

# The Living Light

*"...and Christ shall give thee light." Ephesians 5:14*



**Volume 50, Number 3**

**First Friends Church of Whittier**

**Third Month, 2011**

## Exploring The Quaker Way



*C. Wess Daniels, Berkeley Friends Heritage Day Speaker*

### **Whittier Friends Trek To "Quaker Heritage Day"**

Every other year the annual meeting of the Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends (WARSF) meets in conjunction with "Quaker Heritage Day" at the Berkeley (CA) Friends Church. A delegation from First Friends makes the 400-mile trip to participate in both events. This year nine from First Friends flew or drove the weekend of Feb. 11-13. They attended an outstanding Heritage Day presentation by C. Wess Daniels, the pastor of Camas, WA, Friends Church and a rising young commentator on Quakerism's tradition, theology, and future.

Wess Daniels' forum was titled "Heralding the New Creation: Mission as Participation in the Quaker Tradition." His principal source material was the writings of the founding Friends: George Fox, Margaret Fell, William Penn. Followers, working with the (r)evolutionary precepts of these

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Our Quaker Quest sessions are coming up soon! The public sessions are designed to invite discussion of various topics from a Quaker perspective and provide an opportunity for Friends to share their faith with each other in a structured way. The focus of these sessions is not on Quaker history and structures but is about our direct experience of God and "the faith." The program strongly affirms that Friends have a spiritual path for today that is simple, radical and contemporary and all seekers are invited.

First Friends Church will embark on a journey of exploration with members of our community on three topics:

#### **Quakers and Religious Experience**

March 14, 2011 and April 4, 2011

Mel Sturr, Bill Wright, and Deanna Woirhayne will be presenters.

*How do you experience God? How does the Spirit inform your worship and your daily life?*

#### **Quakers and Equality**

March 21, 2011 and April 11, 2011

Ellie Bewley, Elizabeth Elliot, and Carol Urner will be presenters.

*What does equality mean to you? How would you like equality to play a part in your spiritual journey?*

#### **Quakers and Social Action**

March 28, 2011 and April 18, 2011

Rob Settlege, Isaac Chu, and Jack Huffaker will be presenters.

*What are ways that you put your faith into action? How would you like to?*

The sessions are on Monday evenings and will begin at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall and will end at 9:00 p.m. in the Meetinghouse. Please come early to greet each other and have conversation and a little refreshment before the sessions begin. At each session, three Friends will give brief presentations on the evening's topic. There will be small group discussions and a time to ask questions. The session will conclude with a short Meeting for Worship and informal conversation. Please invite your friends and neighbors and plan to attend the sessions yourselves.

**Dear Friends,** The Friendly Fare in *The Living Light* is the place to share with your “First Friends family” the non-church events that happen in your life. This can include family news, travels, milestones, special projects, celebrations, unusual events, and school or work news. A year ago I was given the word that my job and my department would be moved to Cambridge, ON, Canada. After a year of preparing myself to be out of work, I can happily report that I am still employed, and I have a new position with Bimbo Bakeries. Thanks to everyone who has helped me endure the trek to get here.

**School and Work News:** **Wes Van Dorn** had his photo in the *Press Enterprise* and was featured in their pod-cast about the Jurupa Unified School District’s annual Science Fair with his project about the xylophone and the metallophone. Wes received 2nd place in his division and was chosen as an alternate in case any of the 1st place winners are unable to continue to the RIMS (Riverside, Inyo, Mono, and San Bernardino) counties Science and Engineering Fair.

**Friends Travel:** Jungle, dams, lakes and locks were all a part of **Elinore Petoletti**’s recent trip as she traveled to and through the Panama Canal. **Vikki Kendrick** traveled to cold and snowy Philadelphia to celebrate her sister’s birthday. Vikki’s daughter, **Christy Tavernelli**, who is a sophomore at a suburban Philadelphia college, also attended the party. The Philly-style party featured cheesesteaks, soft pretzels, tastykakes, and entertainment by a Mummers band (ask Vikki if you don’t know what this is.) **Ted & Mary Marshburn, Ron & Becky Memmelaar, Bob & Sabron Newton, Tim Root, and Bill & Marygene Wright** went north to attend the Quaker Heritage Day at Berkeley Friends Church and the annual WARSF meeting on February 12. Also attending were former member **April Ellis** and her husband **Paul**



