

# SPOKANEWORD

July  
2022



Spokane Friends

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## Sunday Schedule

Traditional worship in stillness  
begins at 9:00 a.m.  
when first person sits down

Programmed worship 10:00 am  
In-Person and via Zoom  
See Website For Link

First Sunday of the Month  
Potluck Meal at rise of worship

Third Sunday of the Month  
Monthly Meeting for Business  
begins at rise of worship

## WHO is My Neighbor?

by Bob Neff

In the New Testament Jesus summarizes the essence of Jewish law with these words: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . and your neighbor as yourself (Luke 10:27). In the second half of his answer, he is citing Leviticus 19:18b.

Jesus and a lawyer are talking about what one must do to inherit eternal life, and they both agree on this point. The question now becomes a critical one—not which God shall I worship, but who is the neighbor I should love. Jesus then tells the story of the Samaritan who acts as neighbor to an individual left for dead.

The issue of neighbor permeates the whole 19th chapter of Leviticus and is the background for Jesus’ response. A whole series of individuals are discussed: parent, blind, deaf, laborer, poor, older adults, and the alien. What all have in common is their vulnerability. The blind person cannot see an obstacle, the deaf person cannot hear a disparaging comment, the older adult and parent require respect as vitality wanes, the laborer should be paid on time, the poor should be given the possibility of food at the harvest, as should the alien. Because these people are vulnerable, they are open to mistreatment and can be taken advantage of.

In the conclusion of this key chapter, the one group that requires special attention is the immigrant. The alien is particularly vulnerable because he or she is perceived as an outsider and a threat.

### Radical welcome

The alien, or sojourner, is first referenced in the laws regarding harvest practices. Along with the poor, aliens are provided opportunity to reap grain and pick grapes during the harvest (19:9-10). In a number of texts, the alien comes under the same law as the Israelite citizen: There shall be one law for the native and for the alien who resides among you“ (Exodus 12:49; Leviticus 24:22, and Numbers 15:16, 29).

This injunction requires a single set of laws for all those residing in Israelite territory, even though they are framed in the context of the journey to the promised land. In a much later text, Ezekiel promises the same right of inheritance to an alien as to any Israelite male (Ezekiel 47:21ff). However, this early brief allusion to the alien in Leviticus 19 requires more detailed treatment.

The practice of equal treatment under the law is illustrated in the first part of the injunction regarding the treatment of the immigrant, “You shall not oppress (*ynh*) the alien” (Leviticus 19:33). The Hebrew verb *ynh* might better be translated “cheat,” as it is in Leviticus 25:13 and 17. As the law of jubilee recognizes, people are tempted to take advantage of other individuals, and this is particularly true for the alien.

Such is the case in Genesis 23, where Abraham is identified as “a stranger and alien.” The Hittites gouge Abraham in setting the price on a burial property of “four hundred shekels of silver”—an astronomical fee. The resident is tempted to cheat the outsider with regard to wages, cost of product, or false exchange rates, since the immigrant may not know the customs, the language, or the business traditions of the new land and falls prey to abuse and misdealing.

This text goes much further with the declaration that “the alien who resides with you shall be as the citizen among you.” In all other texts, the contrast between the *ger* (alien) and

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the 'ezrach (citizen) is sharp. These two words represent separate categories and different standings within the community. But here in this text, this distinction is wiped away, since the sojourner receives citizenship status.

This is the most radical legal statement anywhere in the ancient world, according to anthropologist Mary Douglas. The radical welcome at the end of this series of commandments arises out of the granting of full citizenship status to the alien.

With this status now granted, the Israelite neighbor is to love the alien: "You shall love the alien as yourself" (v. 34b). The standard of ethical behavior in relationship to the outsider behavior in relationship to the outsider is the same as for caring for any Israelite. In fact, this commandment repeats word for word what is recognized as the highest ethical norm for human behavior and now requires it for the treatment of the foreigner.

Such a directive makes clear that there cannot be two standards of ethical treatment, one for the insider and the other for the outsider. "To love the alien, arguably, is the ethical summit not only in this chapter but in all of Scripture," concludes Joseph Milgrom, the leading authority on Leviticus.

This directive is undergirded by reminding each Israelite that "you were aliens in the land of Egypt" (v.34c). The Israelite forebears were treated harshly as slaves when they themselves were foreigners, and they depended on God for deliverance from this oppression.

To remember and act in this way toward the alien embraces the holiness that God intends and fulfills in the command "I am the Lord your God" (v. 34d).

