

Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

April 2024



Am I doing my own work in educating myself about reconciliation and decolonization? Am I aware of my own areas of ignorance, bias and discomfort? Reconciliation is work that settlers must do, being careful not to put the burden of this work onto Indigenous Peoples.

Reconciliation Queries #7

Upcoming Events and Announcements

The next Quaker Education Session will be on Sunday, April 14, beginning at noon. Participants are welcome to bring a lunch.

PSAC will meet online at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 15. Please use the regular Meeting for Worship Zoom link.

The next meeting of the Reading group will be on Sunday, April 21, from 3 to 4 p.m. in our Zoom space. Please contact Shirla (shirla766@gmail.com) to be added to the participant list.

On April 28, Hamilton Monthly Meeting has been invited to participate in Pelham Half Yearly Meeting, beginning at 11h30 at 6387 Quaker Road in Sparta. The topic is Holding Space for One Another in Polarized Times. A youth program is also being offered. Lunch will be provided by the hosting Meeting, but Friends from afar are asked to bring a dessert to share. We hope to have carpooling available from our Meeting House, but details had not been finalized at the time of this publication. Please RSVP to spartaquaker@gmail.com by April 24 if you plan to attend.

Cedar Haven Retreat: Saturday May 4th, 2024, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (ish) (Rain date May 11th). The Shepard family have generously offered to open their home for a Ministry and Counsel "Connections" Retreat on May 4th. Everyone is welcome. There will be a children's program. The retreat will begin with muffins and coffee/tea/juice at 9 a.m. It will include a "bring and share lunch" (that means bring food to share) with soup provided. The children's program will be run in two sessions so that facilitators will also have a time to experience the retreat. There will be opportunities to bathe in nature along the trails and walk the labyrinth. A guided walk with prompts for spiritual reflection will also be offered and Friends will be able to share with each other. Friends will be encouraged to sign up so that numbers can be used to plan refreshments etc. If you are interested in supporting/running a portion of the children's program please contact Ministry and Counsel.

The next Meeting for Worship for Business will be held in person at the Meeting House on Sunday, May 5 at 12:30 p.m. You can also join us online on our regular Meeting Zoom link.

Webmaster Needed! We recently learned that our long-time webmaster Rory d'Eon will be stepping back from managing the HMM website for us at year end. Rory was instrumental in helping us craft what we have been told is a very inviting and nicely functional website. I (Wilf Ruland) have had the pleasure of working with Rory since 2018 – I provided content and he made it all work! Rory has been wonderful to work with, and on everyone's behalf, I would like to thank him for the excellent work he has done for us. If anyone has the skill set and is interested in taking over from Rory, please contact me at deerspring1@gmail.com. If you have not, or not recently, viewed the website, it can be found at <http://hamiltonquakers.ca>.

Because it needed more space, the Library committee has moved papers and notecards, etc., from the Pendle Hill Room to the Woodbrooke Room. (Facing the board, that's to the right and to the left). If you need or would like an orientation to that move, please ask Glenna.

Canadian Yearly Meeting in Session will be held from July 24 to July 31 at Camp NeeKauNis. Those interested in attending need to submit their registration by May 1 to allow the organizers to make appropriate arrangements. More information can be found at <https://quaker.ca/yearlymeetinginsession/>. Funding may be available through Hamilton Monthly Meeting for those who wish to attend, but for whom the cost is a barrier. Please inquire.

Supper Groups Update: There was a lot of interest in coming together for shared meals. We now have four groups on the go. Three of them now gather for supper about once a month. Several people expressed an interest in forming a lunch group, and one should be starting shortly. About 29 of us are enjoying the opportunity to get together in small groups over food. Four children are included in our existing groups. If you missed out on the sign up, or wish you had known that a lunch group would be formed, there is likely to be another chance to join a group in about a year's time.

This past year, our own Dick Preston delivered the Sunderland Gardner lecture to Canadian Yearly Meeting. This lecture, “Truth and Reconciliation: a personal view from 60 years of learning Cree culture, is now available in pamphlet form at <https://quaker.ca/news/truth-and-reconciliation-2023-lecture-pamphlet-now-available/>.



Coming Soon – Party Time!

by Beverly Shepard

Siân B-C, Paul, and I were asked at a recent Meeting for Worship for Business to start planning how Hamilton Meeting will celebrate the 400th anniversary of the year George Fox was born (exactly when in that year is unknown). So we met, and we did, and here are our ideas. It's going to be great!

