

Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

May 2025



Do you try to set aside times of quiet openness to the Holy Spirit? All of us need to find a way into silence which allows us to deepen our awareness of the divine and to find the inward source of our strength. Seek to know an inward stillness, even amid the activities of daily life. Do you encourage in yourself and in others a habit of dependence of God's guidance for each day? Hold yourself and others in the Light, knowing that all are cherished by God.

Advices and Queries #3

Upcoming Events and Announcements

The Memorial Meeting to Celebrate the Grace of God in the life of Janis Muller will be held at the Meeting House on Saturday, May 17, at 2 p.m.

There will be an Enquirers Discussion Group on Sunday, May 18 at 12:30 p.m. at the Meeting House. The following questions will be our focus: What are the essentials of Quakerism to you? What do you treasure about your Quaker practice? What are the fundamental beliefs or practices that we might agree on or even struggle with? All are welcome!

PSAC will be hosting a letter-writing workshop on Sunday, May 25 at the Meeting House, after regular meeting for worship. Please see the letter from Wilf Ruland on page 4 of the newsletter for all the details. Everyone is welcome to participate.

PSAC will meet online at 7:45 p.m. on Monday, May 26. Please use the regular Meeting for Worship Zoom link.

The next meeting of the Reading Group will be on Sunday, May 25, from 7 to 8 p.m. in our Zoom space. The group will be studying *Deep Hospitality* by Rhiannon Grant -- Pendle Hill Pamphlet – reading from page 16 to the end. Please contact Shirla (shirla766@gmail.com) to be added to the participant list.

The Spring Retreat will take place on Saturday, May 31 at Cedar Haven, the home of Bev and Robbie Shepard. Please see the full announcement and proposed schedule on pages 6 and 7 of the newsletter.

The next Meeting for Worship for Business will be held in person at the Meeting House on Sunday, June 1 at 12:30 p.m. You can also join us online on our regular Meeting Zoom link.

Can you help? Nathan Lise is looking for a room to rent in Hamilton. He is hoping to remain in Hamilton in the long term but a place for a few months would also be helpful, starting as soon as possible. If you can help or suggest any leads, please email Nathan at theNathanLise@gmail.com



Would you like to buy a book for the HMM Library?

The Library Committee is looking to refresh its offerings this spring! They are looking to acquire the following books, either by purchase or donation:

The Autumn's Brightness by Daisy Newman (youth fiction) \$35+

Don't Think Twice by Alison Lohans (youth fiction) \$15+

Walk Humbly, Serve Boldly by MP Abbott \$40.50+

The Quakers: a very short introduction by Ben Pink Dandelion \$19+

Open for Transformation by Ben Pink Dandelion \$15+

Seeking the Heart of Wisdom by J Goldstein and J Kornfield \$26+

(+ means plus tax or plus shipping)

Please contact Jane MW - mackayjwri@gmail.com or any Library Committee member if you can be of assistance.

PSAC Letter-Writing Workshop

by Wilf Ruland (on behalf of PSAC)

Dear Friends,

In these troubled times, it is good to develop possibilities for positive actions.

HMM's Peace and Social Action Committee (PSAC) has decided to offer monthly workshops for letter-writing on current peace, social justice, human rights or environmental protection concerns.

The first such workshop will be presented after Meeting for Worship on Sunday May 25th. The workshop will be presented by Wilf Ruland, who has over 40 years experience in letter-writing with Amnesty International and other organizations covering a variety of issues.

Members and attenders of HMM are invited to join Wilf for the one hour workshop which will include:

- brief introduction to letter-writing - why we do it, and why it is effective
- key components of an effective letter
- background briefing on the action we will be writing on that day
- actual letter writing and addressing of the envelope so it is ready to mail

All are welcome to join us - no experience necessary. Please bring a pen for letter-writing (but we will have extra pens in case you forget). Those who have laptops may wish to bring them, but they are not needed for this workshop.



First Day School

photos by Anya Moon

This past Easter Sunday the FDS kids learned about the Cadbury-Quaker connection and completed three mindful eating taste tests. We discussed the Quaker SPICES reflected in the story and noted how those testimonies are present in our own Easter celebrations. After refreshments we headed outside for a lovely Easter egg hunt in the beautiful weather.