### **Doers of the law**

The book of Ruth is read by the Jewish community at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), which celebrates the receiving of the law. One reason for this connection is that this is a harvest festival, and the book features the harvest. In addition, it demonstrates the fulfilling of law by the behaviors of Ruth to her adopted family when she cares for her mother-in-law, a dispossessed widow.

One becomes and remains a member of the community by fulfilling the law, and Ruth fulfills the law by an obedience that transcends its letter and reaches the spirit of its individual commandments. In other words, the doer of the law *par excellence* is not an Israelite, but a Moabite. Wonder of wonders, this doer of the law can be an alien. The life and obedience of this foreigner is celebrated every year in the Jewish calendar when the giving of the law by God is celebrated.

Jesus follows this tradition when he singles out a Samaritan, a hated alien, as the one who fulfills the law. Out of their concern for holiness and purity, the priest and the Levite fail to offer assistance to an individual left half dead. However, in this account in Luke, the lawyer understands that the alien did the right thing and served as neighbor to the ailing individual, even though the one bringing assistance might become contaminated.

Thus in both the Old and New Testaments, it is the alien who serves as an example in fulfilling the law. Remarkably, the best citizen is the outsider who understands what it means to provide care to those in distress.

### **What about us?**

At this time, there is no bigger issue for the American Christian community than care for immigrants in our society. Following the lead of these texts, so central to our faith, we have a scriptural basis for speaking the truth in love to the fearful and distressed. We are required by this biblical mandate to come to the defense of those who are imperiled and threatened by hate and mistrust.

We cannot be silent in the face of restrictive laws and overzealous behaviors anchored not in the Bible but in the basest of human instincts — fear of the outsider and the unknown. The Christian response is not only an embrace but a defense and a witness for the alien, the immigrant, the other in our midst.

**Bob Neff** is a biblical scholar, teacher, and writer in Pennsylvania. He has served as a professor at Bethany Theological Seminary, general secretary of the Church of the Brethren, president of Juniata College, and associate for resource development at the Village at Morrisons Cove. **Reprinted from Messenger March 2022 issue.**

## MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS MINUTES

June 26, 2022



The meeting was called to order by Jonas Cox, presiding clerk. 14 people were present. He announced that Linda Nixon had resigned as recording clerk; Susan Keehnen took over.

Minutes from the May meeting were read. A correction that Tina Weaver is not the emergency contact. Ruthie Tippin will be asked if she would agree to be on the rotation for speakers. Kent Biel had suggested we wait a month to meet with Linda Nixon about the open and affirming statement, but she said she would not change her mind, so there was no need for the meeting. Minutes were approved with the above additions and corrections.

Elders report: There was discussion about the need for part-time pastoral care, along with a financial package. A search would be done. Linda Pierce, Josh West and Jessica Carlson were recommended to be recorded as members. There has been no response from Jessica.

Treasurers Report: Checking account balance is \$41,186.20, of which \$30,000 is earmarked to be invested with Everence. Of the \$5,000 earmarked for the bathroom renovation, \$2,500 has already been spent. LaVerne Biel suggested using an online option for accounting. This would enable the treasurer to also work from home rather than just church. Plus the online option is cheaper. The status of 501(c)(3) for Spokane Friends was approved by the IRS.

### Stewards Report:

The \$2,500 already spent is for materials, labor is what's left. Kent suggested that final costs may be \$500 to \$1,000 more. It was APPROVED that up to \$2,000 extra be made available for the renovation expense. The outside water shut-off was finally found in a window well. It's filled with dirt and will have to be cleaned out at some time.

Nominating committee: Laverne reported that they are looking people to fill the positions and are **writing** job descriptions for the positions.

Jon Maroni agreed to be treasurer for one more year. He also agreed to be assistant presiding clerk.

Sue Keehnen agreed to be recording clerk.

Continuing Elders are Kent Biel, Tina Weaver, Krista Maroni and Charlene Cox. Trustees are Bill Emery and Kent Biel.

Presiding clerk - waiting on confirmation. Hopefully there will be a name by next monthly meeting.

Approval of slate will be at July monthly meeting.

There were concerns expressed about the approved language that we are "open and affirming". The concern is that it might be misunderstood about what is meant and that it might exclude some people. Much discussion followed. Kent expressed a concern that by including one group of people, we would be excluding other groups.. Jonas asked if hearts were clear about the approved language. Kent requested more time for us to think about . Jonas said the approved language could be published and that we can publicly say we are open and affirming. The meeting was ended with prayer by Laverne.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Keehnen, Recording Clerk

### Sunday Morning Schedule

July 3	Sarah Scott
July 17	Laura Shubring
July 24	Johan Maurer
July 31	Krista Maroni



### Caritas Update

Here are the needs for this week.

