

# SPOKANENWORD

September

2023



**Spokane Friends**

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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

## LONELINESS

... a house of cards.

by Walter Simon

The trouble with feelings is you can't scrub and hang them up to dry. They travel with you, sometimes haunting, the feeling you are ultimately alone.

Though we struggle to define subtle issues of life, it's more prudent to accept what we experience in day-to-day matters -- a handy tool, a practice that adds reality to how we feel about ourself.

Not easy as we interact with our social conventions: laws, friends and expectations. We all hide at some level from the experience of an active life, perhaps self-protection, a solitude of spirit.

Loneliness is a state-of-mind, feeling alone, an injured organ in isolation. Nevertheless, one can live alone and not feel lonely.

Kovie Biakolo, who writes on this emerging issue, observes: "Loneliness is a dark place a state of mind: invisible surrounded by thousands of people". He continues: "Loneliness is suffering alone," suggesting isolation as a defense from what we cannot accept.

Lately there has been much written on the topic, some that invites criticism. Needed is the medical necessity to diagnose the problems that create and sustain loneliness.

One is better served in understanding the issues by perusing many extensive instructive essays --some challenge others. One thing is for sure, being alone and loneliness are different in scope.

There are a variety of contradictory opinions. Available writings pose group counseling, also meds that induce psychedelic journeys, among other offered treatments. "Loneliness is an awful paradox," observes Biakolo. He continues: "... a scar that never heals".

Loneliness is where one feels empty or unwanted. Common definitions of loneliness describe it as a state of solitude.

People who are lonely often crave human contact, but their mental condition makes it more difficult to form social connections. Experiences of loneliness can vary, but its overall effects can be profound, a public health challenge.

Given the growing concerns around the dangers of such, the U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy recently offered an 82-page advisory on the issue, based on several studies.

Murthy's report found that the risk of premature death due to loneliness has dramatically increased. The report adds that the lack of social connection increases risk of anxiety, depression, stroke, heart disease and dementia.

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Loneliness is both intricate and imposing to each individual. It offers no single common cause to prevent and treat the potentially troubled mind. Researchers offer it's associated with social isolation, poor social skills, introversion, and depression. It inhibits your state-of-mind.

Loneliness is complex. It has profound impact on your overall health. This wide-ranging concern, a major health issue, has been linked to high blood pressure, depression, heart disease, stroke and more.

There are helpful agendas available. The online therapy programs include: Talkspace, Betterhelp, and Re-gain. For those seeking to blossom from this aberrant condition, consider the champions of social infrastructure as libraries, cultural events, friendship bonds and neighborhood organizations might lead the lonely from darkness into light.

Loneliness is a complicated subject. We live with feelings. Consider that the open doors and compassion of Spokane Friends is a good place to start.

**Walter Simon** received a BS in Social Anthropology at the University of WA and studied motion and artiodactyls at Columbia University. Decades of field work -- American, Canadian Natives, and American Gypsies, as well as waterways -- enabled his six decades of media experience, 3 TV documentaries, humorous newspaper publications, voicing for commercial stations and PBS, major market experience, two volumes of poetry, and 50 readings. His second book is about to be published, and best of all, he says, is being a puppeteer for over sixty years. He is a long-time Quaker and is now a member of Spokane Friends Meeting.

## Letters from Friends

### Our Latest Communication from Elizabeth Todd

Friends,

Newberg, OR

Whew! It's already August! I wonder how you are as you look towards fall.

I'm writing you about those next steps in my discernment process.

It's clear now that I will not be going to the Middle East this fall. In the future, I expect to travel, training new teachers as needed. Still, as nothing is on the radar now, it's a good time for you to choose another ministry to support. Your prayer and giving make those ministries possible and there are so many good ones.

I've thought a lot about Friends of Jesus in the Middle East. We didn't manage to maintain a continuous Friends of Jesus presence at the Ramallah Friends Meeting and the Ramallah Friends School as I thought we would. But we are not the only ones who might see this through and ours is not the only time.

We did maintain faithful witness and service while we could. And churches around the pacific northwest were connected and involved. They sent me and others. Then we learned, prayed, served and loved as Friends of Jesus. I'm thankful. There are ongoing benefits we won't even know. So overall, like most of life, we keep our eyes on Jesus and trust him for the past, present, and future. And good work continues at Step's Jerusalem Center through Lana Thurston with Teaching Abroad.

I expect to make Newberg, Oregon, my home and put all my attention now to being rooted and grounded here. In some ways, my transition has been prolonged. That has advantages. Yet this last step feels big to me. I'm "hanging up my hat" as a traveling Friend with long sojourns in the Middle East. But I don't doubt the leading of the Good Shepherd. It took awhile, but here I am:

... your ears will hear a word behind you saying,

'this is the way, walk in it.'

Isaiah 30:21

For work, I'll continue at Friendsview where I support staff who are English language learners.

Part of that is a community English program this fall. I'm so thankful to have this role.

*Elizabeth*  
Friend



The opinions expressed in this Newsletter and on our website are those of the authors, not the Meeting or the editor Lois Kieffaber.

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS MINUTES.  
20 August 2023



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

Minutes of the last meeting were read and **approved**.

Treasurers Report: Jon Marconi reported. If the interest on the funds deposited with Everence should go down, we may want to change from a money market fund to something else that is more profitable. Recommendations will be made at the September Business Meeting.

