

SPOKANEWORD

August

2023



Spokane Friends

1612 W Dalke

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Following the teachings of the Living Christ, we are an open, loving, and affirming community. We believe that God's Light is inherent within all people. There are no exceptions.

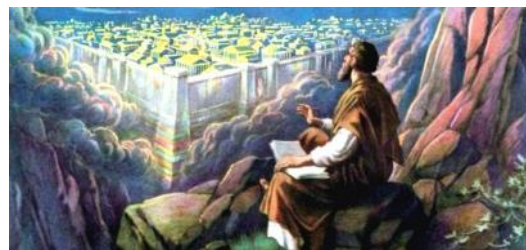
Sunday Schedule

Traditional worship in stillness begins at 8:45 a.m. or when first person sits down
Programmed worship 10:00 a.m.
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

A NEW CITY by David Radcliff



John's Vision

Revelation 21:10-25 describes John's vision of heaven. I have to admit that the first analogy that came to mind when reading this was the Emerald City in *The Wizard of Oz*. Both are fantasy lands of a sort, although the one was shown to be but an illusion, while the other (the holy city descending from heaven) is an inspired vision of what awaits the believer in the life to come.

This must have been quite a revelation for John, to be transported to this future dwelling of God, the Lamb, and the chosen. While the building blocks of the holy city are fabulous enough themselves, with all the gold, jasper, topaz and such, the symbolism of the numbers is rich as well, pointing as they do beyond themselves in sequences of perfection. Even more fabulous is the lack of a need for a temple; the Lord God and the Lamb are here!

A bonus: This passage is a quick tutorial on the origins of the oft-used expression "the pearly gates" (see v. 21).

IS EVERYONE WELCOME? This picture of a future time of splendor for people of all nations and all situations in life is a powerful source of inspiration for those mired in the troubles and imperfections of the present time. It can serve as a respite from current struggles, since we are assured that in the by-and-by things will be better; it can also be used to distract the suffering from their present situation.

This text may be helpful to the down-and-outer in another way: The gates of the city point in each of the cardinal directions, signifying an openness to all, and later we are told that "the nations" and even "the kings of the earth" (v. 24) will be invited, meaning anyone from anywhere whose name is in the book of life is welcome here.

In *Revelation, The Most Revealing Book of the Bible*, Brethren theologian Vernard Eller suggested that the presence of kings and nations, whom John has previously derided (Ch. 13), demonstrates that these must have been given a second chance postmortem. Their baptism by fire in the lake of fire made them into something wholly different, now worthy of being on the roll that's called up yonder.

And since the city gates are never closed (v. 25), they could enter. From where? The lake of fire, Eller says, making the case for universalism—that is, the eventual redemption of all people. (Some early Christians believed that there would be punishment for some in the afterlife, but that a loving God would not make this last for eternity.)

THE FUTURE IS NOW The picture of a welcoming-to-all, beautiful-beyond-imagination world would be particularly helpful to people struggling against various forms of oppression in the here and now. This reminds us of enslaved people

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(continued from last page) in our own history. This vision of a sumptuous and well-appointed afterlife was used by slave-owners to pacify African Americans during the pre-emancipation era. However, the enslaved readily interchanged “heaven and hell” for “freedom and slavery” in their interpretation of Christianity, using their faith as a springboard to push for “heaven on earth,” full rights as citizens in the present day.

Later on, Black leaders would have none of the ploy to use visions of future glory to divert attention from an inglorious present. John Lewis once said of Martin Luther King Jr.: “He was not concerned about the streets of heaven and the pearly gates. . . . He was more concerned about the streets of Montgomery and the way that Black people and poor people were being treated in Montgomery.”

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD In launching their movement, early Quakers and Mennonites looked back to the primitive church to shape their beliefs and practices. They felt the early Christians were pristine, in the sense that they were closest to Jesus and thus would have had the best understanding of how Christianity should express itself. These groups were especially committed to casting off traditional religious observances to align themselves more closely with the early church and with Jesus’ own teachings.

In this Scripture we have another example of “the way things should be” on the other end of the historical timeline—the beauty and inclusivity of the holy city of God. Here, too, the direct presence of God and the Lamb gives credence to the values on display, as did proximity to Jesus for the primitive church.

How is this vision of the shimmering city of God and its “gates are always open” approach helpful to us?

- It foreshadows the marvelous future that awaits us, reminding us that life on earth is not all there is. Especially those who have struggled in this life can know that respite is in their future.
- It is a model for our living here, challenging us to raise our vision of what God’s intentions are for human life. In this way it reminds us of Jesus’ prayer in Matthew 6:10: “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (KJV). We see what heaven is like in these verses. How close are we to approximating this in our world today?
- The open gates, which seem to welcome those we might not have imagined gaining access, is a helpful reminder of the pitfalls of a hell-and-damnation gospel. On the other hand, as people or institutions in our own times bring pain and grief on people or God’s creation, they need to be held to account for their behaviors, as the heavenly city reveals that God clearly seeks beauty and harmony.