NECESSITIES	FOODS
Shampoo	Canned peas
Toothpaste	
Band-Aids	

### OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY!!

This month (July), we will start preparations to celebrate our 30th anniversary on October 27th. If you have any information about the beginnings of Caritas or how your church got involved, please call us at 509-326-2249.

Thank you again. From the Caritas Staff and Volunteers.



## Reconnecting with Each Other for the Common Good

July 29 – 30, 2022



The Quaker women of the Pacific Northwest have gathered every other summer from 1995 to 2018 to grow in the knowledge and love of God. This July we will again create a place to explore the idea of reconnection through the particular lens of relationships with indigenous people. We trust that the inward Teacher, the Christ within, the Inner Light, the Holy Spirit will be present again to guide us.

For this year, the conference will be on-line only and shorter than usual. We will meet on Friday evening (6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.) on July 29th and on Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on July 30th. PLUS it's free and we will not write papers.

In addition to small group conversations and fun, we have wonderful speakers who will offer us a range of tools to begin understanding ourselves and each other's cultures and belief systems and diagnose the obstacles, to discern and resist colonialism in all its forms, and build a community where equity and honesty are heartfelt realities.



◇ **Ellany Kacey** is an enrolled tribal member of the Tlingit Nation, Raven Clan. She's interim director of the Nakani Native Program and has extensive experience as a speaker and workshop leader. Ellany will offer us a range of tools to begin understanding each other's cultures and belief systems and diagnose the obstacles, to discern and resist colonialism in all its forms, and build a community where equity and honesty are heartfelt realities.

◇ **Kathleen Gathercoal** will speak on the new wisdom of current research on how to recover and re-connect with each other and with our work out in the world. Empowered by these old/new ways, we won't stay overwhelmed; we can use whatever advantages we have in society to raise up those who are in the margins. Kathleen teaches at George Fox University's Graduate School of Psychology.

This is our chance to interact with Quaker women from a wonderful range of Quaker meetings and churches, a Friendly chance to reunite with old friends and make new ones. Go to [www.pnwquakerwomen.org](http://www.pnwquakerwomen.org) for more information.



## Faith Action Network Response to Supreme Court's Roe Decision

As a multi-faith organization that values the sacred nature of human beings, care for our neighbors, and protecting human rights and religious freedom in public policy, Faith Action Network Governing Board and staff decries today's decision by the Supreme Court overturning *Roe v. Wade*. We are compelled to speak out because of the negative impacts on the health and well-being of millions of women, with a disproportionate impact on women of color, those with limited resources, and/or those who live in states where all abortions will become illegal. This reversal will increase the inequalities that already are so much part of our health care system in the United States.

Since its formation, the Faith Action Network in Washington has supported human rights and equity in public policy at the state and federal level. As a multi-faith organization, we have spoken out when public policies or acts of violence threaten basic human rights of any group – religious or non-religious.

In the wake of the Supreme Court's action to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, which has maintained the constitutional right of a pregnant person to choose to have an abortion without excessive government restriction, FAN stands with those whose rights are being denied.

We believe the Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade* reflects the growing influence of policy makers in courts, state legislatures, and governor's offices in many areas of our nation to shape public policy according to particular religious viewpoints that privilege patriarchy and white supremacy and interfere with the religious freedoms of others. We fear that other hard-won protections may be at risk.

As individuals from diverse faith communities, we recognize there are multiple and nuanced positions on the issue of abortion and when life begins. Yet, we agree that the protection of reproductive choice in the framework of *Roe v. Wade* is a fundamental right that we seek to uphold.

FAN will advocate to retain equitable policies regarding reproductive health in the State of Washington and protection of women's right to choice; we will also advocate for federal policies to protect such rights.

## LOOK WHAT'S NEW IN OUR LIBRARY!

Our collection of Pendle Hill pamphlets is growing and is full of interesting new topics that contemporary Quakers are writing about in addition to some we have owned for awhile.

When your spirit needs something nourishing, look through our collection and find a subject that attracts you. They are short reads and might form the basis of a message you would like to share during Sunday worship or a discussion you would like to lead during Education Hour.

