

THE LIVING LIGHT

For the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.
Ephesians 5:9

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Whittier First Friends Church

November, 2025

Love Thy Neighbor

In Galatians 5:14, Paul states, "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'". This was the focus for World Quaker Day on Sunday, October 5. First Friends commemorated the day in Meeting for Worship with messages from three Friends, recognition of our newest members, and a group picture.

Darrell Warren posed the question: "What does it mean to ponder your path?" He pointed out there are many words to describe the routes we travel, each with its own nuance. A path implies walking a track laid down by continual treading, yet we can wander off the path to explore and notice the details of our surroundings. When we head to a particular destination on the freeway, we are focused on arriving at the destination as efficiently as possible. And that's OK, but sometimes we are taken in unexpected directions as well. He encouraged us to notice, embrace, and appreciate the detours and diversions on our life's path as unexpected blessings and sacred enrichment.

Elisabeth Elliot began with a reference to 2 Corinthians 11:19 ("For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise") in which Paul chides the Corinthians for valuing worldly wisdom and prestige rather than true spiritual



service and sacrifice. She pointed out that we cannot truly serve others if we think of them as "fools." She encouraged us to let go of the difficult interactions, honor the diversity in others, and give others the benefit of grace. She reminds us that God always gives us grace, and grace is the first step to loving our neighbor.

Mel Sturr reflected that loving your neighbor doesn't necessarily come easily or naturally; it is aspirational and starts with noticing how we speak, act, and react. He credits learning the power of empathy from examples of Friends he has known throughout his life in the meeting. He was also influenced by his mother, who dedicated her life to peace after experiencing

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Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends, Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall...Here we are heading into the busiest time of all. Now might be a good time to remind you all, to please send in your Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas news for December and January.

Friends Visit: A houseful of guests is always nice. Between Whittier College homecoming and siblings visiting siblings who have come into town for homecoming or to visit mom, **Elinore Bates Petoletti** had all four of her kids, **Lynda Bates, Ward Bates, Lea Wright, and Steve Bates**, in town in October.

Friends Celebrate: **Mike & Lynda Ladwig** celebrated 60 years together on the 16th of October. They also want to thank everyone for the prayers regarding Mike's fall. **Carrin & George Bouchard** celebrated 41/45 years together. (41 years married, 45 together)

Friends Drive Old Cars: Wait, what, is this a new category? **Milton Wright** was happy that several of the car shows that he has participated in over the years were back in business this summer. Here he is with the Friendly Fare at the City of Brea Fourth of July Country Fare.



School and Work News: **Francoise Dutil** is volunteering at Friends United Meeting while at ESR. She's helping in the communications department.

Friends Travel: It has been a traveling year for **Marilyn Fant!** Her trip to New Zealand in February started things off. Since then, she has been to New York City, Italy, France, and, most recently to Austria. In Salzburg, she joined a group gathered to celebrate the 65th Anniver-

sary of the Salzburg Semester from the University of Redlands. A Mozart Dinner and Sunday mass at St. Stephan's Church were special highlights for Marilyn. **Brendon & Deanna Woirhaye**

traveled to England to help daughter **Anathea** get situated for her studies at Oxford. Together they climbed



Pendle Hill with the Living Light. **Anne & Bedford McIntosh** enjoyed a travel experience with a small group of UCLA Alumni that began on land in Zagreb, Croatia, and ended with a 7-day sea excursion from Zadar to Dubrovnik.

Here is a photo from their trip to Croatia taken at the Museum of Modern Art in



Dubrovnik, also with the Living Light. (I'm exceptionally happy to have three pictures this month that include the Living Light, continuing our tradition: "The Living Light Travels." Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.)

Friends Sharing News: You can help to keep the Friendly Fare going. All you have to do is email me a quick note and tell me your news. Send it to lealouw@gmail.com, or deliver it to me at church on Sunday. See you next month!

Loletta's Lines

This month we join with other faith communities in our annual, joyful Thanksgiving celebration. The event gives us an opportunity to feel connected and united across all our differences. Our musical, spoken, and silent reflections help us focus on our blessings with gratitude. Gratitude is being grateful, conscious, satisfied, and content with the benefits we have and continue to receive. We express our pleasure and appreciation toward God and those who have blessed our lives.

But the true test of how grateful we really are includes a second step. If we truly appreciate all we have, we want to respond. Not out of obligation, or feeling beholden or indebted to the people in our lives and the Giver of all great gifts. We want to respond because we are alive and we are never alone. We have abundant resources and hope. We are moved to do more than say thank you. We want to share ourselves and all we have, and do it joyfully, without reservation.

