

SPOKANEWORD

February
2021



Spokane Friends
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Sunday Schedule
during
Covid-19 Restrictions

Morning Worship
10:00 am
At Meeting House
And Via Zoom
See Website For Link

Where Do We Go From Here?

by Inga Laurent

"Rain on us, Saint Honesty. Salvation is coming in the morning, but now what we need. Is a little rain on our face from you, sweet Saint Honesty."
— Sara Bareilles

I have broken my own heart a few times. Mostly, this happened in moments when I was not honest with myself.

There were times I ignored facts in front of me, preferring my own projection over other available proof. Times when I was willfully blind, presuming plausible deniability would shield me from the consequences of knowing. Times of immaturity, when I audaciously assumed a limited, cursory understanding would be sufficient, instead of investing in and honoring another's perspective. And times I failed to be brave — too afraid of admitting what I already knew — well-aware that revelation can result in rejection or increased responsibility that abides within connection.

Veracity is demanding, often requiring restructuring — new agreements, accountability, power distributions, resource allocations and vulnerability.

Though demanding, inevitably truth has always been the better choice. The times I ignored intuition, blamed the other, took comfort in contrived conspiracies, or deluded and denied remain the most unflattering, the cause of many deep regrets. Inauthenticity severs connection — between the self and others. What-ifs, disassociation, shame, unavailability, misplaced aggression, abdication and avoidance are harmful tools and byproducts of dishonesty.

An awful lot of heartbreak happens when we are silent about what really matters.

So, America, I can empathize about our recalcitrance, the reluctance to face who we have become. While I comprehend continued attempts to gussy-up those unattractive parts of our history, take heed from my litany of confession. There's an importance to being earnest, and it's high time for a reckoning with the unsightly.

Fania Davis, "healer and warrior," restorative justice practitioner and civil rights attorney, summarizes exquisitely: "Our nation was born in the horrific traumas of genocide and slavery. Because we have neither fully acknowledged nor reckoned with these twin traumas, much less worked to heal them, they perpetually re-enact themselves transgenerationally."

Our genesis, our roots, our foundation — from which the present most-assuredly does spring — lies within these truths.

They made Jan. 6 possible. They made de facto and de jure segregation possible. Erasure, mass incarceration, blood quantum, lynching, the 3/5th Compromise, redlining, family separation, internment camps and disenfranchisement are all fruit of those poisonous trees, individual and state-sanctioned stains on this nation.

But please do not misunderstand or misalign my purpose. My call for attention to the unappealing should not be seen as a means to disparage but as an invitation to love and acceptance of ourselves more fully. By inertia and by design, we have arrived at this moment, but it is the choices we make moving forward, informed by our levels of accurate accounting, that will determine our future and the response to Dr. King's question, "Where do we go from here?"

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We always have a choice. After WWII and a period dubbed "the big silence" — when people were not yet ready to address the collective grief and shame for the Holocaust — Germans united to grapple with their role in the genocide. *Wiedergutmachung*, which means "to make good again," was a movement that created museums and memorials, sites of memory to preserve a harsh but shared reality. Atrocities were publicly acknowledged and confronted ubiquitously. The government pays reparations, and history classes on National Socialism and the Holocaust are mandated in all public schools.

In South Africa, post-apartheid, the country staged public hearings where people testified to violence both perpetrated and received. Some requested amnesty — others forgiveness. Some demanded accountability, wanting those who had done wrong to acknowledge the harm and provide restitution.

These processes, though imperfect, provided pathways. We could make the choice to learn from and improve them. We could recognize that "telling the truth is a beautiful act even if the truth itself is ugly."

America, I believe that one day you'll be stunning. You should know that there's nothing unbecoming about being a work in progress. There's absolutely no shame in being unfinished. The travesty is in never trying. The "magnificent struggle" to be something better is one that I swear will make you sparkle and shine. Girl, you've got some good bones on you — those "unalienable rights" "with liberty and justice for all" where "all ... are created equal" sure are somethin' to behold. I can just tell you'll be a sight for sore eyes. My oh my, how will you glow — radiating such warmth and light — when those laudable tenets of this land are lived, brought into alignment with collaborative action. Simply gorgeous.

Note: **Inga N. Laurent** is a local legal educator and a Fulbright scholar. She is deeply curious about the world and its constructs, and she delights in uncovering common points of connection that unite our shared but unique human experiences. She writes a column for *Inlander*, a weekly Spokane area newspaper. [And she is also an Alternatives to Violence Project facilitator!] This essay first appeared in the January 21, 2020 issue of *Inlander* and is reprinted here with permission.



