

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon

First Month 2020

543 South Mountain Avenue
Ashland, Oregon 97520
(541) 482-0814
ashlandquakers@gmail.com
www.ashlandquakers.org
(Near Southern Oregon University)

1st HOUR: Discussions & Meetings

2nd HOUR: Worship

Meeting for Worship:

11 am Sundays

Childcare During Worship

First Hour & Rise of Meeting:

5 January

9:30 am: Committee Meetings

10:30 am: Circle of Light

12:30 am: Friendship & Hospitality Committee Meeting

12 January

9:30 am: Uprooting Racism Focus Group: Watching and discussing film clips of people of color speaking about their experience of living in the US. All are welcome. (Details on page 3)

19 January

8:30-10:30 am: Business Meeting

26 January

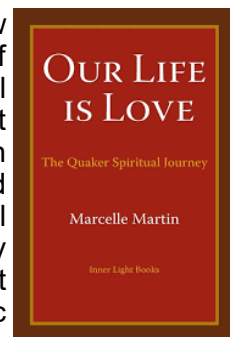
9:30 am: Adult Education: Who Are The Homeless and How Do We Steward Them? Guest speaker: Cass Sinclair, Ashland Shelter Director. (Details on page 4)



Quaker author and instructor Marcelle Martin will be facilitating South Mountain's spring retreat. In preparation I've read her Pendle Hill Pamphlet "Holding One Another in the Light" and her latest book, *Our Life is Love*; copies of both reside in our Quaker library. I write this review to encourage other Friends to acquaint themselves with Marcelle, her writings, and her thinking.

Our Life is Love

Marcelle begins *Our Life is Love* by illustrating how early Friends were unique among the Christians of their day, an era of societal unrest and spiritual seeking. She describes a progressive evolution that underlies spiritual journeys, revealing how this path holds true for both seventeenth century Quakers and current day Friends. Throughout her anecdotal narrative, Marcelle so gently weaves Quaker history and theology that the result is much more a testament than a text, and Quaker idiosyncrasies gain historic context..



As with all growth, spiritual journeys grow out of awakening. "God is present always and everywhere" writes Marcelle. "Many have glimpses of this, especially in childhood. There comes a time, however, when the need to know about the life of the Spirit takes central importance in a person's life. Thus begins a conscious spiritual journey." Initiates find themselves longing for then seeking deeper connection with God. Then, perhaps out of despair, perhaps as part of a gradual deepening, seekers turn within.

Marcelle notes that "[f]or Friends in the past and today, frequent practice in turning within, along with patient, repeated expectation of God's presence, eventually leads to the kinds of experience that brings conviction." She goes on to say that "God is speaking to people today as much as ever, revealing truth and showing the way. The most fundamental kind of opening reveals the divine Presence within people and active in the world. Most openings reveal God's wisdom and love, [as well as] how the ways of the world are not in harmony with God's desire for justice, love, and peace"—the latter often being a challenging personal *dark night of the soul* process of purification and regeneration. Early Quakers immediately felt the blessing of experiencing such purification within community, while the collective surrendering to the will of God, amidst risk of persecution and imprisonment, provided mutual support and strengthened community.

(Continued on Page 2)

Becoming Acquainted with Marcelle Martin

(Continued from Page 1)

For more than three-and-a-half centuries, community has been pivotal to the Quaker spiritual journey and especially recognized during memorial, business, and gathered meetings.

Upon recognizing ways that their lives do not confirm with God's loving design during the process of conviction, people learn how to change inwardly and outwardly in accordance with the divine will. Marcelle has observed that those "who become faithful to the promptings of the Spirit, learn increasingly to serve God's purposes" and to be more attentive to God's leadings. Friends often call upon members of their faith community to help discern whether the calling is rooted in the ego or leads to the fruits of the Spirit (named in Galatians 5:22)—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. Regardless of the joy that emerged from following God's promptings, early Friends referred to such callings as "living in the cross." According to Marcelle, "rather than worship crucifixes or other images of what Jesus suffered long ago, [seventeenth century Quakers] urged people to attend to the way that the living Christ, the Light within, was calling people to take up their own cross every day."