**D’Andrea**. The picture is of the group with **Wess Daniels** (center) and *The Living Light*.

**Friends About Town:** **Bill & Marygene Wright** and **Milt & Donna Wright** recently attended the Barber Shop Quartet concert at the Methodist church. They also enjoyed the Comedy Show at First Christian Church in support of Whittier First Day. **Landon Caringella**, along with his dad **Steven Caringella**, uncle **Philip Wright**, two grand-dads **Dan Wright** and **Tom Caringella**, and great-grand-dad **Milton Wright**, joined in with other amateur organ grinders to provide old-time music for several hundred spectators as they toured a recreation of a historic old west town. The ‘town’ is built on the back lot

of a private home in Riverside and is complete with a gas station, schoolhouse, printing office, saloon, general store, train depot, barbershop, mineshaft, blacksmith shop, bank, jail, and hardware store. Displayed among the buildings were dozens of antique trucks, cars, steam engines, tractors, and various types of old machinery and equipment. Here’s



**Landon** with his dad and his *The Living Light* continuing our tradition: “*The Living Light Travels*.” (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

**Friends Visit:** **Cheryl & Ward Heneveld** came to church with **Alpha Overin** on January 30th while they were visiting Southern California from Vermont. (**Janet Church** was Cheryl’s mother; **Holly Overin** is her sister.) One highlight of this trip was Cheryl’s Cal High 50th Reunion, held in Palm Springs. **Ellie Bewley**, the **Newtons**, **Settlages**, and **Woirhayes** were involved in hosting the Meeting’s recent visitors from ESR (Earlham School of Religion.)

**Friends Celebrate:** **Todd, Nancy, Samantha & Amanda Cramer** moved into their new house in time for their Christmas celebration. **Don & Shirley Votaw** recently attended the wedding, in 29 Palms, of their granddaughter, **Melissa**, daughter of **Deena Robertson**, to **Nathan Delapp**. Their other daughter **Lynda** was also there with her husband **Randy Ulyott** and son **Aaron**. **Gerald Haynes** was honored by “Toastmasters Club 1475” (of which he is a member). Guests at the fun event included his daughter-in-law **Kim Hynes**.

**Special prayers to these Friends during difficult times:** **Judith Austin** is recovering slowly from a serious eye injury.

**Friends Remember:** Condolences to **Jon-Paul Cook** whose father, **Craig Duane Cook** passed away in January.

**Friends Sharing News:** Help to keep the Friendly Fare going. Email me a note and tell me your news. Send to Lea at [lealouw@gmail.com](mailto:lealouw@gmail.com), or deliver to me at church on Sunday. See you next month!

## **Olney Friends Gather**

We welcome you to attend a potluck gathering of Olney Friends School alumni, friends, and others interested in the school on Saturday, March 5 at Noon in Fellowship Hall. Bring a dish to share and your own place setting. Coffee & tea will be provided. Rich Sidwell, head of school, will share news of the school. The gathering is informal and offers an opportunity to visit with old friends and get to know others with connections to Olney. Encourage relatives or friends with children who are potential students to come and learn more about Olney!



## **Michael And Elisabeth Recite Vows At First Friends Clan Gathering**

"We are seekers and Quakers, Republicans and Democrats, Scots and Americans." Thus Elisabeth Graham and Michael Elliot defined their ancestors and themselves in their uniquely-scripted marriage vows recited before a capacity congregation at First Friends Church during Meeting for Worship, Sunday January 30. Elisabeth and Michael were married last June 15 in the Old Quaker Meeting House in Adams MA. The renewal brought together many close friends, professional associates, and members of both families.

Michael wore a handsome formal Prince Charlie jacket and the Scottish tartan kilt of Clan Elliot. Elisabeth was a beautiful bride with a traditional sash of Graham of Menteith tartan over her blue dress. After the vows were recited, she exchanged her ancestral tartan for that of her husband. Some of Michael's family and close friends were similarly kilted, including the tall ceremonial bagpiper. Michael's best men were his brothers Greg from Kirkland, WA and Jeff from San Francisco. The bride's best man was Elisabeth's dear friend and professional theatre partner Scott K. Ratner and her matron of honor was her sister Lori Graham. Their mother Beth Graham Strader came from northern California. Beth is a long-time member of First Friends Church and Olney Friends School classmate of Ted Marshburn.

