maintain strict integrity in all business transactions? Do you bear a faithful testimony against all forms of gambling?

November 9, 2014 Business Meeting Summary, prepared by Paul Buckley, Recording Clerk

The meeting opened with fifteen Friends present. During a period of worship, the presiding clerk read from the website of New York Yearly Meeting on how to open ourselves to creative action through shared worship and a willingness to accept disagreements.

The **Treasurer** reported that the formula for calculating the percent of the total budget that is in the General Fund at the end of the month has been modified to include our commitment to putting \$5000 into the Building Reserve Fund each year. The budget seems to be pretty much on target for the year thanks to the contributions received thus far. More will be needed.

It is time to begin putting together next year's budget. Clerks of committees are asked to send their anticipated expenses to the treasurer.

The **Adult Religious Education Committee** reported that three of the in reach groups have already met and one has been placed on hold for the time being.

The **Victory of Light** is coming up this November 22 and 23 at the Sharonville Convention Center. Sign-up sheets will be circulated for those who are willing to be our representatives there.

The ARE committee is considering a new inter-meeting event like last August's "Exploring Quaker Diversity." They are inviting all Friends to come to the December committee meeting to discuss the spiritual needs of the meeting and determine a topic. The meeting will be on December 7 at 8:45AM.

House & Grounds Committee reported that "lots of projects" were completed on the workday in October. Additional tree work is scheduled for later this year.

The **Friends in Unity with Nature Committee** discussed holding a workshop on how to divest from fossil fuels. Local churches, colleges, environmental groups, government reps, and interested individuals would be invited.

The first-floor toilet has been replaced with an ultra-low, dual-flush model. The handles will be color-coded with a sign to clarify how to use the two flush levers.

The second floor composting toilet has been cleaned out by FUN committee. The manufacturer, Sun Mar, provided instructions on how to set up a drain for excess liquid to go into the sewer so it will not flood onto the floor. Committee members are evaluating what the composting toilet bathroom needs to look refreshed, including paint, and fresh versions of educational materials about composting etc.

A work day on the composting toilet and removing vines in the woods will be on November 29 starting at 10AM. The FUN committee is supporting a protest of mountaintop removal coal mining that will be held at the Clifton branch of PNC Bank on the morning of Saturday, December 6. Contact a committee member, if you are interested.

Ministry & Counsel Committee reported the cost of the fall Renewal, including rent of the facilities at Quaker Knoll and meals was \$541. After \$430 in contributions towards these expenses from 19 participants, only \$111 came out of the committee budget.

Quakerism 101 classes started on Saturday, November 1.

The committee sent letters to youth members, inviting them to consider requesting adult membership. They are also contacting some regular attenders to encourage them to consider membership.

Several inactive members have been contacted to wish them well and ask about their intentions for continued involvement in the meeting. In response, one member responded that he has found a new faith community. The committee recommended removing his name from membership. **This was approved.**

As usual, **Religious Development Committee** will help the children put on a Christmas play. It is scheduled to be presented after meeting for worship on December 21. Practice will start after Thanksgiving.

Four of our intermediate Friends have contributed art work that will be displayed under the virtual quilt on the Quaker Heights website.

At its meeting on November 5, the **Peace & Social Concerns Committee** reviewed the content and timing of their second hour in February and put the spring presentation/movie night on the meeting calendar. They also had an informative and involving discussion regarding the relationship between for-profit prisons and the military and police killings of unarmed citizens.

The committee decided to reinvigorate the process for creating an "issues of concern" page.

Two committee members attended AMOS's public meeting for launching the Exodus Campaign, a movement of the church and faith community whose goal is to end childhood poverty in Greater Cincinnati.

November, 2014 Business Meeting Summary, Continued

The **Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati** fall planning conference will be held November 18th. At least five people will be going from Community and Cincinnati Friends Meetings.

P&SC discussed the **Earth Quaker Action Team** action at the Clifton PNC Bank. There will be twenty groups in at least seven states doing coordinated actions at PNC banks on December 6. The purpose of the protests is to put pressure on PNC bank to stop making loans to companies that do mountaintop-removal coal mining.

The **Centering Prayer** group at Lebanon Correctional Institution is going well and will be extended indefinitely. More men will be integrated into the group after the first of the year.