Having faith in divine intervention is one of the ways that Friends have learned to abide in God's power. Friends recognize synchronistic occurrences between inward and outward events and, as Marcelle has noticed, "speak of *way opening* when God leads them into ministry or action. Some Friends become so humbled by spiritual practices and life experiences which render death to the false self that they live with God continuously and love universally, as does God. Such Friends come to know the blessing of God praying and speaking through them, and they are known for the radiance of their smile and the strength of Spirit that emanates from their being.

"Holding One Another In the Light"

I created the following queries which, seemingly, underlie Marcelle's Pendle Hill Pamphlet:

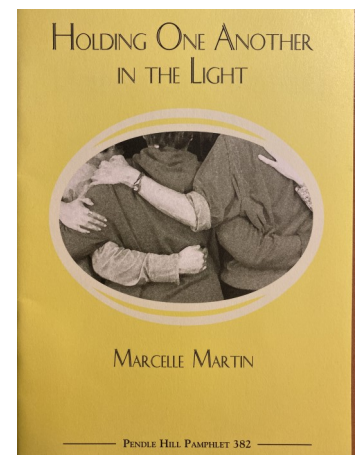
Why might we resist holding others in the Light and other forms of intercessory prayer?

What are some of the myriad ways of participating in divine love?

How may our praying for others be transformative for us?

How might holding another person in the Light impact the peace of our Meeting? of our world?

--Bob Morse



Permaculture for Children

by Yongo Otieno Wycliffe

We use not guns, we use a hoe
We drop not bombs, but seeds we sow
We don't kill, we make things grow
We don't pretend, we are what we show

We wage not war with our fellow mankind
But with their afflictions in body, heart, and mind
Poverty, ignorance, apathy, and despair
To destroy these things we will dare

Our heart is for the People and the Earth
We see them for what they're really worth
Setting all the energies we have in motion
Towards single-minded devotion

We are a few persons in this existence
But as focused rays of light are intense
And can burn a really big hole
Such is the greatness of the human soul

We are Warriors for the greater good
Yearning for a loving brotherhood
Across the world with hearts unfurled
We can make this real in our world

Yongo is a young permaculturist from Kenya who aims to recruit young Kenyans into permaculture work before they get indoctrinated into their country's war scene.

(poem courtesy of Boulder Friends Meeting)

Uprooting Racism Focus Group

9:30 am Sunday 12 January 2020

A half a year ago, we discerned that we have become an open-ended, ad hoc focus group in which we sit with each other, recognizing that those present in the group (and most in our Friends Meeting) have been racialized as white and endeavoring to become more conscious of and to feel and hold the pain of racism.

To continue expanding our awareness of how life feels to be a person of color living in the United States today, we will dedicate the 12 January Uprooting Racism Focus Group to showing and discussion film clips of people of color speaking on race. All are welcome to join in the viewing and the conversing.

If you have ideas of other ways for our focus group to educate ourselves, please communicate them to me so that our focus group remains vibrant, vital, and relevant.

Many thanks,

Bob Morse (morse@mind.net)

Preparing for February's Spiritual Listening Session on Membership

As part of our ongoing reflections on membership, Ministry and Counsel will host a spiritual listening session on 2 February 2020, the first Sunday in February.

From our previous discussions we have been clear as a Meeting that members and those who choose not to take the path of membership are equally valued as full participants in our Meeting community. Those present at the September 2019 winnowing session shared their own journeys with membership and/or choosing not to be members. It was moving to hear the varied paths we have taken and the subsequent changes that occurred over the years. Although we value the idea of membership, we are concerned that the process of seeking membership may need to be changed to make sure that it is inclusive and is experienced as a supportive, even loving, process. Similarly, individuals who are not called to become members are so very valued that we question any practice of not allowing seasoned attenders to serve the Meeting in any specific role(s).