John’s vision of the culmination of history—marked by God tenting among the people and by the people themselves no longer being subject to pain, tears, and death—is a powerful image of the next life that awaits those who have persevered in this life. As such, it can both sustain us in times of trial and inspire us to aspire for a world more like that in the here and now. Why should the peoples of the world have to wait for what we know God wants for them?

David Radcliff, an ordained Church of the Brethren minister, is director of New Community Project, a nonprofit organization working at care for creation and peace through justice. The above piece was condensed from his article of the same title in the July/August 2022 issue of *Messenger*.

Caritas Needs This Week

Good Morning --what a beautiful day!

Food:

Cereal
Canned fruit
Pancake Mix
Peanut Butter and jelly/jam

Quick fix meals
Canned beans
Syrup
Soups

Necessities:

Laundry detergent
Shampoo

Dish soap
Can openers



POTENTIAL HELP FOR CARITAS: Shopping at **Fred Meyers**?? Look for the kiosk at which to donate.

Love **Yard Sales**?? Think of having one and donating proceeds to Caritas?

Birthday coming up?? Instead of presents, ask for donations of cans of food. A great gift.

Big Fundraiser News: Oct. 19th. We need volunteers to do mailings, canvassing businesses and checking websites. We will need themed baskets, donated services, gift cards and bottles of wine.

Caritas Staff and Volunteers

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS MINUTES.
16 July 2023



The meeting was called to order by Clerk Laverne Biel with prayer. Fourteen people were present.

Minutes: The minutes for the June meeting were read and approved.

Treasurers Report: Jon Maroni presented the report. The financial position is better now than it was a year ago.

Elders Report: Krista Marconi stated there was no meeting this month

We do need to have two new Elders appointed to replace those who have resigned. Also she would like to have a year off from leadership of Elders, as she has currently served for six years as an Elder.

No resumes have been received as yet for the pastor's position. Linda Pierce suggested an ad be placed in the FaVS on-line publication.

The Nominating Committee members were approved (Sue Keehnen, Lois Kieffaber, Linda Nixon and Bob Wiese).

Elders report was approved.

Nominating Committee: Lois suggested that individuals who have not been formally recognized as members be allowed to serve in positions of responsibility.

Laverne indicated that two to three years of consistent membership is in some of the job descriptions.

Kent Biel suggested the committee use their sound judgment in putting forward nominations. This suggestion was agreed upon.

Stewardship: We need new carpet in the children's room downstairs. Kent recommended carpet squares such as those used in the fellowship hall, as they are individually replaceable. The estimated cost is \$600 to \$750.

The office computer needs to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$1,000.

It was approved to replace the carpet (up to \$700) and to invest an appropriate, reasonable amount on a new office computer.

Walter Simon is learning about the new city council candidates. He has gotten much information from the city library about faith-based construction grants. He is narrowing down the possibilities. The search has been divided into (1) what needs to be repaired, and (2) eventual replacement of the entire roof.

He stated there are a dozen local entities that could support our project(s) which he will narrow down to two or three. He is going to visit the HUD office in Seattle next month to inquire if that bureaucracy may be of assistance.

He is also looking for a young person who may be interested in his work, with a view to that individual being trained to take over the job at some future time.

There being no new business, the meeting was closed with prayer by Don Hyslop.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Keehnen, Recording Clerk

Hell Yes or Hell No
The discussion continues . . .

St. Gregory says that the image of God is only fully displayed when **every** human person is included, so that the reference in Genesis to making humanity in God's image is actually a reference to **all** of humanity as one body (which is ultimately the body of Jesus Christ that is also revealed at the end of time) [bold added by editor]

Gregory of Nyssa, also known as Gregory Nyssen, was Bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia from 372 to 376 and from 378 until his death in 395.



**CALLING ALL
PHOTOGRAPHERS**

We need your help to brighten up our current Website while we are waiting to get a new one. SO . . . for the next two Sundays, could you all please bring your cameras or cellphones and snap some photos of us doing whatever -- cleaning, eating, worshipping, talking, relaxing together -- and we will be able to update our current Website.