The Hamilton Meeting Spring Retreat

by Beverly Shepard

As was noted in the last newsletter, our spring retreat has now been reduced to one day and made local, rather than a weekend at Camp NeeKauNis. On Saturday, May 31, Friends will gather in the morning at Cedar Haven, the rural home of Bev and Robbie Shepard, for a quiet and reflective day on the theme “Deepening the Spirit”. The day will include gathered Quaker worship, a variety of quiet activities to choose from, potluck lunch, sharing of reflections on our theme, opportunities to talk with each other, and activities for children. We will need volunteers for kitchen cleanup and for the morning children’s activities. Cedar Haven has many quiet spaces indoors and out, a labyrinth, a marked route through the woods that surround the house, a gazebo, nearness to the LaFarge walking trail, and more.

If you would like to participate, please send a note to the Hamilton Monthly Meeting address with your registration information: how many, ages of any children coming, special needs, and whether you can volunteer.

A proposed schedule follows.

HMM Retreat at Cedar Haven

May 31, 2025

Deepening the Spirit

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 10:00 AM | Arrival for coffee, tea, and treats.
(Kitchen leading to elsewhere nearby to schmooze.) |
| 10:30 – 11:15 | Meeting for Worship.
(Outdoors/Indoors, weather permitting.) |
| 11:15-11:30 | <i>Introduction: Deepening the Spirit</i> |

- 10:30-11:30 Children's activities
- 11:30 – Noonish Wash up and preparation for the Potluck Luncheon
(Special diets would be self-catering.)
- Noon Gather for Grace after the manner of Friends, lunch
- 1:00 – 2:30 PM Children's Program
Other activities
Explore the Woods (or your own, or trail leaders are available.)
Walk the Labyrinth.
Enjoy talking with friends in the gazebo.
Read. Write. Sketch. Photography. Solo time – as led.
- 2:30 – 3:00 Re-gather in the house for light refreshments.
- 3:00 – 4:00 *Deepening the Spirit:*
Sharing Reflections from the Day's Retreat.
- 4:00 – 4:15 Quiet Worship, including children
- 4:15 – 5:30 Farewell, whenever you wish.
(Enjoy staying longer for any activities you may have missed.)

What Should I Be Praying For?

An Existential Quaker Query

by Beverly Shepard

When I come to meeting for worship, or when I pray at any time – grace before meals, walking in the woods, on awakening or before sleep – I always begin with thanks. Especially with the present condition of the world much on my mind (and everyone else's, quite likely), it is abundantly clear that I am abundantly blessed. Getting old, having an incurable but treatable ailment, losing much of my eyesight – these are trivial compared to my other realities: my peaceful country, my beautiful home, my family all healthy and nearby, my financial security, and more. So I give thanks first of all, sincerely and fervently.