Craig Smith, a professional colleague of Elisabeth, read the Scriptural invocation, Eccl.4:7-17. Special music was provided by friends of Michael and Elisabeth. The call to worship piece, "Ashokan Farewell" by Jay Unger, was performed by David Eastly, guitar, Lara Ibrahim, violin, Patti Maggs, flute, and Anders Swanson, bass. After Becky Memmelaar's greeting to guests and special words for Elisabeth and Michael, vocalist-guitarist Paul Svenson led the congregation in Pete Seeger's hymn "Turn, Turn, Turn," based on Ecclesiastes 3. Mark Juaton and the Friends Choir sang "Thee I Love" from a favorite Quaker movie, "Friendly Persuasion," providing an introduction to Becky's reflections on marriage, "Not Quickly Broken."

During the open worship period Elisabeth and Michael rose and renewed their vows. They alternated in the highly original recitation (sometimes in mid-sentence!), with quotes from Lucretia Mott, Isaac Pennington, and Walt Whitman on the subject of marriage. A moment of levity occurred when Michael announced that he had to consult his notes (he stated afterward that the chuckle-producing break in the solemnities was uncontrived). At the close of the open worship period, Ted Marshburn read the traditional Friends marriage certificate and invited close family members to come



forward and sign it.

Meeting for Worship ended with a triumphal rendition of "Amazing Grace" by bagpipe virtuoso Michael Tony Sewell. Friends and guests thronged in the foyer to congratulate the couple and sign the marriage certificate, and then all filed into Fellowship Hall for a joyous reception.

— Bob Newton

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### ***Whittier Friends Trek continued***

missionaries, were widely influential because of their total participation: that is, teaching by being living examples of the lifestyle they espoused. Wess uses the detachable (r) because he believes that Quakerism is still a vital and expanding inspiration in the world.

The forum was delivered in two morning sessions built around the topics "Quakers, Culture and Mission" and "Participation in the Quaker Tradition." The afternoon session centered on the theme "Enacting the New Creation," and took place in small discussion groups. Friends were reunited in a final session for sharing of ideas that were generated. Responses to each point made by Wess were invited and lively sharing occurred as Friends commented on their reactions.

A meeting of the Western Association board took place Friday evening, Feb. 11. Board members and officers for the coming year were nominated and a 2011 budget was presented. These recommendations were approved at an open meeting that followed the Saturday forum. Reports by WARSF representatives to the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Friends United Meeting (FUM) and Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) were presented. As part of the last report, WARSF Presiding Clerk Bill Wright made special mention of the 6th World Conference of Friends, to be held in Kenya in April of 2012.



*Brendon Woirhaye and interns in Chengdu*

## **Brendon Brings China To Fellowship Hall**

“Take care of oldsters and children” reads a cautionary sign, written in both Chinese and English, in a park in Chengdu, China. The traditional respect for seniors endures in Chinese culture, but modern China is a nation of youthful vigor and optimism, according to Brendon Woirhaye, who visits there on business for his computer software employer, Symantec. Brendon described his April, 2008 and September, 2010 trips to Beijing and Chengdu for a fascinated All Friends Fellowship Night audience on February 9.

The pace of development in China is phenomenal. Brendon showed pictures of the impressive structures built for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, including the famous “Bird’s Nest” stadium. One high-rise building is shaped like the Olympic torch. The Chinese government curtailed automobile traffic in Beijing for several weeks prior to the Games, and succeeded in substantially reducing their famous air pollution, but it was evident in Brendon’s pictures that the smog has returned to normal levels.

Chengdu in western China is a city of 11 million, and growing rapidly. It is a hub of commerce and technology, with offices of many international companies. Brendon showed pictures of the construction of a large campus that his company is building. He supervises installation of his anti-virus software for the computer-infatuated Chinese public. Half of China’s citizens own a personal computer. Chengdu has a gigantic “computer quad” of twelve square blocks, where a major pastime of Chengdu-ites is to browse through computer hardware and software. Brendon trains young interns in his programs. His advanced trainees get some of their training in the U.S.