We offer the following queries for your reflection prior to the session in February.

What does Membership mean?

*What is the value of Membership in SMFM
(or Religious Society of Friends at large)?*

*Does our current Membership process need to be
changed to be more accessible/inclusive?*

*Are there places or practices that SMFM continues
to value members over non-members?*

--Maureen Graham and Gabrielle Leslie

The BLISTER SISTERS! Lynne Pethel & Jeannie Marsh

*On fire with a passion for
social justice and a belief
in the power of music*

Sharing the stage with
Lisa Spencer, Karen
Wennlund & friends

**BENEFIT CONCERT
SUPPORTING
LAUNDRY LOVE and
ROGUE VALLEY DACA
DREAMERS**

7 pm Saturday 25 January
UCC Congregational Church
717 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland

Ashland's Winter Homeless Shelter

Curious about this year's shelter, Ken Deveney asked questions and put together the following article so that he and other Friends would be updated.—Ed.

The shelter is located at 2082 East Main Street in the former Rogue Valley Church which is still owned by a Baptist organization in northern Oregon. Ashland's City Administrator alerted shelter organizers to federal homeless funds funneled locally through ACCESS, and OHRA (Options for Helping Residents of Ashland) agreed to be the conduit for such funds, hold the necessary insurance, and hire a full-time shelter director (Cass Sinclair) and shelter navigator (case manager). Support comes, as well, from grants and donations. The City Administrator also shepherded the conditional use permit through the county bureaucracy resulting in permission to use this building as a shelter for at least three years.

The winter shelter operates seven nights a week, November through March, for 45 pre-screened guests. Due to the danger of walking on dark and shoulder-less East Main Street on wintry nights, the many guests who haven't their own vehicle are transported by van whose around-town stops include Recology, Safeway, and BiMart. The pre-screened guests are promised a cot for the season, as long as they act respectfully of others. Storage boxes are also at their disposal, allowing guests the freedom to look for work or enter into downtown establishments free of burdensome and stigmatizing backpacks.

Most of the coordinators for the seven nights represent a faith community; our Friends Meeting takes responsibility for coordinating Sunday nights. Coordinators ascertain that there will be volunteer hosts, dinner providers/servers, breakfast providers/servers, listeners, and storage-room monitors. Hosts work the overnight shift and thus, starting this year, are offered a \$50 per shift stipend. Our shelter volunteerism has evolved to where it's fully interfaith, meaning that many Sunday night volunteers are not Quakers, and some Friends serve on other nights of the week. Volunteers need not be part of a faith community; indeed many are unaffiliated, and some are atheists.

The current mission of the shelter is to help guests develop self-sufficiency. All volunteers act in support of the navigator who helps guests acquire identification cards and Oregon Health Plan services, become engaged with mental health and addiction treatment, if needed, and remove whatever other obstacles stand in the way of obtaining affordable housing and employment. Last year, homes were found for 19 guests.

It's worth clarifying that the Ashland Winter Homeless Shelter is different from the Emergency Overnight Warming Center. The latter neither takes place at 2082 East Main nor is it managed by OHRA. It is called into action by the City Administrator when inclement weather is predicted including temps or wind-chill factors near twenty degrees. Jason and Vanessa Houk of Southern Oregon Jobs for Justice operate the Warming Center whose guests include transients passing through southern Oregon or local unhoused people who have opted out of the ongoing vetted shelter system for one reason or another. Without much warning as to when the outdoors will be cold enough to warrant the opening of the Warming Center, the operators have had to scramble to locate buildings which have vacancies. So far this year, the Warming Center has taken place at Trinity Episcopal Church, the Bellview Grange, and the Ashland Public Library.

