

# THE LIVING LIGHT

For the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.

Ephesians 5:9

---

Volume 65, Number 06

Whittier First Friends Church

June, 2026

---

## Founders Day 2026!

This year's Founders Day was held in Central Park in Uptown Whittier on Saturday, May 9, and First Friends Church members were there to share our ministries. Monthly Meeting had a display with famous Quakers that attracted passersby and served as a conversation starter opening the way for discussions about who Quakers are today, how we worship, and how we live out our values. There was even a large shady space with cushions providing "Free Silence."

Whittier's Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Advocacy Group had an interactive display in which visitors could identify their own legislative priorities by placing colorful sticker dots in categories such as peace and non-violence, immigration reform, and food and healthcare assistance. By the end of the day, nearly 200 dots had been placed on the boards. This is the second year in a row that the Advocacy Group has created this type of display, and it is an impactful visual that can be shared when the group meets with legislators throughout the year. It is also a simple way for citizens to share their voices, and it led to conversations about the peace and social justice advocacy work done by the Friends Committee on National Legislation in Washington D.C. as well as Whittier's Advocacy Group here locally.

The Whittier Friends School (WFS) table was represented by dedicated parent volunteers and offered coloring pages for kids and a display board showing the many types of hands-on opportunities



for learning that Whittier Friends School offers. The parents shared with visitors about the positive impact that WFS's small multi-age classes and individualized education has had on their own children, and Director, Cassie Caringella, had the opportunity to talk about upcoming registration for our year-round preschool, Elementary Age Summer Enrichment, and 2026-27 Elementary School enrollment.

Founders Day is an annual celebration of the City of Whittier's founding in 1887 sponsored by the Whittier Historical Society's Whittier Museum whose mission is to collect, preserve, and display materials of historical significance to the Greater Whittier Area and California. They also produce programs and special exhibits of interest to the Whittier community and staff and maintain the Bailey House, the original home of Whittier's earliest Quakers, Jonathan and Rebecca Bailey.

---

*A CHRISTIAN PEOPLE CALLED TO LISTEN, GATHERED TO SEEK PEACE, AND SENT FORTH TO SERVE,*

---

## Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

**Dear Friends,** Lately, I've been thinking about history. Not ancient history, but history that I have lived through. Last year, our "new" Meeting House quietly passed our 50th anniversary, and believe it or not, it seems like we just barely celebrated our 25th anniversary with a 25 foot cake! I remember that like it was the day before yesterday. (That



means it is a little blurry in my mind.) Last month I reported that Friend **Lynne Drayer** passed away, and I shared how artistic she was, which is true, but I attributed the enamel mural

of the Meeting Houses in the lobby of First Friends as her work. That mural was entirely created and donated by **Laura Radford Torres**. It has been hanging in the Meeting House since it was donated and reported on in the Living Light in March 1977.

**Friends Revisited:** Speaking of history, **Jeff William Yates** sent a message via Facebook after seeing a picture of the old big red brick church building, "I



love the photo of the old church. My Great Grandfather, **Willard Trueblood** was the pastor of that church in the first part of the 20th century. His wife **Claire Trueblood** assisted him, and with him, helped work on the new existing church. Her funeral was in the new church in 1976. Willard passed away in 1951." Next time you're in

the church office, look in the hallway, and you can see pictures of all of our former pastors. Willard was our pastor from 8/1/1924 through 8/31/1936.

**School and Work News: Cedric Woirhaye** graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a degree in Environmental Science and a minor in Agribusiness. Two of **Ted & Mary Marshburn's** granddaughters recently graduated:

**Elise Marshburn**

graduated from Claremont Graduate University with a master's degree in Fine Arts, and **Holly Marshburn**, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona from the department of Business Finance and Real Estate. Pictured are parents **John & Linda Marshburn** with kids Luke, Brooke, Elise, and Holly.