Brendon’s Fellowship Night travelogue included a walking tour of downtown Chengdu. It is a city of high-rise apartment buildings — only a few wealthy people live in individual family houses. No evidence could be seen of the destructive earthquake of May, 2008, attesting to the rapid mobilization capacity of the Chinese government. Brendon stayed in a hotel that seemed to be as

luxurious as any four-star equivalent in this country. Some of his most interesting pictures were of dinner tables set with exotic delicacies such as roast chicken feet (!) and bright red “dragon fruit” from a cactus plant. Brendon was initially apprehensive about his visit because he is allergic to rice, but he encountered no rice during his several-day stay in China. Everyone eats noodles as their main carbohydrate.

A bounteous potluck supper engineered by Ted and Mary Marshburn featured chicken legs (sans the feet!) and a large bowl of mysterious cellophane-packaged Chinese sweetmeats, in recognition of the Lunar New Year, which was occurring that week. The potluck, attractive tables decorated with spring flowers, and Brendon’s exhibit of Chinese art objects enhanced an outstanding Fellowship Night presentation.

— *Bob Newton*

## **ESR Visitors Warm To Whittier**

“February brings the rain; thaws the frozen lake again,” according to Sara Coleridge’s poem “The Months.” We at Whittier First Friends know it’s February when the flowering plum tree in Founder’s Court covers the ground with “California snow” and when the Earlham School of Religion visitors arrive from winter-bound eastern Indiana.

Abbey Pratt-Harrington, a first-year ESR student, and Jason Jolley, a second-year student, brought messages to Adult Sunday School and Meeting for Worship on February 6. They were accompanied by Jenny Isbell, ESR’s Outreach Coordinator.

Abbey posed the query “Have you ever heard God Speaking to you?” to a dozen Friends gathered in the Conference Room. She prefaced the query with descriptions of a few times when she felt that she was experiencing the Inward Light. Her testimony inspired a lively discussion that lasted until the call-to-worship bell sounded.

Following Michael Elliot’s reading of John 15:12-17, Jason delivered a direct and powerful challenge in his worship message. Friends should find ways to overcome our instinctive defensiveness, and practice the love that Jesus commanded, by responding to the human need that we see all around us. He reminded the

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## ***“I Am Whittier Friends School” Part 2***

Brendon Woirhaye was in the first ever kindergarten class at Whittier Friends School. Now he is a Senior Director with an international security software firm here in Southern California. He travels to India and China to train young interns in the installation of anti-virus software.

The story of Brendon’s early education at WFS really begins with his mother, Gwen Woirhaye, current Clerk of First Friends Meeting. Says Gwen “As the time approached for Brendon to start kindergarten, I really saw a need for an education based on Friends values that wasn’t available locally. I wanted my children to have a peaceful way of life in their classroom.” Gwen recalls meeting with Fred Bewley, Patty Hughes Rush, and a handful of other FFC and community members to work out an educational philosophy. “We were fortunate to have such nice classroom facilities available, the enthusiastic support of the pastor, and the blessing of the meeting,” says Gwen.

By the fall of 1974 that first kindergarten class was in full swing with a co-op group of parent volunteers supervising. Within a few months, a full-time teacher was hired with a plan to add a grade each year. Brendon’s younger brother, Loren, followed three years later. The school has been providing families with a Quaker education ever since.

An important emphasis back then, as it is now, was on peaceful conflict resolution. “The kids were encouraged to use their words rather than fists,” says Gwen. “We encouraged them to get in touch with their feelings. I feel it has contributed to a gentleness that I see in my sons as adults.” Gwen also says she feels the environment instilled in Brendon the confidence and leadership skills that serve him well today.

