

SPOKANE WORD

January
2025



Spokane Friends
1612 W Dalke
Spokane, WA 99205
(509) 327-7852
www.spokanefriends.com
spokanefriends@gmail.com

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 at rise of worship

Last Sunday of the Month
Book Club at rise of worship

HAITI Mother of Freedom

by Ilexene Alphonse

"Haiti is black, and we have not yet forgiven Haiti for being black or forgiven the Almighty for making her black. . . . Until she spoke no Christian nation had abolished negro slavery. Until she spoke no Christian nation had given to the world an organized effort to abolish slavery. Until she spoke the slave ship, followed by hungry sharks, greedy to devour the dead and dying slaves flung overboard to feed them, ploughed in peace in the South Atlantic painting the sea with the Negro's blood. Until she spoke, the slave trade was sanctioned by all the Christian nations of the world, and our land of liberty and light included. Men made fortunes by this infernal traffic, and were esteemed as good Christians, and the standing types and representations of the Savior of the World. Until Haiti spoke, the church was silent, and the pulpit was dumb. Slave traders lived and slave traders died. Funeral sermons were preached over them, and of them it was said that they died in the triumphs of the Christian faith and went to heaven among the just."

—Frederick Douglass, American abolitionist, giving a "Lecture on Haiti" for the dedication of the Haitian Pavilion at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. A few years later he served briefly as US ambassador to Haiti.

Haiti is located in the Caribbean and used to be called the island of Hispaniola. It's a land of forests and of rock, of deep blue sea and mighty rivers, of high mountains.

The Spanish sailed to that land in the late 1400s and occupied it. Columbus arrived in 1492. The Spaniards treated the resident Tainos and Caribs brutally. When the number of native people declined, the Spanish and then the French imported slaves from Africa, whom they also treated brutally and lethally. From the early 1500s until 1803, Europeans trafficked almost 800,000 slaves, double the number taken to North America.

Then the Africans who had been enslaved revolted and fought the greatest army of that time—the army of Napoleon—and won, led by Toussaint Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Haiti declared independence on Jan. 1, 1804.

[The eastern portion of Hispaniola is now the Dominican Republic. It celebrates its official Independence Day on the day in 1844 when the nation was first declared to be independent of Haiti.]

Haiti is the first Black independent republic in the world. It fought and won its independence without help from any other nations. Even before Haiti's independence from France, Haitians helped the United States of America to gain its independence. Haitians fought alongside Americans from the state of Georgia, and today there are some monuments in Savannah to commemorate the participation of Haitians during the American Revolutionary War. Haiti was the first country to abolish slavery and demanded every other nation do the same.

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Haiti was the first state in the world to be formed from a successful revolt of the lower classes (slaves), and the second republic in the Western Hemisphere, only 28 years behind the US.

Early in the 19th century, Haiti helped modern-day Brazil, Guyana, Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, northern Peru, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Bolivia obtain their independence. Haiti opened its doors to anyone who wanted to be free from slavery. As long they were able to make it to Haiti, they would be free.

The United States, however, under the presidency of Thomas Jefferson, did not acknowledge or accept Haiti's independence. Finally, the US said that it would recognize Haiti's independence only if France accepted it. France said that the only way to accept it would be if Haiti paid for its freedom.

'The Greatest Heist in History'

Called by University of Virginia scholar Marlene Daut "the greatest heist in history", a newly independent Haiti, surrounded by French gunboats, was forced to pay its slaveholders reparations. You read that correctly. The former slaves, not the slaveholders, were forced to pay retribution to the former slave owners. It took Haiti more than a century to pay off the reparations debts...

But as a nation of freed black slaves, Haiti was a threat to the existing world order. President Thomas Jefferson worked to isolate Haiti diplomatically and strangle it economically, fearing that the success of Haiti would inspire slave revolts back home.

—From an NPR "Planet Money" piece by Greg Rosalsky, "The Greatest Heist in History: How Haiti was Forced to Pay Reparations for Freedom," Oct. 5, 2021.

Haiti is continuing to pay for its audacity in abolishing slavery. Today, Haiti has no government, and the blood of Haitians is filling the canals and rivers of Haiti. Presidents are assassinated, and Americans, Haitians, and Canadians are kidnapped. Ransoms are paid, but everything remains the same.