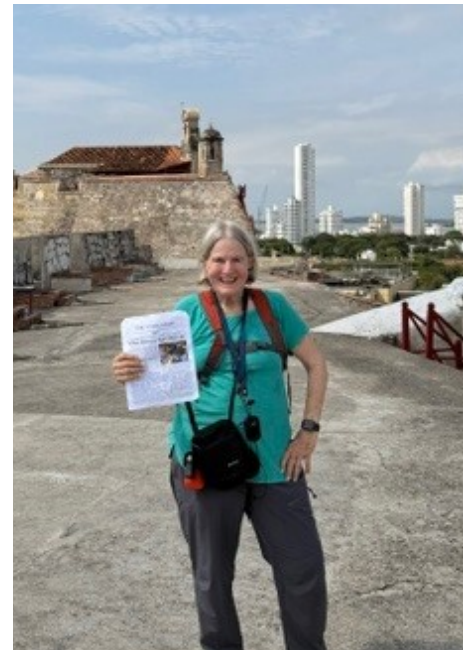
**Friends Travel: Kathy Marin** sent Greetings from Cartegena,

Colombia! Here she is with the Living Light continuing our tradition: "The Living Light Travels." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

**Friends Remember:** We were saddened to hear about the passing of **Rob Settlege** who transitioned to new life

in April 2026. Rob was an active member at First Friends dating back to 1983. He was very involved with FCNL and peace and justice programs. Watch for more about him in next month's Living Light.

**Friends Sharing News:** Help to keep the Friendly Fare going. Email me a quick 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!



## Russ' Reflections

### SUMMER PLANS

#### Summer Choir

As the Friends Choir season ends May 31st, we are planning to have a Summer Choir on the four Sundays in June: 7, 14, 21, 28. We will gather in the Meeting House at 10:10 am, learn a simple anthem, practice the hymns, and then sing the music in Meeting for Worship. If you like to sing and would like to try choral singing for worship, this is your opportunity to experience what we do and share your voice with our Meeting. Friends Choir members are needed and welcome too!

#### Summer Organ Series.

I am planning to offer a Summer Organ Series again this year. 2026 is the 50th anniversary of our Harris Organ, and I want to commemorate that milestone. The concerts will take place on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm, beginning June 23rd and ending July 28th. Each concert will conclude with the singing of a hymn, and an offering will be taken to benefit our Organ Fund. The June 23 concert will be a demonstration of the organ with pieces using different colors of the instrument. June 30 will be a collaboration with singers and will present arias and some folksong and spiritual arrangements. July 7 will feature 250 years of American Organ Music. July 14, "A Tele on the Organ?" will feature TV music. July 21, "The Mystical Organ" will explore music by composers who are considered mystics. The final concert, July 28, "Whippersnapper Bach," will present early organ works by Johann Sebastian Bach and a couple of his predecessor composers. Please invite a friend and come experience the many colors of our organ.

#### Silent Movie

There is a possibility that we may offer a bonus concert, a silent film accompanied by a skilled organist. We are looking for the best day and time to do this so that we can attract a big audience. Tuesday night, Saturday night, Sunday afternoon or ??? Please let me know what might be the best time for you to attend. Thanks, and happy Summer!



## Gwen Woirhaye's Legacy Honored with "Circle of Friends" Dedication

On Saturday, May 9, at 9:30 am, before Founder's Day officially began, Friends, community members, and the family of Gwen Woirhaye joined members of the Whittier Conservancy, Mayor James Becerra, and Council Member Vicky Santana at the southeast corner of Central Park near Friends Ave. and Bailey Street for the dedication of the "Circle of Friends"



memorial benches to honor Gwen's decades of service to the arts, history, and the environment.

Mary Gorman-Sullens, a founding member and the current president of the Whittier Conservancy reflected on Gwen's contributions and legacy: "Gwen was deeply devoted to Whittier, nurturing both her family and her community with quiet grace. She gave freely to the Whittier Conservancy, the American Association of University Women, and the arts community. She was also a passionate advocate for the environment, believing deeply in the importance of preserving natural spaces and creating places where people could gather in reflection and fellowship."