Brendon gives credit to his early education, (as well as his upbringing in the First Friends meeting), for helping him to learn the Quaker approach to consensus building. “This skill enables me to get contributions from everyone on my team and operate an organization that is cooperative rather than hierarchal,” says Brendon. He also notes that it was at WFS that he first learned how to interact with people of all backgrounds and ages. “We were encouraged to solve problems and think ‘outside the box.’ We learned through play and experimentation,” recalls Brendon. He has fond memories of working to create an enclosure for the class pet. He says in math he developed an intuitive approach to solving problems which has helped him academically and professionally ever since. “We were taught to use the inquiry approach and the scientific method,” states Brendon. He recently ran across a science report he had written at an early age. In the conclusion he stated that “sometimes you’re right, and sometimes you’re wrong.” Says Brendon now, “We were given the freedom to try and not always succeed without feeling like it was a failure.” He, in fact, currently holds two patents on software products that he designed, which he credits to that kind of academic and creative freedom.

After participating in the first 6th grade promotion ceremony at WFS, Brendon went on to attend Dexter Middle School, Whittier High School, and Cal Poly Pomona. It was at Whittier that he met his wife, Deanna with whom he now has three delightful children. His daughters, Anathea and Elyse both currently attend Whittier Friends School. Elyse is in the preschool class and Anathea is in third grade. Brendon and Deanna feel it is still an optimal learning environment for their children. They especially like that the students get to learn at their own pace. “Our kids can excel in their strong subjects while getting extra help and practice in their weaker areas.”

This individualized approach along with the Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, and equality (SPICE) are all part of the educational philosophy envisioned so long ago by its founders. At WFS we always say we are like a family, but for the Woirhayes this is literally true.

— Candice Ryder

## ***First Friends Tool Up For Quaker Quest***

Quaker Quest Facilitator Steven Dotson returned to Fellowship Hall from Philadelphia on Saturday, January 22, to guide Friends through a second rehearsal of our up-coming Quaker Quest presentations, to be held in March and April. With him came Rose Marie Cipryk, from St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada. They are a volunteer team that helps Friends Meetings to implement the outreach program promoted by Friends General Conference.

The format designed by British Friends and advocated by FGC is highly structured to present a complex informational outreach. Steve passed out folders describing the philosophy, guidelines and operational procedures of a Quaker Quest program. This information was largely familiar to the twenty-one FFC participants, most of whom had attended the September 19 all-day workshop brought by Steve and his colleagues.

In the short discussions that follow the presentations, guests may address queries on the topic of the evening. Participants in the Jan. 22 workshop ran through practice discussion sessions, alternating in the roles of seeker and Quaker. Two refreshment breaks at a table well-laden with finger-food snacks helped to restore concentration during the in-depth training sessions. Refreshments will also be provided at the actual Quaker Quest presentations.

The practice sessions concluded with a short period of silent meditation and singing of “We Are Called to Be God’s People” accompanied by Russ Litchfield on the piano. Friends retired from the long afternoon rehearsal with a feeling of excitement about their coming outreach project and gratitude to Steve and Rose Marie for their admirable efforts on behalf of Quakerism.

### ***Save the Date!!***

**March 26 at 5:00 p.m.** First Friends is hosting a benefit dinner for FCL-CA. Call Carrin Bouchard for details.



### ***ESR Visitors continued***

congregation that the name "Friends" has its origin in the John 15 passage: "I have called you friends ...".

Abbey grew up with a broad experience of Friends worship, including Friends General Conference unprogrammed meetings, Friends United Meeting churches, and an evangelical Friends Church. She graduated from Wilmington College in eastern Ohio and is a member of Athens OH Friends Meeting (FGC). Abbey loves to experience and appreciate other peoples and cultures. She has traveled extensively in Japan and the British Isles. She believes that she is called to some sort of human relations work that will make use of her education in Friends schools.

Jason comes from the conservative Friends tradition. His home meeting is the Foothills Worship Group near his parents' large fruit and vegetable farm in northern South Carolina, but he also participates actively in the Stillwater Friends Meeting in Barnesville OH. Jason taught English at the college level for several years in Sinaloa and Durango, Mexico. He has been active with the Vineyards mission in Mexico, a social action program. He is planning for a career in secondary education at a Friends school.

The idealism and enthusiasm of the young Friends from ESR is always uplifting to First Friends. As Abbey, Jason, and Jenny departed immediately after Meeting for Worship to catch their plane they left us with a heightened awareness of Jesus' command to "... love one another as I have loved you."