The assassinated president asked for help, and the former prime minister of Haiti, Claude Joseph, asked for help from the international community, especially the US. But both times the answer was the same: "No." Now, many countries that Haiti helped to gain their independence have declared that anyone with a Haitian passport is not allowed in.

Ambassador Daniel Foote, who was appointed by President Biden as the US special envoy to Haiti, resigned in protest. "I will not be associated with the United States' inhumane, counterproductive decision to deport thousands of Haitian refugees," he wrote in his resignation letter. "This cycle of international political interventions in Haiti has consistently produced catastrophic results."

I fear that it has always been the international community's desire to destroy Haiti. The violence in Haiti today is a combination of the legacy of slavery and the price that Haiti paid to become free and independent. The destruction of Haiti includes, for example, the loss of its formerly rich agriculture—producing plantains, rice, yams, millet, cotton, bulgar, sweet potato, yuca (cassava roots), corn, coffee, cocoa, mahogany, vetiver, Campeche wood, breadfruit, malanga. Now Haiti is mostly dependent on imported goods from outside. Former US president Bill Clinton apologized for destroying Haiti's rice industry. His administration forced Haiti to drop tariffs on imported American subsidized rice. "It may have been good for some of my farmers in Arkansas, but it has not worked. It was a mistake," Clinton said in 2010. "I have to live every day with the consequences of the lost capacity to produce a rice crop in Haiti to feed those people, because of what I did."

Haitians are resilient. Haiti will not perish. The people of Haiti have been through a lot of crises, but we shall overcome. God is our refuge and hope. I dream that one day Haiti will stand again as the mother of freedom that she is. Live Haiti!

Ilexene Alphonse is Global Mission's Country Advisory Team (CAT) representative for Haiti. An ordained minister, he pastors Eglise des Frères Haïtiens, a predominantly Haitian-American congregation of the Church of the Brethren in Miami, Fla. The above essay is condensed from "Haiti, Mother of liberty," in the May 2024 issue of **Messenger**, <https://www.brethren.org/messenger/digital/>

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS MINUTES

December 15, 2024



Minutes for Nov. 10 were read by Recording Clerk Bob Wiese and approved as read.

Treasurers Report: The report informed the meeting that our November expenses were greater than our income and that for the year thus far we have a deficit of about \$7,500. It was noted that Avista billing timing was off for some reason. We are remaining off but not as bad as previous months. The report was approved.

Elders Report: The Elders discussed speaker scheduling for Sundays; they are considering how often to have on-line speakers and in-person speakers. There is no theme for our January meetings. The elders are preparing guidelines for Greeters and Worship Leaders, to be discussed in more detail at our next meeting for business.

The Christmas Party for children on December 7, led by Taylor Blackwell, was well planned and the children had a great time. Friends also stayed after Meeting for Worship on December 8 to decorate the interior of the Meeting House for the holidays.

The Elders brought a recommendation to send our Chaplain's monthly earnings through June 2025 to his wife Amy Cross. This was approved by the meeting. We miss Ken dearly.

Report from Walter Simon, Publicity Coordinator: Walter's report was short, informing us that the KPBX Public Radio Station bill of \$500.00 was paid by Walter via a gift to the Meeting. It is good to hear our meeting mentioned on the air as a supporter of public radio.

Spokane Quaker Worship Group: Alan Binnie read a letter (attached) sent to our meeting requesting more time for fellowship between the Programed Meeting and the Silent Worship Meeting. The suggestion is that the programed meeting start at 10:30AM rather than 10:00AM on First Days to provide more time for fellowship with those who attend both worship services. The Worship Group also joined North Pacific Yearly Meeting as a recognized group of Friends under the sponsorship of Sandpoint Friends Meeting. See letter attached.

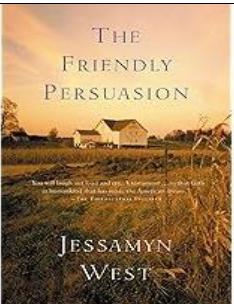
Stewards Report: Kent Biel presented one quote of \$27,000 for purchasing and installing solar panels on our roof. The Meeting House heating systems are suffering some age-related failures. Bill's Heating suggests installing three Minisplits which are wall-mounted units supplying both heat and air-conditioning. Kent suggested this may require a funding raising event to raise money for the costs.