Sunday, June 23rd, after worship and Afterword, we'll start the party. There will be food brought by Friends. There will be a birthday cake! (Maybe we won't put 400 candles on it, but let's think about what we should say on the cake.) We'll sing the George Fox song. We'll celebrate Margaret Fell, too. Maybe our First Day School kids can come up with a little play about George – if they'd like to do that.*

The children have had several FDS sessions about George Fox in his youth. We would love it if they'd each make a poster about something in George's life that particularly intrigued or impressed them, and we will hang those in the meeting room, well ahead of the birthday party day. We also invite adults to reflect on the significance of George's – and Margaret's – life and work, on what the Quaker Way means to them, on Peace Witness and other topics central to being Quaker – and to write their thoughts down. Long-time and new Friends might answer questions such as: "What attracted or attracts you to Quakerism? What brought you here? What keeps you here?" We could print those reflections and post them around the Meeting House, too, along with the posters. We can share some of those thought in person when we gather on the designated birthday.

All those pictures and writings can be made into a little book, like the 40 years, 40 stories book that was so beautifully prepared years ago, for Friends to buy and keep as treasured reminders of our celebration.

So you see, we're going to have a real celebration of this milestone, and your organizers hope everyone will want to participate! Watch for reminders in the HMM newsletter of the fun and sharing in store.

* Siân has a booklet from Friends World Committee for Consultation with information about George and Margaret that could provide useful material – and adults in our Meeting probably have ideas to contribute to a play, if it happens.

We hope to have at least one piece about Fox or Quakers or more details or something along those lines in the next 3 newsletters.



Quakers and the Fellowship of Reconciliation: Part One

by Paul Dekar

In this two-part paper, I share a bit of the history of one of the oldest peace groups worldwide, the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). As well as a brief history of the organization, I share its significance for me and its contribution to peacemaking today.

FOR grew out of an international peace movement that had been active during the nineteenth century, especially in Britain and the United States. In July 1914, a peace conference took place in Konstanz near the border between Germany and Italy. Learning war had broken out, two delegates—Fredrich Siegmund-Schultze, chaplain to the German Kaiser, and Henry Hodgkin, an English Quaker—shook hands and pledged to build a Fellowship of Reconciliation. They wrote that “love, as revealed and interpreted in the life and death of Jesus Christ, involves more than we have yet seen ... it is the only power by which evil can be overcome, and the only sufficient basis of human society.”¹

Hodgkin and Siegmund-Schultze were principal authors of the original statement of purpose, as follows:

The FOR envisions a world of justice, peace and freedom. It is a revolutionary vision of a beloved community where differences are respected, conflicts are addressed nonviolently, oppressive structures are dismantled and where people live in harmony with the earth, nurtured by diverse spiritual traditions that foster compassion, solidarity and reconciliation.²

1 Vera Britain. *The Rebel Passion: A Short History of Some Pioneer Peacemakers*. (New York, 1964) 35.

2 *Creating the Beloved Community. A Journey with the Fellowship of Reconciliation* (Telford and Scottsdale, 2005) 23. I am building this article from my centennial history, *Dangerous People. The Fellowship of Reconciliation Building a Nonviolent World of Freedom, Justice and Peace* (Virginia Beach, 2016).

Chapters sprang up in Britain, Germany and elsewhere. Initially called a “Movement towards a Christian International”, members changed the name in the early 1920s to the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Members of the historic peace churches, Quakers, Anabaptists and Brethren, were active in chapters that sprang up in Canada, the United States and Europe. In World War I, many members went to prison as conscientious objectors. In the US and Britain, FOR chapters lobbied to provide alternative service, whether in the military in a non-combatant role, or in public service. In 1917, they formed a working group that became the National Civil Liberties Bureau (later ACLU). In 1918, FOR began publication of *The World Tomorrow* (later, *Fellowship*).

Quakers were particularly active in leadership roles, notably Henry Hodgkin who later taught at Pendle Hill outside Philadelphia. Over time, while preserving the deep Christian spirituality of its founders, FOR and the IFOR became more inter-faith, with Buddhist, Jewish and Muslim peace fellowships.