Four local Friends will be attending the **Friends Committee on National Legislation** annual meeting November 20-23.

The **Tender Mercies** meals continue to go well thanks to the ongoing contributions of meeting members.

A short survey on **Joint Quarterly Meeting** has been sent out by email. Friends are encouraged to complete it.

It was noted that we continue to support the **Free Store**.

Friends from El Salvador made a presentation on current conditions there on October 22.

MARCC (Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati) Fall Planning Conference

The Planning Conference was held to select issues for MARCC 2015 Concerns.

FIVE Concerns were presented

- Community police relations/ justice reform
- Economic recovery/ income disparity and employment
- Homelessness/affordable housing
- Human Service/hunger/ Medicaid expansion
- Interfaith Dialogue/ Human Rights

The five representing the Religious Society of Friends were unanimous in selecting Community police relations/justice reform.

Each of the 17 Judicatories of which the Religious Society of Friends is one got one vote

The results were:

1. Economic recovery/ income disparity and employment
2. Interfaith dialogue/ Human rights
3. Human Services/Hunger/Medicaid Expansion
4. Community Police Relations/Justice Reform
5. Homelessness/affordable housing



Those representing the Religious Society of Friends:
Left to right: Donne Hayden, Pastor, Cincinnati Friends, Ken Bordwell, serves on the MARRC executive Board representing the Religious Society of Friends and Community Friends, Mary Anne Curtiss, Community Friends, Jim Crocker-Lakness, Cincinnati Friends and Jean Crocker-Lakness, Community Friends

JUSTICE FOR KEITH La MAR

Keith LaMar has been imprisoned on Ohio's death row since 1995 for his alleged role during the "Lucasville Uprising" of 1993. He was falsely accused of having murdered prisoners and having "led a death squad." No physical evidence connects Keith to the murders that took place when the prison at Lucasville was in uprising. The verdict is based on (forced) snitch testimony.

Keith wrote a book called *Condemned*, in 2004, to highlight his life and the truth about what happened. This book [Condemned: The Whole Story](#) is now published.

From his Facebook Page: Justice for Keith LaMar

The day (Dec. 2) is upon us at last. Today, we descend upon the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati and stand in solidarity with Keith LaMar as his final appeal is made. Supporters, can we pause for a moment together and give thanks for the many blessings we have shared in coming to know one another in this fight, and particularly give celebration for how Keith has been able to lend his voice to this narrative in unprecedented ways this past year. Today, people from all walks of life will stand up in unity for this man who deserves, like anyone else, for the truth of his innocence to be heard. Today we pray that everyone will do their due diligence toward a just end: the prosecutors, the defense attorneys, and the three justices who will eventually determine what comes next for Keith. We call out to the ancestors who know Keith's struggle so very well and ask for their guidance. We pray for Keith himself as he awaits the outcome from a solitary confinement cell in Youngstown, now 21 years into this madness. We ask God to guide and direct this day that all our love for Keith and commitment to righting this wrong culminates with a force that permeates the universe; we await a just response. Today we call out for Justice for Keith LaMar, standing on the truth that love is the only freedom...



Jim and I went to the Rally before the group walk to the courthouse. We were a little disappointed because of a small turnout. Jim Crocker-Lakness is in the photo on the left.



But, then we got to the courthouse. The Courtroom could not fit everyone who was there to support Keith. People were there from all over Ohio and as far away as Calif. and Colorado. I heard that Rhonda Pfaltzgraff-Carlson was there, but because of the crowd, had to go to the over flow room. Right behind me seated were Karen Arnett, Evie Hoffmann, and Sara Howery.

We now await the decision of the judges.

Luckily I was able to get these photos before I was told to put my camera away. Ed.

I first heard about the White Privilege Conference at FGC this past summer



Theme: Resistance, Action, Courage, & Equity: The South Leading the Way!

Who Attends the WPC?

The conference is unique in its ability to bring together high school and college students, teachers, university faculty and higher education professionals, nonprofit staff, activists, social workers and counselors, healthcare workers, and members of the spiritual community and corporate arena. Annually, more than 1,500 attend from more than 35 states, Australia, Bermuda, Canada, and Germany.

Keynote Speakers

Chris Crass

Author, Educator, Movement Builder

Gyasi Ross

Author, Attorney, and Speaker

Loretta J. Ross

Speaker, Author

Dr. Mab Segrest

Professor of Gender & Women's Studies, Connecticut College (retired)
Author, Scholar and Activist

Save the Date!