The Ad Hoc Focus Group for Outreach Projects report was given by Krista Maroni. There was a brief discussion regarding our Instagram presence as a way for folks to interact with Spokane Friends. They request that **more members sign up to follow us** on Instagram. Any additional costs for this will be donated by Friend Andrew Nakushian. Taylor Blackwell also offered to donate funds for the Little Free Library that has been planned.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer by Don Hyslop.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Wiese, Recording Secretary



JANUARY'S BOOK OF THE MONTH

Probably the most famous Quaker novel, this book tells the story of Quaker minister Eliza Birdwell, who is a wonderful blend of would-be austerity, practicality, and gentle humor when it comes to keeping her faith and caring for her family and community. Her husband, Jess, shares Eliza's love of people and peaceful ways but, unlike Eliza, he displays a fondness for a fast horse and a lively tune.

With their children, they must negotiate their way through the Civil War, a time that constantly confronts them and tests the strength of their beliefs. Whether it's a gift parcel arriving on their doorstep or Confederate soldiers approaching their land, the Birdwells struggle to maintain their non-violent beliefs and embrace life with emotion, Quaker convictions, and a love for each other and their community. In 1956 the book was adapted as a major motion picture *Friendly Persuasion* starring Gary Cooper, Dorothy McGuire and Anthony Perkins.

We are reading this book during January and will discuss it after worship **on January 26** at the Meeting House and via Zoom.

Poet's Corner

Indwelling

If thou could'st empty all thyself of self,
Like to a shell dishabited,
Then might He find thee on the ocean shelf,
And say, "This is not dead,"
And fill thee with Himself instead.

But thou are all replete with very thou
And hast such shrewd activity,
That when He comes He says, "This is enow
Unto itself - 'twere better let it be,
It is so small and full, there is no room for me."

<https://allpoetry.com/Indwelling> This poem is often erroneously credited to the 17th century author, Sir Thomas Browne. "Indwelling" was published in *Old John and Other Poems* (1893); it was first published anonymously in 1875 in the serial *Plain Talk* under the title "No Room".

CARITAS Needs This Week

FOOD

Soups
Canned fruit
and women
Beans—all kinds

Rice
Chili

NECESSITIES

Can openers
Deodorant—men



Thank you so much for all your generosity in the past year. We could not have helped so many people without you. God Bless You!! —Caritas Staff and Volunteers

Join us in Person and on Zoom

2025 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference 'What Does It Mean To Be Prophetic?'

Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025

8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Spokane Valley United Methodist Church - 115 N. Raymond

KEYNOTE PLENARY PANEL

*Indigenous Wisdom - River Health - Ecosystem Values
Restoring Salmon Runs - Everyone Benefits*

YOUTH ADVOCACY PANEL BRIEFING ON ISSUES

WORKSHOPS: recycling, GTN pipeline, housing, human rights, hunger, racial equity in education, refugees & immigrants, advocacy how-to

For information, contact

Fig Tree - 535-4112 / 216-6090 • Catholic Charities - 358-4273

Donation \$35 in person • \$25 online by Jan 21
Group of 5+ - \$30 in person, \$20 online/per person
scholarships on request

RSVP by mail to:

The Fig Tree • 1323 S. Perry St. • Spokane WA 99202

SIGN UP ONLINE at:

secure.givelively.org/event/the-fig-tree/2025-legislative-conference

Event Planning Team and Sponsors:



FAITH ACTION NETWORK
A Partnership for the Common Good

Episcopal Diocese of Spokane

ACLU

THRIVE
INTERNATIONAL

NAACP
Spokane Branch

The Sisters of St. Francis
of Philadelphia

Meet Dr. Joyce del Rosario New Executive Director of FAN

She writes: I am deeply honored to have been chosen by the board and staff of FAN to lead us into the next season. I have grown up in Washington and have deep roots in Seattle. I believe that the teachings of our diverse faith traditions and commitments to social justice inform each other and call us all to action. I believe my work in community development, non-profit, and higher education management has prepared me to join the wonderful advocacy work at FAN. I have taught graduate level classes in Social Transformation in Action and Social Change Field Work and I am excited to be back "walking the talk" as they say. More than anything, I am eager to get to know the faith communities and organizations in FAN's network and learn how we can bring justice and equity to our neighbors and neighborhoods.

