

Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

March 2024



photo by Darlene James

Do my actions support Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty?

Reconciliation Queries #6

Upcoming Events and Announcements

The next Quaker Education Session will be on Sunday, March 17, beginning at noon. Participants are welcome to bring a lunch.

PSAC will meet online at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 18. Among the items on the agenda this month is how we might contribute food or money to a local agency or agencies involved in mitigating hunger in our local community. Please use the regular Meeting for Worship Zoom link.

The next meeting of the Reading group will be on Sunday, March 24, from 3 to 4 p.m. in our Zoom space. Please contact Shirla (shirla766@gmail.com) to be added to the participant list.

The next Meeting for Worship for Business will be held in person at the Meeting House on Sunday, April 7 at 12:30 p.m. You can also join us online on our regular Meeting Zoom link.



Archive Photo:
Protesting at
King and Bay.
Jean Johnston
and Harriet
Woodside hold
the banner, Dick
Preston holds
the doves, and
Zippy Shiyoya
and Rex Barger
are in the
background.

*Photo by Carol
Leigh Wehking*

Snowfalls

by Beverly Shepard

Snow falls,
muffling sound:
all the world seems quieter -
a mimicry of peace;
muffling my garden,
and the violas look just like
the plantain weeds;

muffling hills and fields
so dull landscapes become
fairylands; and
muffling the frozen lagoon.
(One could walk upon water
and not know it.)



A Reflection on George Fox

by Siân Bowen-Cole

Probably, like many of you, George Fox is synonymous with my earliest encounters with Quakerism. Considered the founder of Quakerism, George Fox kept a journal about his experiences traveling through the United Kingdom. However the very first time I heard the name George Fox was as a child, in the song about him by poet and songwriter Sidney Carter, “with your old leather breeches and your shaggy, shaggy locks you are walking in the glory of the light,” or in some versions, “pulling down the pillars of the world, George Fox.”

I remember wondering who this man could be and admiring how he challenged authority.

At the age of 18, I was fortunate to be selected to participate in the 1983 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage “Into the Americas.” 24 of us from several European and Caribbean countries met with Americans and a Canadian (Jamie Zavitz) and were driven through the US, travelling into many States following an early Quaker migration route.

This experience had such a profound effect on my life that when a few years later British Young Friends decided to organize a pilgrimage through George Fox Country in the North West of England, including Pendle Hill, I knew I had to go.

Once again I basked in Quaker community as we travelled by mini-bus (15 seater van), ate together, explored Meeting Houses and important Quaker places, and all slept in one big room in Lancaster Meeting House.

I can recall so much of that week but most memorable was walking along the track to Margaret Fell’s house, Swarthmoor Hall, in Ulverston. There we sat in silence on the wooden benches pushed against the walls in an oak panelled room, where she would have invited others to join in Worship, we absorbed the hundreds of years which had passed since then.

When we visited Lancaster Jail our guide closed the old wooden door and I experienced the pitch dark claustrophobia of a cell which may once have held George Fox. A few minutes were enough for me.

We walked to the top of Pendle Hill and imagined George Fox standing there preaching. Indeed it was the image on the Quaker tapestry at Fairbank Fell and his words “keep your feet upon the top of the mountain and sound deep to that of God in everyone” that became my mantra and was particularly helpful during a tough time dealing with a co-worker a few years later. I found the post card from the tapestry and placed it on my desk so that it was my companion reminding me hold myself to account and to be my best self despite the challenges and remember that there was that of God in her too.

When we were still in George Fox country, we challenged ourselves to read Fox’s journal. As I read about this man who dissented and argued, I wondered what I would have thought of Quakers in that time, who were quite distinct from other members of society. However I found it a tough read and instead turned to Margaret Fell’s Journal which was fascinating and more readable. Her first husband was Judge Fell, and although he did not worship with Friends, his status afforded Quaker’s some protection, particularly when they met in the Fell’s home. Her subsequent marriage to Fox after her husband’s death made their Swarthmoor Hall home a place where Quakers could continue to meet.