We know Jesus owned nothing and gave everything. He taught us that of all the things we might appreciate, even life itself, our greatest gift and blessing is Love - true love, love that means wanting others to be whole and extending our self for the purpose of another's highest good. It is a selfless giving that does not require repayment, reward, or commensurate blessing in return. If we are fortunate, we might receive this from a parent, partner, or friend. As we evolve spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually, we want to give it to others and ourselves.

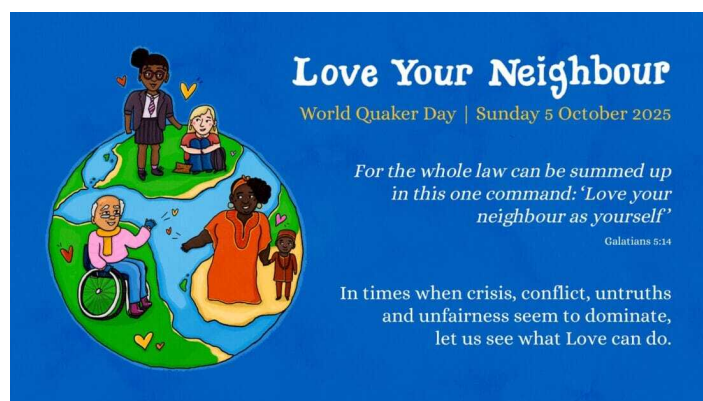


But the most amazing thing of all is there is no need to aspire to, seek, or yearn for Love. The One-Who-Loves-Beyond-Love, the Source of Love, Love Itself, continually gives Love to us. Love has made us of, and for, Love Itself. Just as we are. Love is our blessing, free of debt or obligation, without question or expectation that we return Love. Love is the true gift and blessing from which all blessings flow. Let us be Love.

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World War II in London. And he referred to his work with our campus partners, Congregation Beth Shalom, who recently observed Yom Kippur, the culmination of their period of introspection and penitence known as the High Holy Days. Yom Kippur's central theme is reconciliation with both God and other people. Mel encouraged us all to return to the right way and aspire to always love others.

World Quaker Day is an annual event celebrated by Quakers worldwide on the first Sunday of October. It is encouraged by the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) as a day for Quakers to connect across time zones and cultures through shared worship and community. For more information on events held across the globe, visit: <https://fwcc.world/world-quaker-day-2025-a-success/>, or go to the FWCC facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/globalquakers/>.



Russ' Reflections

A Thank You to the Tech Team

The Tech Team has been hard at work upgrading the sound in the Meeting House in order to provide the best experience possible for worship, not only in person, but also online. Prior to coming back after the summer, George Bouchard, Russ Litchfield, Enrique Mares, Brendon Woirhaye, and Mel Sturr spent multiple days mounting new speakers, running cable, hanging new choir mics from the ceiling, and implementing George's grand plan for the audio. Rumor has it that attendees on Zoom can hear the choir and organ much more clearly, and the music fills the meetinghouse like never before. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the Tech Team for sharing their time, talents, and expertise with our meeting.



News from Whittier Friends School

Where does wisdom come from? Attendees of Whittier Friends School's "Back to School Sunday" on October 19, were met with songs and quotations reinforcing that wisdom comes from listening, questioning, and experiencing. The words of Quaker astronomer Jocelyn Bell Burnell, read by Teacher and Director Cassie Caringella and her students, further established that science and religion have similar processes, both being rooted in asking questions and seeking answers. One of the very important aspects of Quaker Education is self-discovery, and it was a joy to celebrate this very valuable tradition of education with the start of Whittier Friends School's 52nd year!

After Meeting for Worship, WFS families and First Friends Church community members visited the Whittier Friends School campus. Classrooms were open for touring, a pumpkin patch and a photo opportunity plus a gift boutique with Halloween crafts and tasty treats were available for guests to enjoy. And, as has become



tradition (since this is the second year doing this!), Cassie had samples of WFS's famous Beautiful Bean Soup for people to try. We offer this bean soup mix for sale every fall, in memory of Gwen Woirhaye.

Please support our upcoming fundraisers which include WFS Day at Ruby's Diner in the Whittwood Mall (Nov. 13, all day - eat in or take out - must show the flier) and See's Candies beginning Nov. 3, (watch for ordering information in the weekly eNews and WFS website).