Since its beginning on the eve of WWI, FOR members have stressed that pacifism relate to not only to war resistance, but also conditions that give rise to violence and war. Members have sought to apply methods used to resist the arms race that contributed to the First World War. Even before WWI ended, Edward Evans, first executive secretary, thought that after the war, FOR should focus on resisting rearmament and an overcoming race hatred and violence. A white, Evans visited “Colored Harlem” and urged all Christians to give attention to race issues.

After the war, recognizing that the so-called peace of Versailles was deeply flawed, FOR members expanded their original vision and resolved to work for positive peace. Throughout the inter-war period, members called for disarmament, a more just distribution of wealth and the removal of international trade barriers. Seeking not only to create a world in which war is absent, but also to promote economic and social justice without which there can be no peace, members applied nonviolence in strikes and supported collective bargaining. They organized myriad peace delegations to Nicaragua and other conflict zones.

In the US during the 1920s, FOR formed a National Interracial Conference, and opened chapters in the southern states. A number of FOR members visited India and sought to apply Gandhian methods to the struggle for racial justice in the US.

I want to highlight several specific initiatives inspired by campaigns Gandhi led. In 1940, a number of FOR members formed an international “Ashram” or housing community. In a pamphlet, the first members explained,

We live in Harlem because we regard the problem of racial justice as America’s No. 1 problem in reconciliation, and most of our work concerns the Negro-white aspect of this problem. Living here makes it easy for us to contact Negro leaders ... and (for those of us who are white) to get something of a “feel” of being a Negro in America.³

Living in Harlem, members served the community by:

- helping African-Americans migrating from the South to find housing;
- investigating the use of violence by the police in strikes
- creating a credit union run by and for African-Americans, Puerto Ricans and other minorities
- organizing neighbors into a cooperative for shared buying and selling
- organizing interracial play.

The Harlem Ashram lasted into the 1950s. Among its achievements were the creation of a committee that morphed into a leading civil rights organization, CORE, the Congress of Racial Equality. In an early case, July 1944, an African American, Irene Morgan, aged 27 and mother of two, sat on a Greyhound bus in Virginia, headed to Baltimore, Maryland to see a doctor. Though seated in the section for “colored people,” Morgan was told to give up her seat when a white couple needed seats. Morgan refused and was arrested after the driver called the police.

³ *Creating the Beloved Community*, 97.

With support by FOR, CORE and other organizations, the US Supreme Court ruled Virginia's law enforcing segregation on interstate travel was illegal. As well as providing a model for future nonviolent actions, the case was significant in that another FOR member, Thurgood Marshall, at the time head of the NAACP's legal division argued the case. Marshall later was named to the US Supreme Court.

As another, FOR member Bayard Rustin served as CORE's executive. In this role, he organized a Journey of Reconciliation to the South in 1947 and the March on Washington on August 28, 1963.

During WWII in the US, FOR members again faced conscription. FOR helped some c.o.s do alternative service, which system other members opposed as an administrative cog in the war effort. After the war, FOR lobbying led briefly to an end of conscription.

Members opposed restrictions imposed on US citizens of Japanese descent and led protests against the internment of Japanese Americans. The Canadian FOR chapter opposed similar restrictions on Canadians of Japanese background. FOR condemned the dropping of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, and Nagasaki three days later. FOR took the lead in opposing the further development and use of nuclear weapons.



Easter Reflection 2024

by Sheldon Clark

Matthew 28:5-6

Fear not ... He is not here: for he is risen.

William Penn (1644-1718)

The truest end of life is to know the life that never ends.

Reflection

The reality of this life and contemplation about the next have been subject to human preoccupation since time immemorial. Some think that “to be” is all there is. One is born, lives, and dies. Death is a mystery. In the words of Shakespeare death is, *“the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns, puzzles the will and makes us rather bear those ills than fly to others we know not of.”* Death is a fact of life. Some people believe that one is born in the image of God (*Imago Dei*) in the hope of living to reflect God’s purpose, is indeed mortal, and then is born into eternal life. These statements reflect St. Paul’s enigmatic definition, not of death, but of faith: *“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”*

Wonder continues.

Prayer

Holy Spirit Divine, be with us.

We die to ourselves to unite with the Eternal.

The moment of Death is known and unknown.

Death is inevitable.

We know in our bones that Death comes to all.