Quaker News

- ⇒ North Valley Friends Church in Newberg, Oregon, is looking for a youth pastor. For more information and to apply, go to their <https://northvalleyfriends.org/> and scroll down.
- ⇒ **World Quaker Day** for 2023 is Sunday, Oct. 1. This is an annual event where we celebrate the diversity of Quakerism around the world and build connections to make our community stronger. This year's theme is "Living the spirit of ubuntu: Responding with hope to God's call to cherish creation -- and one another."⁶
- ⇒ **Pendle Hill** is advertising for an **Events Coordinator** who oversees use of space at Pendle Hill and is a key position for cooperation across departments. The conference booking process includes all aspects of meeting coordination from initial contact through invoicing and collection \$50,000 – \$55,000. For more info, see <https://pendlehill.org/explore/employment/events-coordinator/>
- ⇒ **Pendle Hill** also announces that a long-time Friend, who believes in the vision of Pendle Hill, has generously offered to match all contributions dollar for dollar up to \$20,000 until August 31st! You can donate at pendlehill.org
- ⇒ **American Friends Service Committee** is advertising more than 20 jobs from volunteers to interns (\$20/hr) to top dogs (Associate Regional Director, West Region at \$81-98K). For more info, go to "American Friends Service Committee jobs" in your browser.
- ⇒ **FCNL** is advertising for an IT Network Administrator and a Community and Culture Administrative Assistant. They also have many volunteer opportunities for young adults. More information is available at <https://www.fcnl.org/about/work-fcnl>

Don't Forget
To Vote by
August 1



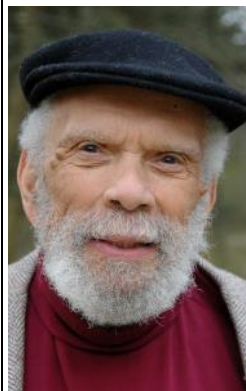
The BlackQuaker Project

The BlackQuaker Project (1) celebrates the lives and contributions of Quakers of Color worldwide and (2) documents and addresses their concerns. It is an outreach and inreach ministry of Wellesley Friends Meeting, guided by the Quaker testimonies of Truth, Peace, Equality, Community and Justice.

Why is The BlackQuaker Project needed at this time in history? While Quakers of Color comprise over half the world's Quaker population,

- little is known about the lives and achievements of Quakers of Color
- little is known about the contributions of Quakers of Color to Quakerism and to Quakers
- Quakers of Color are under-represented in leadership roles and grass-root levels in Quaker organizations worldwide, giving little opportunity to impact decision-making and to express and implement their unique perspectives
- Quakers of Color and their perspectives seldom represent Quakers and Quaker organizations at meetings and conferences of religious bodies, peacemakers and peace builders, academic societies, and ethnic and racial groups worldwide

The BlackQuaker Project was created by Dr. Harold D. (Hal) Weaver. Hal spent his earliest days on a small Black college campus in Savannah, GA, later moving to Pennsylvania and attending Westtown School and Haverford College. He has been a lifelong cultural ambassador, traveling the world breaking down barriers and building bridges between cultures. He founded and chaired the Africana Studies Department at Rutgers. He continues to break down barriers within the Religious Society of Friends, too, with his ministry, The BlackQuaker Project, one of the fruits of which was the publication of Black



Fire: African-American Quakers on Spirituality and Human Rights (2011), which Hal edited with Paul Kriese and Stephen W. Angell. [This book is in our Library.]

A member of Wellesley Friends Meeting, Hal is active locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally among Quakers. He has served in governance roles with the Quaker United Nations Office, the American Friends Service Committee, Pendle Hill, Cambridge Friends School, and the Friends World Committee for Consultation. Please consider following the BlackQuaker Project on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/theblackquakerproject/>.



Know Your Quakers A Lesson in Perseverance

By Shannon Fagan



Prudence Crandall was born on September 3, 1803, to Pardon and Esther Carpenter Crandall, a Quaker farm couple who taught their children

to value peace and kindness. Ever so, Prudence's brother Ruben she was a "very obstinate girl." The family moved to Canterbury, Connecticut, in 1813, when Prudence was ten. They sent her to Black Hill Quaker School in the nearby town of Plainfield. Her teacher there was an abolitionist, which means he was a person who worked to end slavery. In 1812 slavery was still legal in the U.S., and it would stay legal for fifty more years. When Prudence became a young woman, she started teaching school in Plainfield. Then a group of wealthy families asked her to start a school for girls in Canterbury. In 1831, Prudence and her sister Almira opened the Canterbury Female Boarding School with forty students. It quickly became one of the best schools in the whole state of Connecticut, and Crandall became popular in Canterbury.

However, the people of Canterbury turned against her in 1832. That fall, a young African American woman named Sarah Harris asked if she could attend the school – so she could learn to become a teacher herself. No school in the United States had ever allowed white students and black students to learn together. Prudence liked Sarah Harris, but she wasn't sure what to do. So she opened her Bible at random, and it told her "Behold the tears of the oppressed." There was her answer. She welcomed Sarah Harris into the Canterbury Female Boarding School, making it the first integrated school in the United States.

