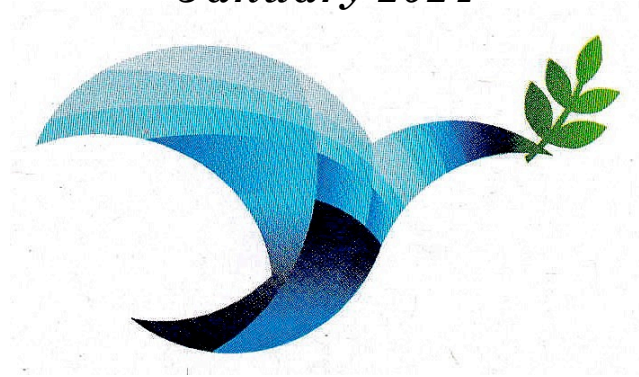


THE FAIRFIELD FRIEND

January 2024



Fairfield Friends Meeting is a diverse Quaker community that lives and shares the peace, love and Light of God in the world.



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The Fairfield Friend –January 2024

Thoughts From the Pastor, Phil Gulley

Meal as Sacrament

If you've been paying any attention to my monthly pastoral reports, you've no doubt noticed my fondness for public dining. Ten or so times a month, I join others in the meeting for a meal. One of my best attributes, gene-wise, is my ability to eat out regularly without gaining weight. I've weighed 153 pounds, without deviation, for the past ten years or so. This is God's way of telling me to eat out more.

There's a science to eating out one learns over time. Many an otherwise good meal has been ruined by the wrong company. By wrong company, I mean those people who spend the whole meal whining about others, or worse, those who haven't made the effort to talk intelligently about motorcycling. The worst dining companions are those folks who complain about the meeting. I love our meeting and don't have much patience with people who pick it apart, especially when it gives me indigestion. Complaining about your church to your pastor is like complaining about your marriage to your spouse. It never accomplishes its intended purpose, and no one wants to hear it. To ruin a good meal with negativity and blame is a waste of good food. The author of Ecclesiastes said such people were more annoying than a leaky roof in a rainstorm. Spoken like a true foodie.

This isn't to say you can't talk to me about the challenges in your life. If you're having difficulty in life and want to share a meal and talk about it, I'm all ears. But if all you do is moan about someone else, I'll probably fake an emergency and leave early. That probably makes me a bad pastor. On the other hand, the average pastor stays 4.4 years at their church, and we've been together almost 24 years, which suggests we've done a fine job not annoying one another too much.

If you'll allow the metaphor, I think a good meal is akin to a good relationship. The best meals, like the best relationships, nourish us physically and emotionally. They fill us, leaving us enriched by the experience. A bad meal, like a bad relationship, does just the opposite, leaving us disappointed and depleted. It's no surprise to me that the last thing Jesus did with his disciples was share a meal. If I knew I was going to die, I'd take all my friends to Charbono's for one last meal. We'd sit at a big round table, I'd tell jokes and stories, and since I'd soon be dead, you'd feel sorry for me and laugh at everything I said. When it came time to pay the bill, Ralph Baker would wave for the check. This is my dream.

It turns out the rules for a good meal are the same for a good life.

Take your time, haste ruins appreciation.

Treat the people who serve you with kindness and generosity. Share the meal, and your life, with people you love.

Order dessert.

Regularly and often, pick up the tab.

And that's all I have to say about that.

Fairfield Writing Group

The Fairfield Writing Group is pleased to donate \$140 to the Patricksburg school lunch fund. Books are still available. Please contact Theresa Minton or Beth Symons if you are interested in purchasing a book. Proceeds will continue to go to the Patricksburg School. Our book includes contributions from: Don Adams, JB Symons, Theresa Minton, Kathe Bryant, Linda Mann, Sondra Hayes-Hartman, Laura Borcharding, James Wolfe, M. Beth Symons, and Deborah Hunt.

Lynne Durocher

Family Promise

During my vacation this year to Portland, OR, I saw a community struggling with homelessness. Tents were everywhere along the bus and train lines which I could ride for \$1.50 a day. I'm sure the hundreds of tents that I saw were only the tip of their problem.

What a blessing it is to be home for the holidays! And yet I recognize that is not the case for everyone. Thankfully Family Promise helps out Hendrick County families with our help. In many cases the families get counseling and assistance before their eviction.

In hopes of encouragement, I'm gathering plaques for an inspiration wall. Goodwill has words of wisdom for 1-4 dollars. The washer/dryer area of Almost home is literally walking into the garage. The wall behind the machines could use some attention.

Is anyone adept at hanging a variety of size, shape, and color items and having them look balanced and pleasant? I have about a dozen plaques so far for an inspiration wall. Attached is an example.