16th Annual White Privilege Conference

Louisville, KY

March 11-14, 2015

Registration Begins January 1, 2015

Conference Highlights

High school youth leadership conference

Pre-conference institutes

Evening film series

Caucuses for: People of Color, College Students, Educational Professionals, LGBT Community, White Anti-Racists, and more!

Meet the Speaker and Book Signing Reception

Undergraduate/Graduate college credit in Education or Sociology available, as well as CEUs

About the WPC

Since its inception in 1999, the founder, Dr. Eddie Moore Jr., has persisted beyond misperceptions of the White Privilege Conference's (WPC) name to present a transformational experience based on three tenets: understanding, connecting and respecting. The WPC has become a venue for fostering difficult and critical dialogues around white privilege, diversity, multicultural education and leadership, social & economic justice, and intersecting systems of privilege and oppression.

- Understanding & Dismantling Privilege Journal - www.wpcjournal.com



The 2015 Gathering Committee is thrilled to announce that acclaimed Quaker author and activist [Parker J. Palmer](#) will speak to attendees at an evening plenary session at The Gathering next year. Founder of the Center for Courage and Renewal, former Dean of Studies for Pendle Hill, and author of nine books including *Let Your Life Speak* and his most recent *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, FGC is extremely pleased to have Parker share his insights and perspectives.

Joining Parker on the roster of plenary presenters is award-winning singer/songwriter [Carrie Newcomer](#), who will perform a concert for audiences on Wednesday evening at the Gathering. Carrie has produced 15 albums as a solo artist and worked with FGC's own Brent Bill for the 2006 PBS special *Festival of Friends: An Offering of Four Quaker Voices*. Proudly Quaker, she attends Bloomington Friends Meeting (OVYM).

The Gathering 2015 will also welcome North Carolina-based attorneys [Daryl Atkinson and Scott Holmes](#). During Monday night's plenary session, Daryl and Scott will discuss creating sustainable wholeness in communities broken by state-sanctioned injustice. As a trial lawyer focused on civil rights and criminal defense cases, Scott has represented Moral Monday protesters, panhandlers, Dream Team activists, and Occupy Protesters. Daryl recently used his passion for criminal justice reform to lead the nation's first successful Ban the Box campaign, which compelled the City of Durham to remove a question about past criminal convictions from the city's employment application.

Rounding out a week of invigorating plenary events will be [Dr. Tieraona Low Dog](#). On Friday, July 10th, Dr. Low Dog will present a message of transformation and hope drawing from her years as a physician, midwife, researcher, and National Geographic author.

We hope you'll join us at Gathering 2015 at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC! Follow FGC on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to get fresh updates about next year's festivities as they break.

Early Registration is April 1-12, 2015

November Nature Walk

From Elyce Benke

We had a great time on our Nature Walk on Sunday, November 16 - about 15 of us walked the trails at Mt. Airy Forest and enjoyed the woods, exercise & fellowship - We're talking about doing this on a monthly basis: taking a walk at a local Cincinnati Park after carry-in. We will be discussing what parks to go to and what time to leave, so if you're interested, contact Kim Francis, Sue Brungs or Elyce Benke. We hope to keep this simple, casual & fun - just something we can show up & share - hope you can make it



Declaration of Interdependence submitted by Susan Gerke after hearing Bill Cahalan's talk
"Communion with the Living World: An Animist Quakerism"

Let it be declared, announced and hereby celebrated...

That all people everywhere are dependent on one another.

That everyone needs everyone else for freedom, life, love and happiness.

That all things in the natural order are dependent on everything else.

That our little planet and all the planets and stars in all the solar systems are in a state of mutual dependence upon one another.

That this universally shared interdependence comes from God and is of God

And that each individual part of this great relationship has it's own part to play---

It's own destiny to fulfill in God's plan.

From Paul Buckley:

It's been a year since our very successful "Fill the Barrel" food drive. Time for another one. The food barrel is in the entryway of the meetinghouse every week, but Eugene Marquis and I are challenging Friends to fill the barrel with non-perishable food on December 7 (a pitch-in Sunday). This will be a "Feed ourselves; feed others" food drive.