We feel Death as an emptiness in body and mind.

No more suffering. No more anguish. No more pain.

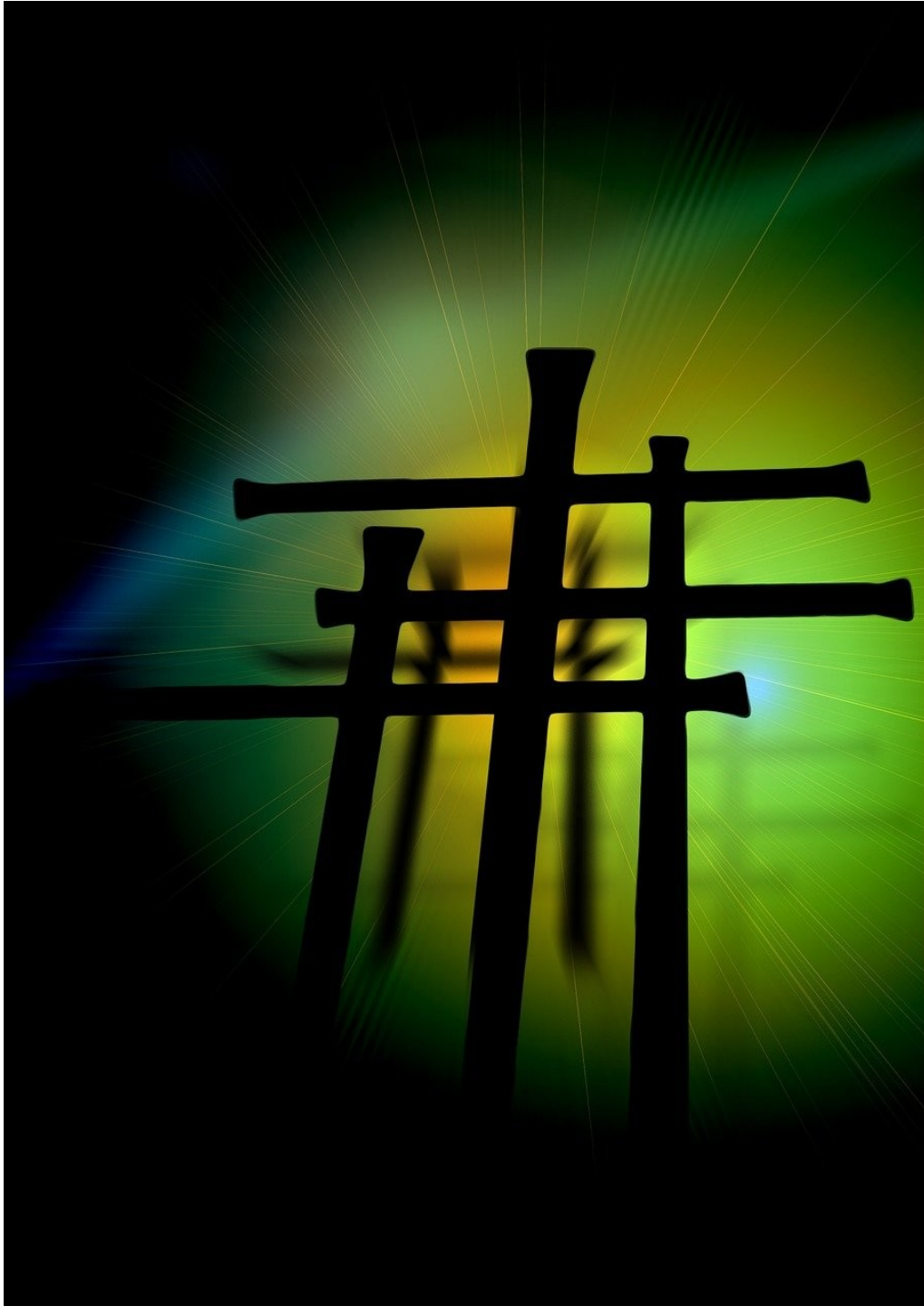
Death is the great Liberator.

Death is but the momentary pause between Tic and Toc.

Death is the silence between what used to be and what is to be.
We mourn. We rejoice. We hesitate. We live by Grace.

Heavenly Spirit, Divine Presence,
We are grateful for the mystery, *“to know the life that never ends.”*

Amen



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.