The Great Hotel Murder by Vincent Starrett

Sue's Corner



This was a very quick read at 210 pages. It was originally published in 1934 and recently reissued. The writing is therefor a bit dated. It reminded me if Nick Charles/The Thin Man.

The protagonist Riley Blackwood is a Chicago theater critic who fancies himself a sleuth and is just a bit full of himself. A man is murdered at the Grenada Hotel and the owner asks Riley to figure out whodunit.

Enter a huge cast of characters; the police are so far out of the picture as to be nonexistent. Riley investigates and follows the trail into the "wilds" of northern Wisconsin. Don't think Green Bay...we're only talking about an hour north of Milwaukee! "He was ardently sick of trees.... Trees hemmed him in. They weighed mysteriously on the senses." But this is where the final action happens and Riley has to deal with it.

Planning to celebrate Lent? Perhaps you might be interested in a tri-fold called [Lenten Prayers for an End to Hunger](#) put out by Bread for the World, a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. Scripture, prayer and action are suggested for each week of the six-week Lenten period between Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17) and Easter. To get a copy, you may request the Office of the Meeting House to send you one. Or you may print it out for yourself if you type [Bread for the World Lenten Prayers](#) into Google or your preferred search engine.

Note: This is the third of a new monthly column which we hope will represent Quakerism, raise questions, and perhaps even elicit responses and/or letters to the writer of the column. Please address any responses to "A. Friend" and send them to spokanefriends@gmail.com

FAITH AND REASON

... a lesson in now

by A. Friend



Events of the last few months climaxed with the inauguration of a new president and implores us to accept and repair an historic breakdown of reason. Do we salt the wounds of our nation, or seek healing through tolerance? Indeed a choice between passion and practicality.

At midnight, the Spokane Cathedral bells tolled-in the New Year, but it's reasonable to think this nocturnal music more "...a knell that summons us to heaven or to hell."*

Recall Pogo's insight: "We have met the enemy and he is us."** We seem to be at a moment in our history with an existential understanding of our mental state-of-mind, one that supports the essential question: What to do next?

Events in recent weeks are not scenes from a dramatic movie, more the real magnification of a nation of contrary thoughts and actions, seeking resolve. Twenty-twenty proved a mindbender: a datum mark, a dogear on the historic book-of-time.

Let us hope for positive leadership, for a more sensible resolution that tolerates political differences. How will future generations of Americans judge us? "Remember your humanity, forget the rest", said Bertrand Russell.

David Brooks observed the country is "divided, fearful, radicalized—and worn out." He encouraged prayer for our unpredictable future, to seek resolve.

Prayer offers the foundation of hope, if not mercy, a search for a path to spiritual insight, a reach for higher vision based on experience and belief, a meditation that echoes soul, a spiritual guidance.

We ask you to pray for peace and healing as a starting point for reasonable resolution for all we face in coming days! We seem at a defining moment in our modern history.

"Quakers believe there is something of God in everybody and that each human being is of unique worth. This is why we value all people equally and oppose anything that may harm or threaten them, religious truth and place great reliance on conscience as the basis of morality." ***

Thus said, this is a good time to sit down and think through our future as voters, parents, investors, especially neighbors, to "...avoid the negative, accentuate the positive," to recall Mercers' marvelous 1944 song.

It takes a lot of courage to stand-up against the tyranny of hatred, but more to endorse moral consequence, attempting to meet cultural expectations, seeking resolution without conflict. Presently Americans are more fearful, less trusting, and more polarized since perhaps the 1860s.

Martin Luther King faced legally embedded oppression and confronted race suppression. In this moment made dark by white nationalism, hidden behind a deceptive curtain of denial, remember Dr. King's words: "We shall overcome!"

Journalist Vanessa Friedman thinks: "The political costume department of our collective imagination will never be the same."

C'mon, pray for peace. Unvarnished truth still counts as a viable strength in our democratic system. Start with a dose of kindness! Abe Lincoln in a post-civil war speech stated: "We are not enemies, but friends. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bond of affection."

There's a lesson to be learned from the thirteenth Psalm. It regards the intriguing thought that we hope to wake tomorrow, because *Joy cometh in the morning*.

Most recently, at the inauguration, a 22-year-old poet, Amanda Gorman, proved herself a headliner among political pundits as she assessed our feelings in her poem: *The Hill We Climb*". To recall a few edited lines: "*History has its eyes on us...while democracy can be periodically delayed, it can never be permanently defeated.*"

*McBeth/Shakespeare **Walt Kelly ***ASFC

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From this remarkable performance we learn that if a poet voicing dreams can steal the show surrounded on a podium of political warriors, there is promise *via* an image of self-awareness.