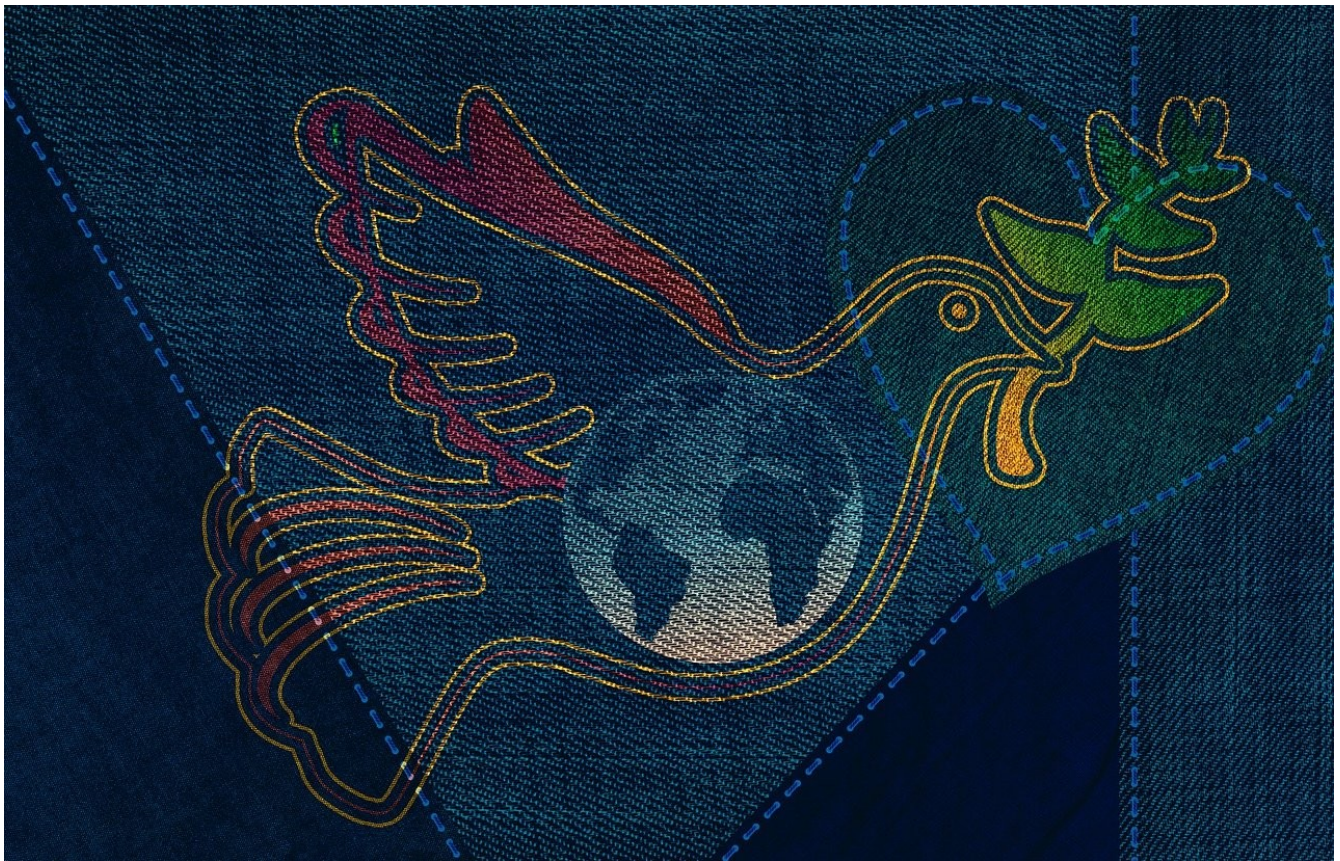
And then. Then I pray for those things I believe need divine assistance, that would benefit from the Creator's attention. This is not for myself – I just acknowledged my blessings, didn't I? – but for bigger things. I pray that human beings will work harder to save our planet. I pray that the homeless will find homes and the hungry will be fed. I pray that I will know and do my part in the work that must be done to accomplish such things. And I pray for peace.

Lately this has felt very hard. I have sat in meeting and struggled to feel relevant and meaningful as I pray for Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, Syria., Ethiopia... over 110 armed conflicts that amount to wars. Am I being silly to think peace can happen? Is this not just the way things are? What can my prayers do for this apparently perennial situation?

The Bible – which, by the way, I regard as an interesting and valuable document written by many different people a long time ago – is in large part a chronicle of conflict. Both old and new testaments tell of different peoples fighting each other, sometimes as whole societies, sometimes as clannish groups, sometimes as individuals. And going back even further, archaeologists have recently been reporting on discoveries that indicate hominids were fighting and killing each other over 13,000 years ago. It's what we do. Of course, there are always reasons. But it does seem as though that is our natural inclination.

Can God do anything about it? If we say that the Creator created people, then did s/he also build in their need to inflict harm on each other? Some of us, even from very long ago, seem to have been able to suppress or overcome that inclination. There are areas of peace, if not times with no wars. Can we pray meaningfully for peaceful spaces and times to increase? Is there a chance of that actually working? Or do we just pray that the wars which, seemingly, must go on will not spread too far, will not kill too many innocents, will be resolved even as others begin?

I sit baffled in meeting sometimes, wondering what to do, what to ask, where to begin. Wondering how to find my own peace.



Praying in Jesus' Name

by Carol Leigh Wehking

Well, they handed out the prayer books
and they asked Jesus to pray for us sinners,
but Jesus was busy feeding the hungry.
They bowed their heads and asked Jesus
to cover us in grace,
but Jesus was outside
handing his cloak to the naked.
They passed around the collection plate
to gather up the pledges,
and Jesus was on the street,
giving all he had to the poor.
They handed out hymnals
and sang hallelujah, Jesus forgives our sins,
but Jesus had moved on;
he had work to do.



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.