Elders Report: Krista Marconi reported that there has been one applicant for the pastoral care position. They are preparing a hiring matrix so that all applicants can be screened by the same standards.

Trustees Report: Carpet for the children's rooms downstairs has purchased, delivered and is ready to install.

The appropriate portion of roof will cost \$10,000 to repair, but \$30,000 to replace. Replacement would also require an additional charge to maintain the contract. Repair is the best option, and it was indicated that they should be good for about 20 years. It is yet to be determined how best to pay for the repairs. The Meeting **approved proceeding with repair work**.

Nominating Committee: Sue Keehnen reported that the committee was unable to find anyone who would agree to accept a position either as Treasurer or as an Elder. At that time, Pam Emery volunteered to serve as an Elder, with Lois Kieffaber offering to serve as an Elder on a two-to-three month basis.

Discussion was held on outsourcing the Treasurer's work. Laverne will check a corporate option. Lois will contact Ken Bendixen for possible referrals.

The meeting was closed with prayer by the Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Keehnen, Recording Clerk



We are all concerned about the people in our geographic area who are homeless due to the recent wild-fires. We wanted to let you know that as we were praying and speaking about this, the **Red Cross contacted us about using our Meeting House to be a Shelter**, a community service we last provided in 2014. Our Trustees approved this use of the Building with Bill Emery as the principal contact person.



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 few 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. THANK YOU!!

P.S. You might have some "already taken" pictures that would be suitable -- please submit those also.

Caritas Needs This Week

Good Morning --what a beautiful day!

Food:

Pasta	Sauce for Pasta
Canned fruit	Canned beans
Peanut Butter	Jelly/jam
Pancake Mix	Syrup
Chili	



Necessities:

Laundry detergent	Dish soap
Toothpaste	Can openers
Cleaners such as Pine Sol, Mr. Clean, etc.	

We REALLY need your help with our upcoming Fall Dinner and Silent Auction Fundraiser scheduled for Oct. 19.

We need donations of themed baskets and individual items. Basket ideas can include Gardners' Basket, BBQ Basket, Dog or Cat Basket, Home Chef Starter Basket, Car care Basket, Beach Day Basket, Date Night at Home Basket to name a few.

Can you spare a few hours to send out mailings? We would really appreciate it.

Thank you so much.

Caritas Staff and Volunteers

## Poet's Corner

### Our Need

I am thinking now about the future and how we will proceed  
And as I see my thoughts and yours, I'm struck by our deep need.  
It's like we all can hear a Bell that reminds us of our Mission,  
But if we follow that Bell-tone to its source there will be a great transition.  
Something will happen within our souls - A change that can't be reversed  
Placing power where it belongs in us - Healing everyone we've cursed.  
That healing tone that rings in me -- I know it rings in you,  
But there is a question we must ask -- Can it ring in the stranger too?  
That other that looks so unlike me -- so full of arrogance and deceit?  
Can it be the tone that calls me to be whole also calls the stranger to be complete?  
When I feel the Bell inside me ring, do I let it sound right through my being  
And out through everything I am -- out to everyone I'm seeing?  
Perhaps what would make those strangers whole is my un-muffled gift of ringing  
To awaken what still sleeps in them -- the song of justice singing.  
Not Vengeance, I said Justice -- retribution brings no healing.  
The Universal Bell has no crack -- its tone is perfectly appealing.  
Can we let this bell ring loud enough to wash away our indignation?  
To be replaced entirely by its compelling intonation?  
One voice inside the mind seems to always answer no.  
Obsessed to make the present like the past -- it must predict how things will go  
But if we seek to have something new -- like a baby in a manger  
We need to learn to ignore that voice and ring out to the stranger.

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### Not-So-Serious Labor Day Quotes

Labor Day is a great opportunity to reflect on what you failed to accomplish this summer.

This Labor Day try not to think about how your next holiday isn't till Thanksgiving.

I wish I remotely made enough money from my labor to afford a Labor Day vacation.

My Labor day is shaping up to be busier than any work day this year.

If today is Labor Day, how many babies were born?

"If all the cars in the United States were placed end to end... it would probably be Labor Day Weekend." ~ Doug Larson

The Labor Day holiday means I get my unemployment check a day late.

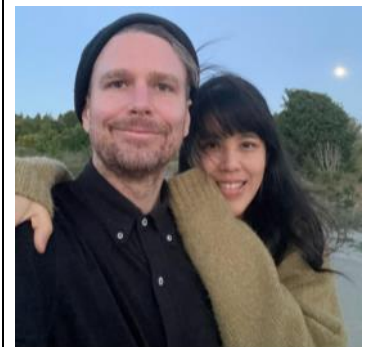
Happy Labor Day! Oh wait... we live on a farm. Never mind!

This Labor Day let's salute American corporations for keeping the Chinese gainfully employed.



CONGRATULATIONS  
PAUL AND EVELYN!

We recently learned that our former interim part-time pastor Paul Blankenship was planning to marry. Evelyn is described by Paul as a young woman of deep faith, wisdom and integrity. By profession she is a pediatric nurse practitioner, professor and writer. We share with you a picture of the engaged couple.



More recently we learned that the marriage occurred on August 12. Here is a picture of the newly-weds.



All Spokane Friends and friends who were with us under Paul's leadership wish Paul and Evelyn many happy years together as they face life as a couple with all its joys and sorrows, challenges, successes and growth.