Whimsy aside, Gorman has written a prayer, a lyrical hope, and we are touched. Another unshakable document has been added to our vision of ourselves, *a lesson in now*.

“Self-awareness” is fragile effort, but reason gives us strength and offers the will to claim future days.

Our ability to forgive is a significant part of any relationship. To forgive is important. Pain is part of any relationship. “Mistakes are part of being human.”****

What do you think?

Write to A. Friend at spokanefriends@gmail.com

Next Month: Nosce te ipsum!

**** Antonucci, Ajrouch & Webster

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS MINUTES 24 January 2021



The meeting was opened by Presiding Clerk, Jonas Cox. 20 people were in attendance.

The **December minutes** were read and approved with 2 corrections. Jon Maroni had previously reported that online giving was ready, but there are still a couple of things to work out. Kent Biel and Bill Emery were reported to be liaisons only for Caritas. This was not correct and will be changed during new business.

Treasurer’s Report: Jon Maroni gave a summary of giving for 2020 (copy is available). We are in the plus about 8K. He asked for people to think if they want to keep money in the Friends Foundation since we are no longer part of NWYM. We do not have to move it, but we may want to look at other investments that would give a higher interest rate.

Elder’s Report: Messages have been good and future messages are scheduled through March. We are asking to subscribe to a paper, *Black Lens*, for \$40 that is in print and digital. This was approved by the meeting. We would also like to continue our subscription to *The Fig Tree* paper for \$20 with a \$100 donation. This was also approved by the meeting. Lois Kieffaber has said she will be stepping back from her secretarial work at the church but will continue to work on the monthly newsletter. We will start looking for someone that could fill this part-time position.

Stewards & Trustees Report: No official report today.

Old Business: Caritas sent back correspondence. Our full agreement will be sent back to Caritas Outreach Ministries. This was approved.

We received word from Caritas that they have found a new place to relocate and will be doing this by June 1, 2021. (Letter attached) They will pay for the cost of the paint and 3K for their share of the carpet replacement. We will schedule both of these after they have moved out. This was approved.

New Business: Kent Biel and Bill Emery will be liaisons to facilitate the building use. This was approved.

With no other old or new business and all hearts and minds were clear, Tina Weaver dismissed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Nixon, Recording Clerk

Sunday Schedule



- Feb 7 Queries
- Feb 14 Nick Block
- Feb 21 Douglas Pierce
- Feb 28 Anya Lawrence
- Mar 7 Tim Jackson
- Apr 4 Deborah Suess

Financial Report for the Year 2020

- 2020 giving: \$49,330
- 2020 expenses: \$41,043
- Difference: \$ 8,287



Quaker News

- ⇒ Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) is offering a helpful resource for anyone looking to become more engaged with climate action. The series connects people with international efforts that can strengthen climate action at all levels. For more information go to <https://quno.org/timeline/2020/12/quno-launches-peoples-climate-empowerment-series>
- ⇒ The next **Quarterly Gathering** for Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends is scheduled for Saturday, February 20, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.
- ⇒ Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends **Annual Sessions** are scheduled for Friday to Sunday, June 18–20, 2021, and they are tentatively planning on meeting in person at Canby Grove.
- ⇒ Northwest Yearly Meeting’s **Annual Sessions** will take place July 18–21. No further information is available at this time.
- ⇒ **Evangelical Friends Mission** has been restructured and the Executive Director’s work will be split into three different positions. Current Executive Director Dan Cammack will become the Field Director, former Associate Director Matt Macy will become the Director of Mobilization, and a search for a new Executive Director has been announced. For more information see the 1/23/2021 issue of *Connections* at the website of Northwest Yearly Meeting, nwfrineds.org

Caritas Needs



- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| <u>Food</u> | |
| Chili | Ramen Noodles |
| Chef Boyardee | |
| <u>Necessities</u> | |
| Dish Soap | Laundry Soap |
| Paper Towels | |

Caritas News: This may sound strange but we have a need for rubber bands, like the kind you get around your newspaper. We greatly appreciate your generosity.

We have been informed by Caritas that they will be moving to a different, free-standing building on the parking lot of Northside Church of Christ at 5601 N. Jefferson. They hope the move will be completed by June 1, 2021. We know they need more room, but this will end a relationship of 7-plus years, and we will miss them!



A Word from
Howard
Thurman

Floating Hopes

Each of us is mindful of the tight circle in which our life is lived; all of the ways by which life is lived; all of the ways by which life closes in, stultifies, frightens, disturbs; all of those private regions of the heart where desires have their beginnings, the quiet anxieties of the spirit that express themselves in many ways that defeat the outward life. We remember the floating hopes and dreams and desires that surround us but do not quite take hold upon us.