Thanks for your continued community support.

Theresa Minton



CLERK PLEASE

January 2024

The following highlights are from the December 17 Monthly Meeting (MM), be sure to see the final minutes for details:

- Mike Chenoweth presented the November Financial Statement. November continued a concerning trend in that our expenses exceeded our income. Expenses were high due to the payment of the annual insurance premium and some operational expenses, and significantly lower revenue resulted in a deficit for the month of \$8,291. The Average Weekly Offering was around \$900 less than the current year-to-date, but the current year-to-date exceeds the previous year-to-date by more than \$300. The Reserve Fund Balance fell to 91% of the previous year expenses, the target is 75%.
- Lynne Durocher, clerk of the Finance committee, presented the proposed budget for 2024. She began by stating that this was the first time in her 15 year experience at Fairfield that a deficit budget has been proposed. This is due to the anticipated increase in expenses being roughly double the estimated increase in revenue. The proposed budget was approved.
- Ann Tarvin, Clerk, presented a brief report on behalf of Ministry and Counsel. Because December includes a fifth Sunday and it falls on New Years eve, we will hold a pitch in meal following silent worship.
- Jim McClung, clerk, presented the Trustees reports for November and December. The most important topic concerned the 1892 Meeting House. Scott Singleton, Town of Plainfield Director of Transportation had presented information about plans for the intersection of Camby Road (CR700S) and CR 1050E. The Town of Plainfield has budgeted funds for the 2024 fiscal year to proceed with the initial phase of this project and are asking for Fairfield Friends Meeting to submit a “Letter of Intent” to show our interest in selling land to them for this project. Mr. Singleton provided a draft drawing of the project showing where a round-about would be sited and what lands we would need to sell. He said that after the “Letter of Intent” was received and presented to the Town Board, Fairfield Friends could meet with members of the Town Board for discussion of the project. Included in the presentation were two proposals: one without a land swap and one with a land swap. The Town of Plainfield will need to know if Fairfield wants cash for the land or would prefer to acquire nearby land. Once the “Letter of Intent” is finalized, the Town would proceed with actual plans for the project to identify exactly how much land would be needed and to appraise the value of that land. A timeline is included that shows expectations for both sides to proceed. Scott said that after appraisal and a contract being signed the Town of Plainfield would escrow funds for the demolition of the 1892 Meeting House and the property transfer. It would be up to Fairfield Friends to use the demolition funds. The Town of Plainfield has no interest in the 1892 Meeting House. Permission to sign the “Letter of Intent” was approved.
- Laura Essex, acting clerk, reported for Christian Education. A Children’s Ministry Policy & Procedure document has been completed, and was reviewed at the last All Clerks meeting. It will now be distributed for consideration by the Fairfield community, with

approval expected at the January Monthly Meeting for Business.

- Linda Bryant, clerk of Nominating committee, present their recommendations for persons to fill committee positions in 2024. These were approved, leaving two positions to be filled, one for Trustees and one for Finance.
- Next Monthly Meeting will be at the Meetinghouse on Sunday January 21, at the rise of worship.

We have not done our best communicating on the affairs of Western Yearly Meeting, the parent organization to which Fairfield belongs, and to which we pay significant quarterly assessments. If you are interested you can learn a lot at <https://www.westernyearlymeeting.org>. There you will find a link to Western Work, the WYM newsletter.

Randy Horton, Presiding Clerk

A Contribution from Sue Walton:

A college classmate of mine who is a Quaker in Burlington, Vermont, wrote the following to me about Rammalah Friends Graduates:

Hello Hoosier!

. We Burlingtonians have been trying to reassure the world that it was one man who shot the Palestinian students and not our community. He had actually moved here only a short time, maybe just 6 months ago. He definitely should not have been able to buy a gun. I attend the Quaker Meeting which is only 3 blocks from where the students were shot so have been reaching out to console our neighbors and the family of one of the students who were hosting them for the Thanksgiving holiday.

The shooter was originally from Syracuse, NY,

This certainly has been a dark time of the year. The holidays are helping us through it. I'm lucky to live in a cohousing community where we have meals and gatherings together. Tomorrow night will be a Yankee Swap.