Back to the Ashland Winter Homeless shelter, **currently there is a need for more volunteers, especially in the morning.** Each volunteer is asked to serve just one time a month and do it every month through March. So far this season, volunteers affiliated with our Friends Meeting include Beth Aspedon, Becky Hale, K Hering, Terri Brain, Bob Morse, Cathy McDaniel, Herb Rothschild, Anya Kumara, Lisa Nichols, Anna Monders, Marlene Warneke, Camille Newby, Javan and Alex Reid, and participants from the Free Writing Friends group. **Interested in volunteering?** Please contact Alex at ralexandrareid@gmail.com.

Who Are The Homeless and How Do We Steward Them?

The **Sunday 26 January Adult Education's 9:30-10:30 am discussion** will focus on how F/friends feel led to share resources and caring with local unhoused residents. Volunteers will offer information, insights, and experience vis-à-vis who are homeless and why homelessness is growing exponentially. F/friends attending will be invited to share their personal inspiration regarding stewardship of those less fortunate and experiences of giving AND receiving. **Special Guest: Cass Sinclair, Ashland Shelter Director**, will share her views on homelessness and the shelter's future visions and plans. --Becky Hale

Meeting for Business: 15 Dec 2019

Present: Melody Ashworth, Bill Ashworth, Beth Aspedon, Alex Reid, Ken Deveney, Herb Rothschild, Lisa Nichols, Jean Semrau, Adam Thompson, Sylvia Weaver

Centering quote from Max Ehrmann

Library Committee

The library collection has been updated. Pendle Hill pamphlets are available for the taking. Photos of our most recently deceased Friends are now in the library.

Treasurer

Donations and expenses continue to be low.

NPYM Coordinating Committee

Junior Friends are looking for Friendly adult assistance with upcoming events. Western Oregon University in Monmouth will be the venue for the 2020 Annual Session in July. The committee is seeking an audio-visual coordinator and an event coordinator as well as a permanent Annual Session site. The Eugene Meeting has asked to be held in the Light.

Uprooting Racism Focus Group

Friends granted the group's request to meet next at 9:30am Sunday January 12.

Calendar

Rick Seifert will be in Southern Oregon in early February, researching options for a Hospice House in Portland. He is knowledgeable about Outreach and has offered to provide spiritual listening while here.

Outreach

2019.12.1 The Meeting approved establishing an ad hoc Outreach Committee to invite and involve others in our community.

Bill Ashworth and Herb Rothschild volunteered to serve on the committee, which will meet with Rick.

Ministry & Counsel

SMFM's new Welcome Statement is ready for greeters to share with new attenders. A winnowing session on membership will be held 2 February. The Summer Silent Retreat has been set for Saturday 13 June 13, 10-3 at Willow Witt.

Ashland Winter Shelter & Laundry Love

At 1 pm on 22 December, Lisa Nichols' ensemble, Firebird Wind Trio, will present a concert to benefit SMFM's sponsorship of the Winter Shelter. Bob Morse and Becky Hale have agreed to participate on the new Winter Shelter/Laundry Love committee.

Peace & Social Concerns

Local city councils are currently voting on Jackson County's proposal for a new billion-dollar jail. If approved, the vote will go to a ballot measure. The committee recommends that SMFM members and attenders oppose this proposal, which makes no effort to keep people who are mentally ill or who have drug problems out of the criminal justice system.

The Nationwide Statement: Christians Against Christian Nationalism

2019.12.2 Friends approve the Meeting for Business's encouraging members and attenders to go to the statement on Christians against Christian Nationalism website: www.christiansagainstchristianationalism.org and give serious consideration to signing this statement as they feel led.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Nichols, Clerk
Alex Reid, Recording Clerk

Bigotry, Torture & the American Way

The bigotry of America's resurgent tribalism expresses itself in several ways. One is White Nationalism. Another is Christian Nationalism—the belief that ours is a Christian nation and should be officially declared as such. Its advocates have enjoyed increasing success in weakening church-state separation.



One response is a project called Christians Against Christian Nationalism. It's a way for religious voices other than Fundamentalism to make themselves heard in the public forum. Diane Randall, executive director of Friends Committee on National Legislation, is one of many leaders who've signed the statement of principles. Meeting for Business urges Friends to visit www.christiansagainstchristianationalism.org and give serious thought to signing it.