Mary continued, "Rooted in the Quaker tradition, Gwen carried a profound love for education and community, helping to plant the seeds of a school where young minds could grow and flourish at First Friends Church. Central Park - once gifted by the Quaker community to the people of Whittier - is a fitting home for Gwen's Circle of Friends Benches - a place of rest, reflection, and connection, much like the spaces she created throughout her life." The Conservancy worked diligently for the past two years, in coordination with the City of Whittier, to transform this vision into reality.



## News from Whittier Friends School



Whittier Friends School's annual Open House was an opportunity to see the accomplishments of 34 children, ranging in age from 3 years to 12 years old. Preschool children explored the characteristics of plants, and the teachers made a display board where each child shared whether something they found on the playground was a plant or not a plant. It was a great opportunity for our youngest children to see that science is everywhere around them!

The Lower Elementary children had two projects on display: science research projects completed in class about Space and/or Earth Science, and a castle model completed at home as a "Family" project. The Upper Elementary children also had two projects on display: their History Competition project from earlier this school year, and a model of a planet from our solar system. It was a wonderful opportunity for children to share their projects with an eager audience. Thank you to all who attended our event and validated the hard work of our terrific kids!

We look forward to celebrating all of our children at their upcoming end-of-year events. Elementary classes will have a Field Day in early June, as well as a beach trip the following week. Elementary Recognition is scheduled for

Wednesday, June 10, and then their summer break begins. During the break, elementary students from our campus, and from elsewhere, will have the opportunity to attend six



weeks of Summer Enrichment. Fun themes include "The Great Outdoors," "Camp Greece and Rome," and "Authors and Artists." It is the perfect opportunity to interact with friends and practice social skills, while having structured learning and enrichment opportunities through games, arts, and crafts catered to a child's specific level and need.

Preschool Graduation is Tuesday, June 16. Besides a couple of school holidays (Juneteenth and 4th of July), our preschool will continue to be open all summer long.

Enrollment is still open for Elementary Summer Enrichment, year-round preschool, and the 2026-27 Elementary school year. See our website [whittierfriendsschool.org](http://whittierfriendsschool.org) or email [cassie.wfs@gmail.com](mailto:cassie.wfs@gmail.com) for information about enrollment in any of our programs.

As always, be sure to follow Whittier Friends School's adventures on Facebook at: [facebook.com/whittierfriendsschool](https://facebook.com/whittierfriendsschool) and on Instagram at: [instagram.com/whittierfriendsschool](https://instagram.com/whittierfriendsschool) and check out our wishlist at: <https://amzn.to/2QK8Yp8>

*-Cassie Caringella*

## Shelter's Right Hand's Annual 5K Walk

On Saturday, April 25, Friends joined members of the Mission Collaborative at Central Park in Uptown Whittier for the 30th annual 5K Walk to raise funds for the Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter. While some signed up to walk, others supported the participants by cheering them on.

Check-in began at 6:30 am with registered participants receiving a special 30th anniversary t-shirt. At 7:30 am, Shelter's Right Hand President, Marilyn Fant, welcomed participants, thanked sponsors, and recognized this year's Honorary Chair, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. After a group warm-up, the walkers headed out at 8 am on the 5 kilometer (approximately 3.1 miles) course through the streets of Uptown Whittier. At the conclusion of the walk, medals were awarded for the first 650 participants that finished the course, and refreshments were served. There was also a raffle drawing for a gift card tree valued at over \$700, and FFC member, Linda Nakamura, was the lucky winner!

Close to 700 walkers and 90 volunteers participated in the event, and the Walk generated a total of approximately \$65,000 for the Women and Children's Crisis Shelter (WCCS). Since 1977, the shelter, a non-profit organization, has been committed to providing safety, temporary housing, and hope to victims of domestic violence – of all genders and ages. It serves its clients with a 45-day emergency shelter program and a bilingual 24-hour hotline. As part of the program, they collaborate with other agencies to improve overall health, wellness, and



economic stability and provide culturally relevant and supportive intervention and educational information for the prevention of family violence. The shelter operates on a 24-hour basis, and all of the programs are free-of-charge.