Jean, hoping to hear Plainfield is a good place to enjoy the holidays

#ICWA's 69th Season
Distinguished Speakers

RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM

One of the Foremost
Scholars on Christian
Nationalism

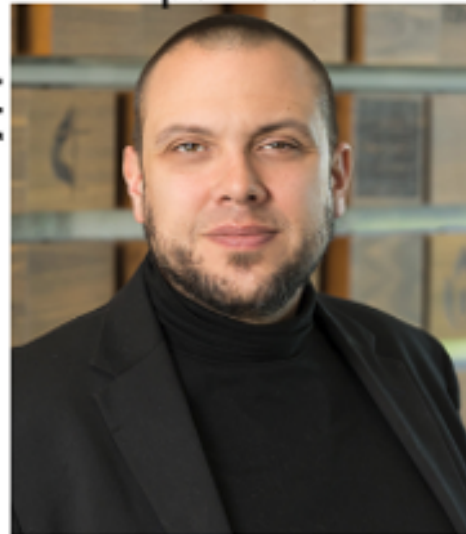
Andrew
Whitehead



panelists

Fellow at the
Center for the Study of
Religion and Culture

Robert
Saler



Hybrid-Event

**IN-PERSON and
Interactive ZOOM**

**Save the
RESCHEDULED
DATE**

**January 18, 2024
@ 7 PM ET**

Executive Director
at The Center on
Interfaith Cooperation

moderator
Charles
Wiles



The Indiana Council on World Affairs has been an active organization in Indiana for over 60 years, whose purpose is to foster public understanding of world conditions and US foreign policy through forums, lectures, conferences, publications, and online sessions. Please join online for ICWA's

69th Distinguished Speakers Series on Thursday, January 18, 7PM. This year's focus will be on Religious Nationalism, with panelists Dr. Andrew Whitehead (IU Indianapolis, Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture) and Dr. Robert Saler (Christian Theologica Seminary, Center for Pastoral Excellence and the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs) moderated by Charlie Wiles (Center for Interfaith Cooperation). Registration is at: <https://www.indianaworld.org/>

Submitted by Josih Hostetler

Program Director, Center for Interfaith Cooperation

on behalf of the Peace and Social Justice Committee

January Birthdays

Leslieann Lee	Jan 04
Kyle Rhoden	Jan 08
Larry Cordray	Jan. 09
Cathy Lucas	Jan. 09
Charles Barker	Jan. 10
Carl Lucas	Jan. 12
Charles Lee	Jan. 19
Tim Settles	Jan. 20
Georgie Baker	Jan. 21
Jake Gabbard	Jan. 28
Stacey Denny	Jan. 29
Cindy Strietelmeier	Jan. 29
Laura Gabbard	Jan. 31

Peace and Social Justice

Bullies on the Playground

by JB Symons

*Do not oppress, as you do not like to be oppressed. Do well to others, as you would like good to be done to you. Regard bad for yourself whatever you regard bad for others. Accept that (treatment) from others that you would like others to accept from you. **Islamic Golden Rule***

*Whatever is hateful and distasteful to you, do not do to your fellow man. **Judaism Golden Rule***

*Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you. **Christian Golden Rule***

The “golden rule” thought dates at least to the early [Confucian](#) times (551–479 BC). This concept appears prominently in Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and the rest of the world's major religions. 143 leaders of the world's major faiths endorsed the Golden Rule as part of the 1993 "Declaration Toward a Global Ethic." It is a concept that essentially no religion misses entirely, but belief in God is not necessary to endorse it. The Golden Rule can be found in some form in almost every ethical tradition. So now comes the 6.3 billion-dollar-question: Why is there so much hatred and vengeance in our world both explicit and implicit?

Mark Twain commented, “It is curious – curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.”

The world abounds with those who thirst for power and control – from parents to countries with tyrants and cruel dictators – bullies on the playground.

On nearly a daily basis we see hundreds to thousands paying homage to their various faiths and beliefs. Each hoping or expecting their prayers and behaviors might bring about change for themselves or others. However, sometimes too often those prayers are for the destruction of some other’s faiths and perhaps even their lives. Bullies in prayer -on the playground.

I have studied world religions for over 50 years from Native Spirituality to Zoroastrianism to Hinduism and Buddhism to name a few. At the core of all is the focus of a supreme being or place of being that is rife with peace and justice. How did the bullies get hold of this core and corrupt it?

In most cases it is the biggest and/or loudest voice that draws attention on how to interpret these Golden Rules. Egotism and selfishness are the messages clothes in sheepskins of the wolves on the playground.

Blame is another good tool for bullies—blame of other Faiths for hunger, oppression, disease, and death. The bully’s claim that they can make all of these conditions go away if only their Faith, leadership and willingness to follow would rise up and destroy the ‘unbelievers’ of other Faiths. “I will destroy you, for I believe you would destroy me” is the distorted Golden Rule of the bullies.

A solution? All of the world faiths want and expect peace, hopefulness, kindness and care of others. Do I believe my internal and external place of Faith speaks loudly and clearly enough to silence the bullies? Out of over six billion people of this beautiful planet, I cannot be the only one that can or will raise his voice.