A Note About Singing

Singing together in worship is one thing we can all participate in - it unifies us. I invite you to be vulnerable and courageous as you enter the singing; no one will judge you. Think of singing together as an investment in our community. By the way, there is room in the Friends Choir for you, particularly if you sing bass! We meet at 9 am on Sundays in the Music Room. See Russ if you are interested.



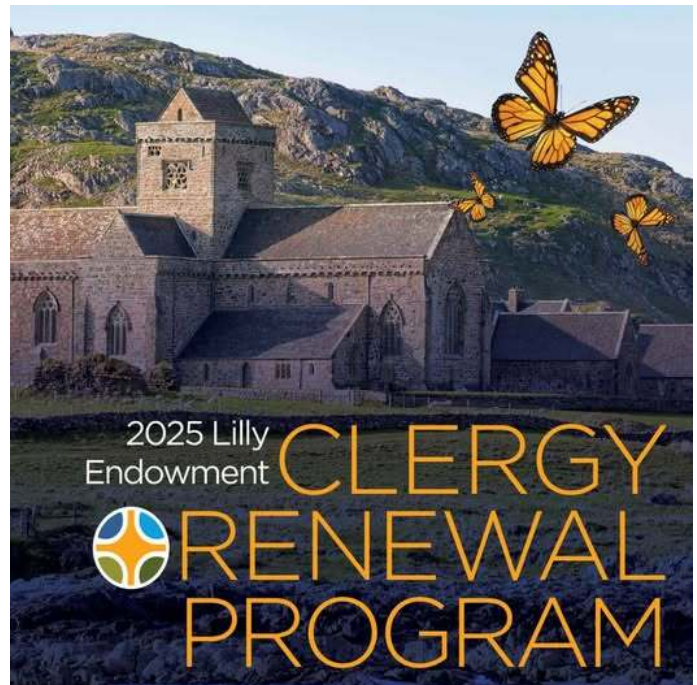
First Friends Selected for 2025 Clergy Renewal Program Grant

We are excited to announce our meeting has been chosen to participate in the 2025 National Clergy Renewal Program. We are one of 233 congregations across the United States selected for this competitive grant program, funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and administered by Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. Established by the Endowment in 2000, the program's grants allow Christian congregations to support their pastors with the gift of extended time away from their ministerial duties and responsibilities.

Ministers whose congregations are awarded the grants use their time away from the demands of daily ministry to pursue renewal and revitalization. The approach respects the "Sabbath time" concept, offering ministers a carefully considered respite that may include travel, study, rest, prayer, immersive arts, and cultural experiences.

Through the National Clergy Renewal Program, congregations apply for grants of up to \$60,000 to support renewal programs. Collaborative in nature and implementation, the program allows congregations to partner with their ministers in developing experiences that address their unique renewal needs and aspirations. Congregational needs during the minister's renewal experience also are considered. Up to \$20,000 of the grant may be used to support interim pastoral leadership during the pastor's retreat, as well as renewal activities within the congregation.

Since the inception of the National Clergy Renewal Program and the Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations, more than 4,526 congregations throughout the United States and in Puerto Rico have participated in the program, including the 233 congregations



receiving grants in 2025. Congregations in the 2025 programs represent the broad spectrum of Christian traditions, including Roman Catholic and Orthodox parishes and congregations from 28 Protestant denominations. In harmony with the spirit of these programs, congregations and their pastors collaborated to craft plans designed to renew pastors physically and spiritually and energize them in their ministry.

"We certainly owe the success of our application to the wonderful video of Friends speaking about why they are part of our meeting," said Pastor Loletta Barrett. She plans to use the grant during her three-month sabbatical in Spring/Summer 2026 to explore family history in England, Scotland, Wales, and perhaps Ireland. She also plans to rest and rejuvenate at a residential library in Wales ("a library with food and a bed sounds heavenly!"). In addition, she plans to spend time at Pendle Hill Retreat Center in Philadelphia, as well as at home with her feline companions, Zest and Joy. She is also very excited about the congregational portion of the grant. The meeting will be able to have an all-church retreat in fall 2026 and have funds to cover some of her pastoral duties as well.

2026 Stewardship Message from Business and Finance Committee

Dear Friends,

God has blessed us with many gifts, and we all give a combination of these - Time, Talent, and Treasure - to our Meeting. It is that time of year when we begin to create our budget for the following year. Support of our staff, upkeep of our facility for the use of the community, outreach, and Significant Giving - all of these are our collective responsibility and opportunity to help fund.