### ***Save the Date: May 1, 2011***

By popular request we will again have a Plant Sharing Event in our patio following meeting for worship on May 1st. For those of you who are interested, it is not too early to start now by making cuttings from some of your surplus garden or house plants. Less experienced gardeners appreciate plants from cuttings or seeds which are already rooted and growing in a pot. — Mary Marshburn



## ***Where Does Our Trash Go?***

On January 27, thirteen Senior Sneaks found the answer to that question at the Recycling Center, a material recovery facility (MERF) on Workman Mill Road in Whittier next to the Puente Hills landfill. Our guide took us up several stairs to a corridor overlooking the operation of the plant. He explained that there are two types of recycling plants: the domestic MERF that sorts the curbside collections and the commercial MERF that gathers waste material from businesses and industry. The latter collects a large amount of cardboard and paper. This facility was the commercial type.

The Puente Hills landfill is the largest in the United States. It can handle 13,200 tons of refuse a day. Since there is no more room for facilities of this kind in the Los Angeles basin, plans have been made to send the waste material by railroad to a remote area where 100,000 tons can be disposed of per day. Most of this project is already in place, but future construction needs to be done to enable transporting the rubbish across the road to a loading facility beside the railroad tracks. Loaded trucks are too heavy for domestic streets. A tunnel is now being built under Workman Mill Road, which had to be temporarily raised. When the job is completed the road will be lowered to its original height.

Two years ago the local landfill was running at full capacity, but now it receives only about 5,000 tons per day. The economy has affected the amount of trash collected as construction has declined and people are not buying as much. The Recycle Center used to employ nine floor sorters; now there are two. From above we watched a truck dump its load of trash on the floor. Immediately a floor sorter began to pull out the large pieces of cardboard.

What is left behind from the floor travels along a belt while pickers sort out paper, plastics, scrap metal, etc. When enough has been collected each type of material is bound into bundles. White paper is more valuable than colored. Plastic bottles and their caps are desirable. However milk cartons and other cartons which are waxed are not recycled. China is the biggest customer for most of the bundles. They are loaded onto trucks, transferred to the Port of Los Angeles, shipped to China and reprocessed further.

After this enjoyable and educational tour, the group had lunch at a TGIF restaurant in the City of Industry. Thanks, Don and Shirley Votaw, for scouting out this informative excursion. You did it again!

— Mary Raymond



## **JHF and YFF in Lake Arrowhead**

During the first weekend of February, the youth took a trip up to Lake Arrowhead to visit the beautiful cabin of Don and Shirley Votaw, who graciously opened up their home to us. Among those who went were Ethan Purkiss, Jaden Pinsker, and Wes Van Dorn of the JHF group, and Raquel Allen, Austin Allen, Olivia Allen, and Jasmine Sturr of the YFF group. Mel Sturr and Tom Purkiss had the fortunate job of chaperoning the group for the weekend. The group had lots of fun, even though there was no snow near the cabin. For a mid day activity, we headed over to a tubing range in Big Bear. There we took inflatable inner tubes up a hill and slid down. It was an enjoyable hour well spent. We later headed to the village to enjoy ice cream and shopping. Back at the cabin a few hours later, it was time to make dinner. Because Lynda was out sick for the weekend, I had the pleasure of filling her role as the chief cook and assisted Shirley in the preparation of our wonderful meal. We said our thanks and enjoyed the last night up in the mountains together. The next morning we packed up the van and thanked Don and Shirley for a wonderful weekend in their lovely home.

— Jasmine Sturr

## **Youth Glide Along**

On January 23rd at Rise of Meeting the JHF and YFF headed to The East West Ice Palace to do some ice skating. Upon our arrival we found that the rinks were hosting youth hockey playoffs and there would be no public skating that day. Being the determined group of Quakers that we are and flexible in our plans we headed off to Anaheim Ice which is the official practice ice rink for the Anaheim Ducks. The warm Sunday afternoon faded as we bundled up in our colorful coats, mittens, and caps and readied ourselves to glide across the ice, or make our best attempt at it anyway.