The very first song I sang in public was: “Let there be peace on earth.” The last line is: “And let it begin with me.”

January 2024 Calendar

January 2	Trustees Committee 6:30-7:30pm
January 3	NA Support Group 7:00-8:00pm
January 4	Ministry and Counsel Committee 7:00-8:00pm
January 7	Chat Room 9:30-10:30am Meeting for Worship 10:30-11:30am
January 9	Stewardship Committee 1:30-2:30pm
January 10	NA Support Group 7-8pm
January 13	Peace and Social Justice Committee 9:30-10:30am
January 14	Chat Room 9:30-10:30am Meeting for Worship 10:30-11:30am Book Club Discussion 12-2pm
January 17	NA Support Group 7-8pm
January 18	Finance Committee 7:00-8:00pm
January 21	Chat Room 9:30-10:30am Meeting for Worship 10:30-11:30 Meeting for Business 12:00-1:00pm (At Rise of Worship and over zoom)
January 24	NA Support Group 7-8pm
January 28	Chat Room 9:30-10:30am Meeting for Worship 10:30-11:30am
January 31	NA Support Group 7-8pm

Save the date for July 11-14 when the Western Yearly Meeting will host its annual conference.

Holding in the Light List

Mark Milhous
Patti Siemantel
Jamie Beard (Sandy's niece)
Jerry & Wilma Mowrey (Cordray's friends)
Hisham Awartani
Mary Howell (Cordray's friend)
Sondra Hayes-Hartman
Jenny and her mother Jeannie
(Pam Smith's family)
Josie Uray (Josh Hostetler's friend) 0 ß

Joe Spranger's family (Matthew's father)
Don Hanlin (Hugh's brother)
Mike Jones (Ellen Blacketer's brother-in-law)
Linda Vankirk (Bill & Pam Smith's friend)
Ken Crenshaw (Edmundson/Tarvin family friend)
Ramallah Friends School
Karen Adams (Pam Smith's friend)
Liz Chrisinger (Lynne Durocher's friend)
Leah Oye (Cynthia Strietelmeier's friend)
Mike Roland (friend of Bill & Pam Smith)

And we continue to hold in the light those in our Fairfield family and larger Quaker community who cope with ongoing issues of compromised health or aging, or otherwise live with challenging situations on a daily basis:

Jack and Mary Lou (Mary Dooley's friends)
Tom & Jeanne Sagar (Phil Gulley's sister
and husband)
Alan & Helen Heuss (Cindy Streitlmeier's parents)
Margie Wollitz (Mary's twin sister)
Carol Gabbard (Jeff's mother)
Mary Denbo (Terry's mom)
Beth Sotkiewicz
Nancy Graham
Ron Frye
Patty Bowling
Jack & Marilyn Apple (Joan Gulley's brother)
Cam & Dolores "June" Smith (Bill's parents)

Ann Denny and daughter Betsey (Herb's
mom and sister)
Helen Symons (JB's mom)
Mirra LaGasse (Pam Smith's great-niece)
Bob Church (Rosemary's husband)
Margaret Tutewiler-Cox
Daryl T. Brown
Julie Kindle
Mary Lee Comer
Brenda Sellers (Linze Southwick's mom)
Jim & Pat Wilson
Louis Geiger
Deann Waltz (zoom friend)

Meeting Contacts

Pastor

Phil Gulley
philiphgulley@gmail.com
317-446-4923

Choir Director

Presiding Clerk of the Meeting

Randy Horton
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Outreach Committee

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Caring Friends Committee

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317-690-0160

Becky Horton
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To Be Added to the Email List

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Fairfield Men's Fellowship

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Membership Coordinators

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Nursery (under age 3)

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Bulletin

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Children's Meeting (age 3-8th grade)

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Jimmy McClung
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765-346-8848

Newsletter

M. Beth Symons
mbethsymons@aol.com
317-409-0300

United Society of Friends Women

Sarah Lookabill
slookabill@att.net
317-431-6342

Pianists: Lee Edmundson, Joan Gulley, Hubert Perry

Membership

Membership does not require great moral or spiritual achievement, but it does require sincerity of purpose and a commitment to Quaker values and practices. Membership is a spiritual discipline, a commitment to the well-being of ones spiritual home and not simply appearance on a membership roll.

The above is taken from the Britain Yearly Meeting book on Quaker Faith and Practice. If you desire to join us at Fairfield Friends Meeting to share your and our journey in spiritual growth please contact Larry or Carol Cordray. Our contact information is below.

Carol Daffodil327@hotmail.com or 317-727-1678 Larry Lcordray3388@gmail.com 317-372-2777