The annual 5K Walk is a fundraising outreach of The Shelter's Right Hand (SRH), a thrift shop and boutique located at 12300 Washington Blvd in Whittier, which was established in 1981 as a non-profit auxiliary to the WCCS with the goal of raising funds to support the shelter's mission. As their website says, "Domestic violence is not confined to any socioeconomic, ethnic, religious, racial, or age group and shows no geographic or educational boundaries." And the Shelter's site states "WCCS was founded on the belief that everyone has the right to a violence-free environment; that violence, be it physical, actual or threatened, emotional, or psychological, has no place in healthy relationships. We are dedicated to helping the victims at whatever stage they find themselves."



## Remembering Lind Coop (1945-2026)

Lind William Coop, Ph.D., was born November 18, 1945, in Los Angeles, CA, and passed away peacefully at his Whittier, CA home of more than 50 years on March 23, 2026. He successfully lived his entire life in Los Angeles County, departing with his beloved Dodgers as MLB champions. He was preceded in death by his wife of 50 years, Jeananne Wright Coop, who passed to new life in 2017. He is survived by his sons Ben (Jennifer) Coop and Ted Coop, and three grandchildren.

Lind's professional arc included stints in the manufacturing and grocery industries prior to his "career" jobs with credit unions (Whittier Citizens/Community CU and Friends Credit Union, both now CU SoCal), culminating in his position as CEO of Community Credit Union. After departing the financial industry, Lind served as a full-time college professor and administrator with Azusa Pacific University and Hope International University. This was a natural transition following years of adjunct positions with his alma mater, National University. His expertise kept him engaged through early "retirement," as he was continually tapped by colleagues to fill faculty gaps or consult on program structure and curriculum.

Lind's commitment to the Quaker church was lifelong. He served as clerk of Monthly, Yearly, and Triennial meetings and traveled the country to engage in church strategy and decision-making—a topic that fueled his published doctoral thesis on decision-making in Christian denominations. Lind met his wife and raised his family at First Friends Church, Whittier. In later years, he and Jeananne transitioned to active membership in the Whitleaf meeting.

Serving his beloved Whittier community, Lind held leadership positions in the Whittier Host Lions Club and on the Boys & Girls Club board, supporting various municipal and social causes through continued activism. He enjoyed an active lifestyle including running (completing numerous marathons), church league basketball and softball, table tennis, walking, hiking, and fishing. Baseball held a special place in Lind's heart; as a lifelong Dodgers fan, he followed their exploits daily, even before they moved from Brooklyn to be near him in Los Angeles in 1957.



As an early member of the Buick Club of America (member number under 800), Lind enthusiastically pursued antique automobile restoration, sharing his passion with anyone interested. Throughout the process, he owned and worked on cars spanning the 1910–1965 era. 1929 Buicks were the sweet spot for Lind, and he served as a BCA technical advisor for the revered '29s, fielding calls from shadetree enthusiasts and restorers across several continents as one of the few who could explain exactly how an obscure updraft carburetor should be set up.

Unless it was "...time for Dodger baseball...", there was always music playing to complement the day. An appreciator of many genres—jazz, swing, big band, rock and roll, folk, classical, and country—there was always a new road for him to explore. While never formally trained, the harmonica, clarinet, and saxophone were happy diversions. Primarily singing along to Crosby, Bennett, Clooney, and a host of other artists, he lent his voice to special events, displaying a natural, if unpolished, talent.

Lind's unique sense of humor could be dry or acerbic as situations dictated. While it has been said he never let the truth get in the way of a good joke, he skillfully took real-life events and turned them into running gags or punchlines at the expense of himself, family, and friends alike.

He is missed by those in his many communities: Meeting for Worship; his writing group; the LDG (Little Dog Group); the Buick Club; his Central Park neighborhood friends; his wine dinner group; and his many other friends and family spread globally.

## “Encourage One Another In Love”

On Sunday, May 17, 2026, Kelly Kellum, Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Secretary, joined us remotely in Meeting for Worship to bring the message, “Encourage One Another in Love.” It was based on Hebrews 10:24-25 which says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (NIV).

