

Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

December 2025



When you are preoccupied and distracted in meeting let wayward and disturbing thoughts give way quietly to your awareness of God's presence among us and in the world. Receive the vocal ministry of others in a tender and creative spirit. Reach for the meaning deep within it, recognizing that even if it is not God's word for you, it may be so for others. Remember that we all share responsibility for the meeting for worship whether our ministry is in silence or through the spoken word.

Advices and Queries #12

Upcoming Events and Announcements

On December 14, First Day School will share their Christmas Presentation after Meeting for Worship.

The next meeting of the Reading Group will be on Sunday, January 4 beginning at 7:30 p.m. in our Zoom space. We will be reading the second section from *Richard Wagamese selected: what comes from Spirit*, pages 55-82, "Which Hat to Wear". There will also be a meeting on Sunday, January 25, at the same time. 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, January 4 at 12:30 p.m. You can also join us online on our regular Meeting Zoom link.

Entertaining Quaker related videos suggested by Bev:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XlMkK4_kTg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t68hQxh9tqw>

Cover photo by Bev Shepard

A Message from the Treasurer

It's time for your treasurer to remind Friends that the end of year is fast approaching. If you are new to Meeting I would remind you that Meeting needs funds to continue to operate. Please consider whether it is within your means to make a contribution. Even a small amount indicates your commitment to Meeting.

For those who normally make your contribution at this time of year, please consider whether you have been making the same contribution for several years. If you have, is it time to increase your contribution considering that annual inflation of about 3% every year increases our costs? Over the last number of years we have lost members who made significant contributions. Please be generous. Some Friends are more able to contribute than others.

In Friendship, Pete Cross, Treasurer

Cookies and Carols: December 21, 2025

Once again, we will prepare plates of sweets and treats and deliver them to those unable to make it to Meeting for Worship. Volunteers will deliver these after Meeting for Worship and sing a few songs during their visit.

Children will make cards and will prepare and wrap the cookie plates during Meeting for Worship on December 21. Donations of disposable trays and cellophane before this date would be much appreciated!

If you are able to deliver a plate or two and do some singing (there won't be many visits this year), please let Harriet know woodsideh@gmail.com (or 905-627-7930)



Remembrance Day, November 11, 2025

by Sheldon Clark

Thích Quảng Đức (1897-1963) was a Vietnamese Buddhist monk who died by self-immolation in Saigon in 1963. Anyone who saw the picture of the Buddhist in flames can never forget it. Quảng Đức was protesting the persecution of Buddhists by the South Vietnamese government, which simultaneously was waging war on their own people. The War raged on. Quảng Đức died 12 years before the fall of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), 63 years ago. Quảng Đức is remembered.

Norman Morrison (1933-1965) was an American Quaker and anti-Vietnam War (1955-1975) activist. On November 22, 1963, John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Lyndon B. Johnson, now President, began the United State's massive military build-up in Vietnam. The Bay of Tonkin incident was August 2-4, 1964. The world seemed to be going crazy with fear of another world war. On November 2, 1965, Morrison's self-immolation happened outside the Pentagon to protest United States involvement in the Vietnam War. Ironically, he died 10 days before Remembrance Day 1965, and 10 years before the fall of Saigon in 1975. Think, November 11, 2025, is 60 years since Morrison took his own life! He died to illustrate the senseless futility of the mayhem happening in Vietnam's killing fields. We remember the TV pictures of women, children, and old people being slaughtered by American soldiers in the rice paddies. Morrison is remembered.

"Lest we Forget" is the phrase used to immortalize military soldiers of the Allied Nations who were killed in WWI, and Western military personnel killed in every war since 1919. The red poppy is a controversial floral symbol derived from the poem "In Flanders Field," by Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae, M.D. The controversy stems from the red poppy (popularized since 1921), being exclusively relegated as a military recognition.

The white poppy, by contrast, is an alternative floral symbol (begun in 1933), meaning to honour all people, civilians and military alike, who are

affected by war, and furthermore as a symbol of commitment to peace and the search for non-violent solutions to international conflict and all-out war.

In 1952, our mother was a delegate to the Friends World Conference at Oxford, UK. During a break in the sessions, she joined our father and watched as my brother and I gathered white swan feathers along the Thames. A British Quaker quietly told our mother about the meaning of the white feather as “cowardice” in the UK. Our mother asked us why were we picking up the swan feathers. We answered that swan feathers looked like eagle feathers to us and were a symbol of strength and courage. The stranger said she preferred our American interpretation of the ‘white feather’.

Quảng Đức died in 1963. Morrison died in 1965. These events were two years apart, 8,500 to 8,700 miles apart, geographically and culturally quite different, but they were philosophically and spiritually entwined. Both individuals wanted to make the strongest possible statement to stop the persecution and stop the Vietnam War through their very public ultimate sacrifice. They chose to demonstrate by their ultimate sacrifice that violent persecutions and waging war destroy everything and everybody in their horrifically destructive paths to the benefit no one.

Today, Friends and others of like-mind, continue to use flowers and the gossamer beauty of feathers to commit to finding collaborative non-violent solutions for peace for the sake of everyone and everything for the survival of all. Climate change, unbridled exploitation of natural resources, especially water and arable land, and unsustainable population growth, do not need to add war to the challenges facing future generations. Let us remember, no more “chicken” games of mutually assured destruction (MAD).

Quaker Norman Morrison and Buddhist Thich Quảng Đức are remembered.

No Kings Rallies

by Paul Dekar

Nancy and I recently visited our son Matthew and his family, who live in Folsom, a city of about 90,000 inhabitants located about fifty kilometres northeast of Sacramento, California in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Originally founded in 1849 during a gold rush, when an estimated 300,000 people settled in California, Folsom is today best known for its prison, made famous by Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues."

The city straddles the American River, over which a dam was built in 1956 that provides flood control and water rights for the Sacramento-San Joaquin rivers. These provide food and recreation for millions of people. On October 18, my daughter-in-law Melissa and I joined perhaps a thousand others who straddled both sides of the river. The night before, Melissa and I had made signs, with "No Kings" and "Democracy Now" slogans. We held these throughout the two-hour vigil, which was part of a national protest of roughly six hundred rallies throughout the United States. There were no speeches; however, there were some during a rally held simultaneously in the city centre.

As we straddled both sides of the river, cars honked with riders generally greeting us with peaceable signs and gestures. The only exception was about mid-way through the rally, when about a hundred motorcycles passed us twice. The riders cursed us and unfurled banners supporting President Trump and his "Make America Great Again" agenda.

The Folsom No Kings Rally was part of the second wave of "no kings" demonstrations held around the country. According to a *Sacramento Bee* newspaper account of the rallies nationwide, the first No Kings rally in June was one of the largest single-days of protest in United States history. Both days have been organized to protest President Donald Trump's mass deportation of undocumented people nationwide without due process. The phrase refers to King George III, who exerted his power over the American colonies that sought independence in 1776. The protests have been nonviolent, and organizers have been trained in de-escalation.

There is no indication that the two No Kings rallies have swayed President Trump. But they have created a climate of resistance that is becoming manifest in other ways, for example by the recent election of Zohran Mamdani to be the first Muslim and South Asian to lead New York City, along with the electoral success of Democratic candidates in other elections. And they have engendered a coalition that has engendered support for migrants particularly threatened by President Trump's administration.



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.