A hallmark of the Neo-cons' New American Century was a CIA program of systematic, though utterly ineffective, torture of detainees at Guantanamo and "black sites." Obama immediately ended the program but refused to hold anyone accountable and impeded Congressional efforts to make known what had been done in our name. *The Report* is an account of the Senate Intelligence Committee's dogged pursuit of the truth and partial success in exposing it. The two-hour film is fictional but hews closely to the historical reality. It's available for viewing on Amazon Prime Video. The Peace & Social Concerns Committee urges Friends to view it. Be warned: The scenes of torture are painful to watch. And be aware: After seventeen years men are still being held without trial at Guantanamo.

--Herb Rothschild

New attacks on LGBTQ Ugandans—and on Friends

During the past few months, the Ugandan government has ramped up its efforts to revive the country's Anti-Homosexuality Act, including renewed calls for the death penalty for LGBTQ Ugandans. General violence against LGBTQ Ugandans has risen sharply, including violence against members of Bulungi Tree Shade Friends Meeting, a meeting that is in relationship with Olympia Friends Meeting (NPYM).

In response to this crisis, Olympia Friends Meeting is actively seeking immediate donations to its *Friends Ugandan Safe Transport Fund*. The meeting created this fund in 2014 to help LGBTQ Ugandans flee their homeland after the Anti-Homosexuality Act was originally passed in December 2013.

In the coming months, the *Friends Ugandan Safe Transport Fund* will help pay for medical expenses for victims of anti-LGBTQ violence and will help with transportation costs of LGBTQ Ugandans who choose to flee the country for their lives and safety.

As David Albert with Olympia Meeting told *Western Friend* this week, "What is happening there is pretty awful, and many of the targets are members of Bulungi Tree Shade Friends Meeting. . . . The fear level is extreme. Still, Meeting members there are doing what they can."

To make donations or to learn more: <http://friendsugandansafetransport.org>

"Once upon a time, when everything was so quiet you could hear green things growing, those people who cared for holy things were called to witness by speaking true words and testifying to right reason. Now, the world is filled with noise, propaganda, and ideology. It is time to learn to listen. The sacred can only be rediscovered by those who will become the shepherds of silence."

--Sam Keen, Contributing Editor, *Psychology Today*

Advices & Queries on Unity

Unity arises within the gathered meeting. Knowledge of our historic witness and spiritual discipline and mutual love prepare us for our life together. Through unity, the sense of being gathered, we may feel assured of the authenticity of our experience. Different ways of understanding the divine life can arise among us. These differences are not to be ignored for the sake of superficial agreement. They are better recognized and understood, so that a deeper and more vital unity can be reached. Convictions which might divide or disrupt us can, through divine grace, help to make the meeting creative and strong. Friends are encouraged to keep faith and fellowship with each other, waiting in the Light for that unity which draws us together in Truth and Love.

When new witness arises within a meeting, it may occasion a season of disquiet as we discern its nature and meaning. New light can be given to any one among us. We do well to remain open to what the Innermost Word calls forth among us. Revelation is ongoing, providing illumination and guidance to the individual and through individuals to the whole. Through practical and ongoing devotion, we are drawn into an experience of being gathered as a beloved community. Frequent fellowship is vital to maintaining our life together. As we grow in love and knowledge of one another, we are more able to dwell together in singleness, wholeness, and unity.

Unity is found in God's will. If we are divided, when we listen in the Spirit together, the way forward will become clear.

When problems and conflicts arise, how do we work to resolve them in a spirit of love and humility?

How do we let go of our individual desires and let the Holy Spirit lead us to unity?

How do we open ourselves to the diversity of culture, language, and expressions of faith in our yearly meeting and in the world community of Friends?

How do we respect the reputations of others? Do we avoid gossip? Do we protect necessary confidentiality?

How careful are we to avoid manipulating and exploiting one another?