Kelly reflected that this message is relevant to us today, citing examples from FUM’s global ministries such as the effect of the years-long drought in Kenya where we support the nomadic herders at Turkana Friends Mission, the perpetual threat of bombings and military occupation in the West Bank where we support Ramallah Friends School, and here in the U.S. where many communities and families face a time of fear and uncertainty.

He divided the Hebrews passage into three admonitions: Hold fast, consider one another, and encourage one another. In times of despair, anger, and loneliness, it is easy to give up, but Kelly says, “hold on to hope.” When we are tempted to withdraw and self-preserve, the phrase “consider one another” tells us to consider how we can prod each other to express love, care, and concern. It is an invitation to be mindful and attentive to others. Lastly, encouraging one another literally means imparting courage. We have the ability to empower another person to have hope, carry on, and continue their work. We must remind others of their worth and dignity and that they do not walk alone. Kelly reminds us, “The world needs more courageous Quakers.”

In this season, the direction and work of Friends United Meeting is focused on this same consistent message. “Encourage one another in love” is being threaded into the fabric of FUM’s work with intentionality. FUM is a collection of 37 Quaker Yearly Meetings and Associations, which embrace thousands of local gatherings and



hundreds of thousands of individuals connected through a shared experience of God and united in common ministries forming a beloved fellowship that is powerfully at work in local areas through cross-cultural service. With impactful ministries such as schools, hospitals, and missions, in places like Africa, Palestine, the Caribbean, and North America, FUM has built a global network rooted in Quaker values at a time when the world is being divided by cultural, political, and geographic differences.

The generosity of Friends continues to sustain and strengthen their work. Their financial goal is to sustain their Ministry Support Fund which was set this year at \$650,000 by December 31, 2026. This fund is essential to the life of FUM, supporting global ministries, relationships with Yearly Meetings and partners, and allowing faithful response to immediate needs. As of the end of April, Kelly shared with gratitude that, “together, we have raised ... just over 70% of our goal.”

FFC Whittier provides annual support to FUM through our Yearly Meeting organization, the Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends (WARSF). Summer Mission Projects have also provided financial support for specific mission needs over the years. For more information about FUM, its ministries, and its beloved community, go to [friendsunitedmeeting.org](https://friendsunitedmeeting.org). And mark your calendar for June 28, when Michael Sherman, FUM’s Coordinator for North American and Caribbean Ministries, will bring the message in Meeting for Worship.

Return Service Requested  
Postmaster: send address changes to:  
The Living Light  
Whittier First Friends Church  
13205 Philadelphia St  
Whittier, CA 90601-4384

Periodicals  
Postage Paid at  
Whittier, California

The Living Light  
USPS 316-320  
Volume 65 Number 06  
Issue Date: June 1, 2026

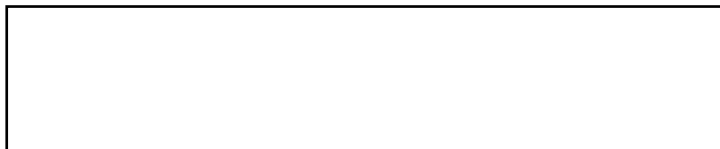
The Living Light is published monthly by  
Whittier First Friends Church, 13205  
Philadelphia Street, Whittier, California,  
90601-4303.

Periodical postage paid at Whittier, California.

Candice Ryder and Mel Sturr, Editors  
Loletta Barrett, Pastor  
Russell Litchfield, Dir of Music Ministries and  
Organist

Telephone 562-698-9805

[www.firstfriendswhittier.org](http://www.firstfriendswhittier.org)  
Whittier Friends School Staff  
Candice Ryder, School Committee Clerk  
562-945-1654



- |                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Steve Bates     | Shane Purkiss        |
| Wyatt Bradley   | Tom Purkiss          |
| Alene Burke     | Meghan Rollins-Davis |
| Nancy Cramer    | Amanda Settlage      |
| Iris Harris     | Bella Sturr          |
| Taylor Hays     | Sharon Sturr         |
| Jordan Martinez | Wes Van Dorn         |
| Joe Mendoza     | Shirley Votaw        |
| Bob Newton      | Diane Wemmerus       |
| Ethan Purkiss   | Sarah Wood           |