One of our priorities is Significant Giving. This is a portion of our budget we set aside to help with special projects or events in our community and abroad. Any member can bring an issue to the attention of Monthly Meeting for consideration. Recently, we have helped the Orange Grove meeting in Pasadena in the aftermath of the Altadena fire in their community and sent aid to Gaza through the American Friends Service Committee and the UN. We have helped people in war-torn Ukraine, supported the Friends Lugulu Mission Hospital in Kenya, and sponsored a water tank for a Navajo family bringing them running water. We have funded field missions for Friends United Meeting, and the list goes on.

Our significant giving has scaled back in recent years as our plans for support have decreased, but the demands have not. On October 12th, the Monthly Meeting asked for an aspirational increase of \$2,000 in the significant giving allocation for next year. If everyone could give just \$2.50 more per week, or \$10 more per month, we could meet that goal.

Most of our members, attenders, and supporting Friends send us money via check or billpay, but we have many options available. A new electronic payment option, Zelle, has been introduced! Unlike Paypal, Zelle has no transaction costs and can usually be set up on



a scheduled basis by your bank or sent on-demand from your smartphone.

First Friends Church requests that you prayerfully create a plan for financial support in 2026. This is not a hard and fast commitment, as we know that life changes. Sometimes we are blessed with more resources we can share with the Meeting, and other times we are strained and have to share less. We do need to get our best estimate of what individuals can give, however, so that we can put together our budget for next year. We will have physical cards available that you can fill out, or you can fill it out electronically at <https://forms.gle/FzwCiLhTwP9rYC7FA> - or snap the QR code shown here. We ask that everyone fill out a plan for support by Thanksgiving, so we can bring a budget for approval in December.

Lastly, we invite everyone to a luncheon on November 9th, after Meeting for Worship – our treat from Business and Finance. Stay for Monthly Meeting if you like, but it isn't required.

~ Business and Finance Committee



October AFFN Features “Hams”

Did you know that amateur radio enthusiasts are affectionately known as “hams?” Or that “73” is how operators express “best wishes” at the end of a transmission? Attendees at the October All Friends Fellowship Night learned these interesting facts and more. Following an abundant potluck dinner, Darrell Warren, Rita Barakat, Randy Pastrone, and Sylvia Graber-Pastrone shared their knowledge and experiences with ham radio.

Darrell noted that he has been fascinated by radios since childhood, and his father was a ham. He expressed his belief in the benefit of processing what we hear without images because it stimulates our ability to imagine. His first ham radio transmission was as a teen in 1982 to a contact in Japan with only 5 watts of power. Since then he has communicated with operators from all 50 states via Morse Code and has talked to people in places as far away as Sweden, Bulgaria, Papua New Guinea, Australia, and Cape Verde Island off the coast of Africa. His oldest contact was a 99-year-old gentleman, and his youngest was 10 years old.

Rita met Darrell when she was a graduate student at USC where she served with their Young Scientists Program. This program partners with elementary schools to encourage youth to consider future careers in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM). She was tasked with writing a grant to enable the students to contact the International Space Station (ISS) by radio. That led her to take a class to obtain her entry level radio operator license (Technician Level) from the FCC. The grant was awarded, and after months of preparation and coordination with the school and community, the students were able to ask questions of the astronauts in space via live radio. Darrell was the licensed operator that day, and he shared with us a video of the students asking their carefully prepared questions.



Sylvia became interested in amateur radio after watching emergency preparation videos on YouTube. She noted that, in the event of widespread disruption of landline, cellular, and internet services, radio is a vital form of communication. For example, during 9/11, hams relayed information between emergency services, hospitals, and shelters, filled gaps in official communications, and helped coordinate volunteers for organizations like the Red Cross.

Her interest led her to take a class to obtain her General Class certification which provides access to all VHF and UHF bands for local and North American Communication and limited privileges on some HF bands for international communication. Her husband, Randy, studied the course online at the same time. They were able to take the 35-question test on the same day and were awarded consecutive FCC call signs.

Darrell emphasized that beyond being a hobby or even a vital service, amateur radio creates community and promotes peace. He maintains email contacts with operators worldwide, and once visited a fellow ham in Zacateca, Mexico, unannounced, and he received a warm welcome and generous hospitality. If you want to learn more about this fascinating topic, The Rio Hondo Amateur Radio Club meets the second Monday of the month at the Whittier Senior Center at 7 pm, and all are invited. Or simply talk to one of our “ham” Friends.

Be sure to join us for the next AFFN on Nov. 12, when guest speakers from the Audubon Society will talk about Sycamore Canyon.

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If we've missed your birthday, we apologize (and happy birthday)! We work hard to keep our birthday calendar up-to-date, so please let us know if we're forgetting anyone. Thank you!