In the meantime, Linda Pierce and Lauren are hard at work producing an on-line catalog of our holdings and listing identifying themes such as

Spirituality

Ecology .

Social Concerns

Incarceration

Grief/Death

Mental Health

Peace

Biography

...and more. Until our catalog is on-line, you can pull out a handful of pamphlets and go through them or read the list taped to the library shelf.

### YOU DON'T SAY . . .

*Kindness is more important than wisdom, and the recognitions of this is the beginning of wisdom.*

*Theodore Isaac Rubin*

You need not cry very loud. He is nearer to us than we think. Brother Lawrence

The penalty that good men pay for not being interested in politics is to be governed by men worse than themselves. Plato

Do not confine your children to your own learning, for they were born in another time. Hebrew proverb

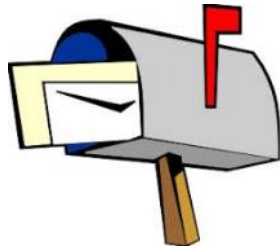
I am plagued by doubts. What if everything is an illusion and nothing exists? In that case, I definitely overpaid for my carpet. If only God would give me some clear sign! Like making a large deposit in my name at a Swiss bank. Woody Allen

**If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we would find in each man's life a sorrow and a suffering enough to disarm all hostility.** Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

God speaks as softly as He can, and as loudly as He has to. Rafi Zabor

It's not over till it's over. Yogi Berra

## Meeting Mailbox



A Thank-you note from the musical group who meets in our Fellowship Hall on Thursdays:

*"We are grateful to be able to use the church basement for our music social groups every Thursday afternoon. Please accept this donation in appreciation.*

*Let us know if there is anything we can help with maintaining the facility. Sincerely, Northside Jam (with lots of signatures including one that added "Gorgeous Space!!")*

Also we receive many thank-you notes from organizations and people who are recipients of the "See the Need" funds distributed by our community. This program gives \$100 to a different participant every two weeks. That person may give the funds in any way that meets a need they have noticed. The goal of this program is to help us open our eyes to the needs of the world that surrounds us. These notes are posted together on our Bulletin Board under the title Seeing the Need.

## Quaker News

- ⇒ **Newberg Friends Church** is receiving applications for a full-time pastoral position with responsibilities in preaching, intergenerational and family ministries and evangelistic outreach. They also seek a part-time youth ministry position, for up to 20 hours a week. Contact <[rstansell@georgefox.edu](mailto:rstansell@georgefox.edu)>.
- ⇒ **Northwest Yearly Meeting's Annual Sessions** will take place July 17-20, 2022, at George Fox University in Newberg, OR. We encourage people to attend in person if they are able, but there will be an option to attend virtually. The theme is *Together to Gather: Workers for the Harvest*. For more information, go to [nwfriends.org/sessions-conferences-retreats/](http://nwfriends.org/sessions-conferences-retreats/).
- ⇒ **Friends Committee on National Legislation** (FCNL) invites you to read this statement against anti-Asian violence at <https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2021-03/stop-violence-against-asian-americans>

## Spokane Friends Meeting Receives New Federal Status

Spokane Friends had this status by virtue of belonging to Northwest Yearly Meeting. It allows us to apply for Federal funding. We lost this when we left that Yearly Meeting. Now, after massive amounts of paperwork, application submission, and months of waiting, Spokane Friends has been notified that we once again have this status

## QUAKERS AND POLITICS— GOD'S BIG TENT

We wish to affirm our belief that Quakerism is God's "big tent," politically. We welcome people with all sorts of political beliefs—Republicans, Democrats, conservatives, liberals, socialists, Libertarians and Independents—to the Religious Society of Friends.

The Religious Society of Friends is a religious organization, not a political one, though many Quakers join together in common political pursuits.

Nor is the Society of Friends affiliated with any political party or position. Individual Quakers may and often do disagree with various political and foreign policy positions taken by Quaker-related organizations, and with individuals who express their views in various Friends publications.

Many Friends are politically involved and active which we believe is the right and duty of all of us living in a democracy.

The Religious Society of Friends and our individual Friends meetings extend a warm welcome to all regardless of political interests and/or party affiliation.

Support and Outreach Standing Committee  
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends  
October 13, 2012

## Spokane Friends Meeting is "Open and Affirming"

At the May 2022 Monthly Meeting for Business, after lively, difficult, and spirited discussion, Spokane Friends approved the use of the words "open and affirming" in descriptions of our Meeting.

The opinions expressed within this Newsletter and on our website are those of the authors, not the Meeting.