SMFM CALENDAR

January 2020

Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Thinking about attending the writing group Free Writing Friends? Please call Becky (541-601-3084) to get on a wait list			1	2	3	4 9:30-11:30 am Ministry & Counsel Committee Meeting
5 9:30 am Committee Meetings 10:30 am Circle of Light 12:30 pm Friendship & Hospitality Committee Meeting	6	7 2:30-4:30 pm Free Writing Friends (FWF)	8 6:30-8 pm Light Meditation	9	10	11
12 9:30 am Uprooting Racism Focus Group: Watching and discussing video clips of people of color speaking on race	13	14 2:30 FWF 7-9 pm Ashland Song Circle	15	16	17	18
19 8:30 -10:30 am Business Meeting 2 pm Medford's MLK Day Celebration (see details below)	20 Noon Ashland's MLK Day Event (see details below)	21 2:30-4:30 pm Free Writing Friends SMFM Newsletter Deadline	22 6:30-8 pm Inquiry-Based Meditation	23	24	25 7 pm at UCC Ashland Blister Sisters Benefit Concert for Laundry Love & Rogue Valley DACA Dreamers
26 9:30 am Adult Education: Who are the homeless and how do we steward them? Guest Speaker: Ashland Winter Homeless Shelter Director Cass Sinclair	27	28 2:30-4:30 pm Free Writing Friends	29	30	31	

Martin Luther King Jr Day Celebrations in Southern Oregon

Medford:

2 pm Sunday 19 January
Medford School District Auditorium
815 South Oakdale
Doors open at 1:30 pm

Ashland:

Noon Monday 20 January
Ashland Historic Armory
208 Oak Street
Doors open at 11:30 am

MEETING OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

Clerk: Lisa Nichols 488-5577

Assistant Clerk: Jean Semrau 488-6855

Recording Clerk: Alex Reid 707-499-9146

Treasurer: Adam Thompson 201-8255

Weekly e-Bulletin Editor: Adam Thompson 201-8255

Newsletter Editor: Bob Morse 482-8449, assisted by Pam Johnson and Sylvie Weaver

Web Administrator: Bob Morse 482-8449

NPYM Coordinating Committee Contact: Sylvie Weaver 717-475-6940

Art Coordinator: Becky Hale 601-3084

Children's Education & Spirituality: Ken Deveney (convener) 488-5506, Cathy McDaniel

Joint Committee Representatives: Herb Rothschild, Steve Wells

Please direct all Meeting-related electronic correspondence to ashlandquakers@gmail.com

*Newsletter submissions are due to Bob Morse (morse@mind.net) **Tuesday** after Business Meeting*

All area codes are 541 unless otherwise noted

Finance Committee: Scott Plummer, Beth Aspedon, Bill Ashworth, Treasurer *ex officio*

Buildings & Grounds: Steve Wells, Merlin McDaniel, Raymond Scully, Hazel Ward

Nominating Committee: Beth Aspedon, Alex Reid, Anna Monders

Friendship & Hospitality Committee: Crystal Bosbach, Cathie McDaniel, Kathleen Hering, Valeria Breiten,
Greeters: Steve Radcliffe, Sylvie Weaver, Alex Reid, Javan Reid, Valeria Breiten, Karen Maleski, Terri Brain (sub)

Peace & Social Concerns Committee: Herb Rothschild (clerk), Ken Deveney, Javan Reid, Pam Allister, Andra Hollenbeck

Library Elves: Melody Ashworth, Jean Semrau, Steve Wells, Fran Curtis

Adult Education Committee: Becky Hale, Jim Lobsenz, Terri Brain, Melody Ashworth, Kathleen Hering

Ministry & Counsel Committee: Gabrielle Leslie (co-clerk) 897-4458, Maureen Graham (co-clerk) 326-9609, Rochelle Webster 201-8255, Cathy McDaniel 770-3318, Jim Phillips 482-2388, Clerk or Assistant Clerk *ex officio*

South Mountain Friends Meeting

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520