The parents of the white students were outraged. They told Crandall to get rid of Sarah Harris, but Crandall refused. So the white families pulled their daughters out of the school. Then Crandall filled the school with African-American girls and young women.

The people of Canterbury became even angrier. Day after day they threw eggs, stones, and dung at the school house and the students. But Crandall kept teaching.

Finally, on May 24, 1833, the people of Canterbury convinced the State of Connecticut to pass a law called the "Black Law." This made it illegal for Crandall to teach her students. Crandall kept on teaching until she was arrested and thrown into jail.

Famous abolitionists hired the best lawyers they could find to help Crandall. She went to court three times. The first time the jury couldn't decide if she was guilty or not. The second time the court said she was guilty. But she had the right to a third trial. That time the court said she was not guilty.

Crandall went back to teaching her students. This made the townspeople angrier than ever. On September 9, 1834, a mob broke into the school and, using heavy iron bars, they shattered the school's windows and furniture and terrified all of the students. Out of fear for the safety of the children, Crandall closed the school the following day.

When she was an old woman, Crandall told a visitor, "My whole life has been one of opposition. I never could find anyone near me to agree with me. . . [I have always] read all sides, and searched for the truth, whether it was in science, religion, humanity." She died in 1890 at the age of 86 and continues to shine as an example of the importance of fighting for one's beliefs. In 1954 the Supreme Court finally made equal education the law of the land, in a case won partly by the arguments that Crandall had made a hundred and twenty years earlier.

Shannon Fagan wrote this essay for the Sept/Oct 2020 issue of *Western Friend* when she was studying at Austin College in Sherman, TX. She grew up attending Reno Friends Meeting in Nevada (Pacific YM).

Letters from Friends

Our Latest Communication from Elizabeth Todd

July 10, 2023

Newberg, OR

Friends,

In planning my year without an Israeli work visa, I made some assumptions. Assuming that I would be back in Jerusalem-Ramallah this spring didn't account for an unexpected family situation that kept me here. Instead, I've spoken in churches seven times about being Friends of Jesus, tutored refugees, and tried to be a good neighbor. And I took a part-time job helping Friendsview (a retirement community) with a vision to help staff learn English and advance into health care careers. It's a win-win!

I'd like to tell you my plans for the rest of the year. I'd like to feel sure! For now, I see two possibilities:

1. I'm in Jerusalem this fall for new teacher orientation and curriculum planning.
2. I'm not.

I probably won't know for sure until the middle of August.

Either way, I feel led to end my tenure as a Friend of Jesus released for long-term ministry this year. I'm seeking a full-time salaried position here in the U.S. that will allow me to travel in ministry from time to time. In some ways this transition has already begun. Still, it feels a bit scary.

As I expect to take short term trips in the future, the Paraclete ministry account remains open. Donations received there after September will be kept for my traveling in ministry in 2024 and beyond.

However, like you, perhaps, I'm aware of several people raising money for full time inspiring ministries around the world. I am so pleased to hear if you are transferring financial support to these Friends. I also am for them and the ministries they will have!

The following is for those of you who want to understand my sense of leading. (It isn't, as some might think, about the current troubles in the land; I've been through worse.)

First: We began Friends of Jesus in the Middle East, more than ten years ago. This group formed and sent me: praying, encouraging, and giving to make years of sustained ministry possible. I've been released to follow this call by the love and support. Over time, these friends, one by one, leave the cares of this world for heaven. So, now would be the time for me to gather more Friends to fund ongoing ministry. And yet... I don't. I've come to understand that one season is coming to an end. I feel deeply that we all shared this call, we were faithful to the call, and we did what was ours to do in the time we had.

Second: Because we were faithful to carry on the work as far as we did, the cause has been taken up by the Teaching Abroad program. They've already sent a teacher and plan to send more.

Third: I've realized that there is good work and ministry for me to do here in Oregon. And I'd like to do it.

If you are one of the people financially supporting me, your ongoing support through September would help my transition. And if you want to contribute to a fund for future ministry, you can continue to give in the same way as before. I appreciate your prayers for my coming transition.

I can't say thank you enough for your kindnesses to me, for your fellowship in ministry, and for your "count me in!" spirit that has buoyed me through tough times. You've made it possible for Palestinian Christians and Muslims to experience small acts of great love by Friends of Jesus. Really. How can I say thanks?

With a heart full of love, Elizabeth, Friend of Jesus

P.S. You can expect to hear from me in August on fall plans, answering questions, and closing thoughts.



Upcoming Speakers

July 30 Jonathan Williams
Aug 6 Lauren Taylor
Aug 13 John Kinney



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, August 12
Riverfront Park
10 am - 4 pm
A Multicultural Celebration