As we still ourselves in Thy Presence, O God, our Father, we trust there may be visited upon us that which can widen the narrowness of our little lives, that which can make room within us for love where there was hate, for understanding where there is misunderstanding, for courage where there is fear. We want this so much for ourselves. We are tired, our Father, of the narrowness and the weariness and the littleness of our lives. This we know, but again and again, our Father, we do not know how to go any other way. We try, Thou knowest it. Now we wait, we wait with confidences, that what we have been unable to do, using all powers of our minds and imaginations, Thou mayest show us how to do as we wait in Thy presence. O God of our spirits, we await Thy pleasure. — The Centering Moment

[Note: Unapologetically lifted from the latest Friends United Meeting E-News.]

From the Desk at the Meeting House

A thank-you note from Sarah Scott includes the following: “As I reflect on the past year, I am thankful for the opportunities to worship with you all.” Praying for you in the New Year.” Sarah was a guest speaker twice this past year.

Hello from Honduras! Karlie Norman writes from Central America: “I wanted to drop a line and let everyone know that I am currently living near Cofradia, Honduras, teaching English. It will be the first time putting my CEL-TA to good use. If you wouldn’t mind keeping me in mind` and in your prayers. I would greatly appreciate it.”*

**Certificate in Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages*



Pastor Walter Kendrick of Morning Start Baptist Church was the keynote speaker of the 2021 Legislative Conference on Saturday, January 31. More than 150 people from local congregations attended the Zoom conference, including Kiantha Duncan, president of Spokane's NAACP chapter, Catholic Deacon Chalo Martinez whose career was as a probation/parole officer, former president of NAACP's local chapter Kurtis Robinson, former Spokane Regional Health District health officer Dr. Bob Lutz, and Margo Hill, Attorney for the Spokane Tribe and leader in the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women movement.

After the plenary session, participants were able to attend two workshops, chosen from among the following topics:

Environmental Legislation

Budget and revenue issues

Policing reform

Racism and the public health disparity

Immigration issues

Lastly, participants were briefed on the status of the legislation FAN is supporting during the 2021 session which has just completed the third of the eight weeks of this year's "long" session.

Letters from Friends

Karli Norman has written us from Honduras

January 31, 2021, 7:30 am.

I've only been here in Cofradia for one night. I was provided housing in a reasonably safe neighborhood called Braises de Valle with other volunteers. The position is a volunteer position, but the offer of a year's worth of experiences, plus food and housing was an offer that was too good for a first foray into teaching. While looking for teaching positions, I spoke to people in many places, but it was after speaking to the volunteer coordinator here in Honduras that I felt most excited and comfortable.

The hurricane was felt quite intensely here. The nearby river flooded, destroying homes and other buildings. I was told that the airport flooded to the second floor and when people went in to clear debris, they discovered cows that had escaped the flood waters roaming the second floor of the airport. When you drive away from the airport, you can see the people who lost their homes, living on the side of the road in houses cobbled from metal sheeting, cardboard, tree limbs, and tarp. Others sleep in tents. Families beg on the roadside, holding out two fingers for cash. Their children will come straight up to your car in the chaotic traffic and tap on your window. The road is still damaged between Cofradia and San Pedro, which means that travel is slow between the two cities and it has affected people's ability to get to work on time and has caused people to lose their job. There is word of a protest starting tomorrow on that road, protesting the government's failure to clean and clear it even months after the hurricane. We are expecting the road to be blocked by tires which will be lit on fire.

Tomorrow I start teacher training. I will be teaching third and fourth graders. Another volunteer and I are planning to visit Cofradia today before the roads close for the protest. My Spanish is basically nonexistent, so I will be muddling my way through and hopefully improving it as I go along. So far, people have tried to speak English with me, since I could not look whiter. I was told not to drink the water, and not to go out at night. So far, the power has only flickered briefly--probably from all the neighbors blasting their radio on Saturday night. The neighborhood noise does not seem particularly threatening, especially with the number of children around.

I woke up this morning to the sound of the neighbor's roosters crowing, neighborhood cats having sex, and the loudspeaker of the man who sells water as he drove down the road. I have yet to get a chance to try any local food as we've been mostly cooking at home, but I am hoping to get a chance very soon. I know the only other American volunteer--Quinton from Kansas--was very intrigued by the number of chicken shops near the school. As I speak, the neighborhood continues to be alive with noise, and a neighborhood dog named Alba sleeps on an empty bed.

Regards, *Karli*