## **Youths Lead Worship Service**

On February 13, ten youths of First Friends Church participated in Meeting for Worship. Their message was entitled "A Problem Parable." Emma McIntosh welcomed the congregation, after which Austin Allen read the scripture: 1 Corinthians 2: 1-16. Quotes from this scripture read: "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him – these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit." Then Paul states "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

In her introduction Jasmine Sturr said that parables are often hard to understand. There can be several interpretations, depending on one's experiences, and it is not always easy to know what God wants us to do. To illustrate, Olivia Allen and Wes Van Dorn approached the front of the church discussing an anticipated meeting with the Teacher. Olivia played the part of one who wished to memorize and analyze his words while Wes planned to suck the words right into his soul. The Teacher, played by Ethan Purkiss, kept repeating "Practice what I preach." He also related a story about two men, one walking easily who fell over a cliff and the other walking hard and landing on the beach. Two paths, the wrong one led to death and the right one to life. He also told Olivia and Wes they should get along with each other.

However, they continued to argue over the meaning of the Teacher's words. Olivia had a more logical explanation while Wes claimed he remembered with his heart. In exasperation they eventually resorted to name calling such as idiot and fool. The Teacher returned imploring the two to love one another and help each other understand even though they interpreted his message differently. At the end of the skit, Jasmine returned to the podium and asked the following questions: How do we discern or hear the voice of God among all the other voices around us? Do we look for, listen to, and respond to that of God in others? Do we seek to recognize and respect the divine in those with whom we may have basic differences?

Raquel Allen gave the offertory prayer and Bella Sturr served as an usher. The closing hymn, "Day by Day" was appropriately chosen:

"O dear Lord three things I pray:

To see thee more clearly, Love thee more dearly

And follow thee more nearly Day by day."

After Amanda Cramer pronounced the sending words, the young people formed a line by the door to greet members of the congregation as they left the foyer. Their inspiring message gave us much to think about when we run into people with different views from our own.

— Mary Raymond



## Remembering Ruth Beede

Ruth Olive Young Beede was born on December 9, 1924. She was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. Her parents were Norman and Mabel Young. Her brother was Theodore Young. She graduated from North Denver High School in 1942 where she played the glockenspiel in the marching band. She attended Nebraska Central College in Central City NE for one year and William Penn College in Oskaloosa, Iowa for two years; she took a break from college in 1945 and worked in Los Angeles at United California Bank, after which she graduated with an economics degree from Earlham College in 1949.



She was married to Donald Beede on June 14, 1949 in Kokomo, Indiana. They spent their first few years of marriage in Richmond, Indiana, but in September 1953 they moved to Indio, California for about a year and then settled in La Habra, California. They raised five children — Norm, Ben, JoNita, Tina, and Lyn, of whom they have always been very proud and supportive. Their extended family now includes daughter-in-law Gayle and son-in-law Frank. Ruth enjoyed sharing her life with the lives of her seven grandchildren Mahalah, Ian, Austin, Amelia, Jonathan, Karen, and Jeffrey as well as her great grandson Jack.

Ruth Beede was a lifelong Quaker and a long time member of First Friends Church. Through Don and Ruth's involvement with the American Friends Service Committee's Crenshaw House, a half way house for recent parolees, they opened their home and family to Bob Meader, who remained a significant member of the family and a contributing member to society until his passing. Bob was fully pardoned before he died in 1995 by Governor Deukmejian.

Ruth spent many years raising her five children but also started a career as a dental assistant. She moved from assisting to the front office where she worked for over twenty-five years. After she retired from the dental office she helped in the First Friends office until she had a stroke in July 1996.

In October 1979, at 55, she started flying lessons and on May 9, 1981 she successfully passed her private flight test and became a private pilot. This was the culmination of a lifelong passion for flying. She was a member of the 99's, a woman's flying club. She always enjoyed watching airplanes, wherever she was. This included selecting her commuting route to work so that she would pass by the Fullerton airport twice a day. She was even thrilled that at St. Jude's Hospital in her last days of life, she could see airplanes on final approach to Fullerton airport.

She is survived by all of her children and grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband Donald F. Beede, August 12, 2005.