As for George Fox’s Journal, recognizing it was a greater challenge to read, we young Friends decided there would be a prize for whoever read it first. It is no matter that none of us recall what the prize was as no one has claimed it. I think this is the year for me to pick it up and try again.

<https://youtu.be/GxbtvdQHFCU> George Fox song

<https://youtu.be/IIv95dM7FwY> George Fox lyrics

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2004/mar/17/guardianobituaries.religion>

Service

by Sheldon Clark

Service sees needs.
Service is creatively helpful.
Service examines alternatives.
Service is the predilection to caring.
Service is sympathetic shepherding.
'Wisdom' is the *sine qua non* of service.

Service is noble.
Service is considerate.
Service is heart-warming.
Service assumes responsibility.
Service is inspirational without limitation.
Inasmuch as ye have done it ... ye have done it unto Me.

Service listens to the Spirit.
Service is extraordinary attentiveness.
Service practices predictable consistency.
Service separates the essential from the incidental.
Service incorporates and respects others' initiatives.
Service enlarges our expectations to incorporate theirs.

Service is ubiquitous.
Service occurs anytime anywhere.
Service obeys the calls for diversity.
Service artfully, lovingly, and selflessly benefits.
Service intermingles among individuals and groups.
Serving others serves three, their neighbour, themselves, and Me

Recent Gatherings

by Dick Preston, photos by Alice Preston

A minor miracle! And to think that it happened at 7 Butty Place. On Sunday, February 11th, 2024 we shared a Friendly celebration of Hamilton Monthly Meeting's resurgence, following the lean days of Cautionary Covid Concerns.



After the very satisfactory Memorial Meeting dedicated to Ruth and Reuven Kitai on Saturday, and a well- attended Meeting for Worship on Sunday morning, we had a surprisingly big turnout for our Pot Luck – 30 people! Our Meeting Room was comfortably filled with F/friendly people, with good conversations, and plenty of food – a veritable loaves and fishes event (but without the water-into-wine part).



Meetings are expected to go through periods of shrinking and then expanding, but when we get down to a worrisome few, as we did last year, we feel so heartened to see our numbers increase.

About this Newsletter / Submission Guidelines

This Newsletter is a monthly publication of news and announcements relevant to Hamilton Quakers.

It is also a venue for members and attenders to share creative works or articles they have written on subjects that may be of interest to our Quaker community. As a general guideline we are looking for submissions that are inspirational and related to Quaker concerns, as well as announcements and news. Members and Attenders are encouraged to submit works for the newsletter.

Requests for newsletter items are announced after Meeting for Worship and/or via email during the week before Meeting for Worship for Business. They are due by the Friday before Business Meeting. Submission of materials implies permission to publish. Copyright for original material resides with the author.

If the person submitting the article is unknown to the editor or if there are questions as to whether the article will be appropriate for the Quaker newsletter, the editor will consult with the clerk(s) who will together discern what will be included. Written permission to publish must be obtained from the copyright holder if a submission is not the original work of the submitter, unless the works are in the public domain, or are covered under the creative commons license.

Hamilton Meeting reserves the right to edit submissions for length or content in consultation with the authors. Please limit submissions to a maximum of 750 words. When opinion pieces are included a line will be added indicating "Submissions reflect the opinions of their authors, and not necessarily of Hamilton Monthly Meeting".

Submissions should be directed to the current editor, Síân Reid, daywitch@gmail.com.

We acknowledge the land upon which Hamilton Friends Meeting House is located as the shared traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg, protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt covenant. This historic peace agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy, the Ojibwe, and allied nations represents a commitment to share and protect the land, water, plants, and animals, with respect. It is the privilege of Hamilton Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) to share in the tradition of stewardship of this land, which has been the environment of human beings in this territory for thousands of years. We honour the original Peoples of this land and express a commitment to and gratitude for the opportunity to work together toward restorative justice and reconciliation.