## Becky's Byline



*"I want to see you and share with you the same blessings that God's Spirit has given me. Then you will grow stronger in your faith. What I am saying is that we can encourage each other by the faith that is ours." Romans 1:11-12*

"I don't need to go to church. I can experience God in nature; or I experience God on the golf course; or I have no need to be involved in organized religion because I'm spiritual, not religious." These are some of the phrases offered by people who are explaining away their need to be in church on a regular basis. While I too have experienced God in nature or during the course of recreation, I recognize that my faith community helps draw my attention to God. Sometimes I am drawn by the words of music, sometimes by words of scripture, by spoken words, or by basking in the stillness of open worship. I tend to run away from those who proclaim spirituality over religiosity because it often is an excuse to believe in nothing (I admit my own bias here).

During the last year, my first at Whittier First Friends Church, I have had the great privilege of being a part of a variety of services. We have celebrated Christmas and Easter, studied scripture together, and listened to one another as we have done the hard work of decision-making. More than worshiping together, we have celebrated births, we have witnessed the joining of hearts in marriage, and we have shared tears and laughter as we have remembered those who have preceded us in death.

Worshiping, studying, listening, celebrating, witnessing, sharing tears and laughter, and remembering bind us into a faith community. It softens our opinions and turns our hearts towards the mutual good of the body of Christ rather than our own individuality. We begin to recognize that God is at work in all of these events. We hear God's voice when we hear words of encouragement or even at times when we are called to wait. We feel God's touch with each embrace during the dark moments of our lives. We see the light of Christ within the radiant smiles of our newborns.

Growing, working, and studying together are parts of becoming a faith community. We listen to God and for God in a collective. We grow stronger in our faith enabling us to turn our hearts and abilities outward to minister to those in our world. We sharpen and hone our ideas in our places of agreement and sometimes even in our places of disagreement. Each time we encourage one another in this journey of faith we demonstrate that God is at work around us; we demonstrate to our world that a faith community is worth the commitment of our time, talents, and tithes.



## *The Living Light*

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Becky Memmelaar .....Pastor  
Bob Newton.....Editor  
Mary Raymond .....Advising Editor  
Lynda Ladwig.....  
.....Christian Education Coordinator  
Russell Litchfield.....  
.....Dir of Music Ministries & Organist  
Mary Boltz.....Office Administrator  
Lorenzo Mora .....Custodian

Telephone 562-698-9805

FAX 562-698-1127

[www.firstfriendswhittier.org](http://www.firstfriendswhittier.org)

Whittier Friends School Staff

Millie Vasquez.....Administrative Asst  
562-945-1654



## **Senior Sneaks**

On Thursday March 24 we have a tour scheduled to see the new Whittier police facility. This was a \$35,000,000.00 project to construct a new, state-of-the-art police headquarters.

It would be best to meet at the church and then either walk if you'd like or go down in fewer cars. Let's meet at 9:40 a.m. After our tour we will eat at the California Grill. Please call Shirley Votaw if you'd like to join us.

On April 9 we are going to the Pageant of Our Lord near Palos Verdes. We have the tickets now but if there are others who might like to go let me know in case there are any cancellations.

## **All Friends Fellowship Night**

We are pleased to have Ron Memmelaar bring our program to us on March 9th. We will hear about his experiences as a commercial airline pilot and the "ups and downs" of his profession. You will be able to ask him questions you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask other airline pilots.

Please join us for the pot-luck dinner at 6:00 p.m. The program will be from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.. The main dish will be provided — corned beef and cabbage and a veggie dish. Please bring a salad or dessert and \$1 per person or \$3 per person if not providing food. Drinks and bread will be provided.

We hope you can join us for good food, fellowship and an interesting program. Please call the church office to sign up if you plan to attend.

— Ted Marshburn



*Please  
remember in  
prayer  
those Friends  
unable to  
worship with  
us regularly.*

Peggy Anderson  
Audine Coffin  
Monica Dean  
Ruth Esther Durham  
Gil Gillis  
Trudy Kurth  
Esther Morris  
Virginia Moorhead  
Alice Rosenberger  
Russ Summerhayes  
Ami Troedsson  
Helen Vanover  
Mary Wanner