Career Highlights: Director of Multi Ethnic Programs at Seattle Pacific University, equipping students to create projects that positively impact LGBTQ+ folks, people of color, and other underrepresented communities; Asst. Professor and Director of Community Engaged Learning, Pacific School of Religion; Executive Director, 2010-2015, providing housing and support services for mostly Latina and African American teen moms and their children, Masters of Divinity, Princeton Theological Seminary, PHD. Fuller School of Intercultural Studies.

FAITH ACTION NETWORK

A Partnership for the Common Good





YOU CAN GIVE TO SPOKANE FRIENDS in many ways:

- ◊ Click the Donate button on your weekly email with worship information for Sunday or
- ◊ Go to our website, Spokanefriends.org, and click the Donate tab, or
- ◊ Drop checks or cash into the offering plate at the back of the meeting room, or
- ◊ Make an automatic donation through your bank's free Bill Pay service — you choose the amount and how often.

Thank you for giving to your Spokane Friends Meeting!

A Different Kind of New Year's Resolution

Don't have enough money to save anything? Not enough to give to the Meeting? If this is you, here are two strategies to overcome the mental block that is keeping you from saving,

21-day financial fast

Yes, prayer and fasting are highly recommended practices for continuing spiritual development, but fasting is certainly out of style or is used mainly for dieting or weight control. But what about a **financial fast**, especially for those of us whose money runs out before the end of the month?

For three weeks, you cannot buy anything that is not a necessity. You can't eat out. You can't go to the movies. You most certainly can't shop as a form of entertainment. Do not even browse your favorite online shopping sites.

You also can't accept spending on your behalf. For instance, a friend may want to treat you to a movie or dinner. Nope, not allowed on the fast.

Why? The goal of the fast is to stop spending mindlessly. It is to develop a habit of looking for ways to entertain

yourself without money being spent. It is not unusual for folks on the fast to realize they are spending hundreds of dollars eating out every month.

Eat out of your house. "Each year the average American family of four loses \$1,500 to uneaten food," according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Is this you? You open the refrigerator or cabinets, and although there's food in there, you say, "There's nothing to eat" What you mean is, there's nothing you want to eat.

Try this. Eat all the food in your house before you shop again. And I mean everything. Don't go to the grocery store except to buy perishables such as milk, eggs, and bread. Make an inventory of what you have and then search online for recipes for what's on your list. Get creative. Got lots of beans and diced tomatoes? There's an incredibly easy vegetarian chili on allrecipes.com. **This piece is condensed from an essay by Michelle Singletary in the Spokesman-Review, last January 2024.**

Quaker Connections

- ⇒ The unprogrammed group hosted by Spokane Friends has become a Worship Group affiliated with North Pacific Yearly Meeting under the sponsorship of Sandpoint Friends Meeting. Their name is now **Spokane Quaker Worship Group**. They average 10–12 worshipers on Sunday mornings.
- ⇒ **North Pacific Yearly Meeting** will hold Annual Sessions on July 9-13, 2024 on the University of Montana campus in Missoula, Montana.
- ⇒ **Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting** is meeting for their **Winter Gathering** on Saturday, February 8, at West Hills Friends. They plan to worship together, attend workshops, enjoy a meal together, and listen to each other and the Spirit in meeting for business.

⇒ **Sierra-Cascades** has also announced the dates and location of their **2025 Annual Session**. It will occur July 25-27 at Reedwood Friends Church in Portland, Oregon. Keep up with Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting at <https://www.scymfriends.org/events>

⇒ Evangelical Friends Mission, a consortium of six yearly meetings including Northwest Yearly Meeting has approved **a new mission field in the Balkans** (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.)

⇒ Join **Right Sharing of World Resources** on Zoom on Tuesday, January 21 for a conversation about how simplicity manifests in our lives, and how its practice impacts our wider community and the world. To register, go to <https://rswr.org/community-engagement> and look under Right Sharing Conversations. Come prepared to share and listen deeply.

A Quaker Glossary

Advices are principles for spiritual guidance, caution and counsel of a Quaker Meeting.

Affirmation—a legal declaration made by Friends or others who have conscientious objection to the taking of oaths. Taking oaths implies a double standard of truth; Affirming means that we must always tell the truth.

A.F.S.C. — the American Friends Service Committee, a Nobel Peace Prize organization of Quakers.

Answering that of God in everyone is life's purpose for Quakers.

The *Apology* is the theological foundation written by Robert Barclay.

Attender — A person who worships regularly with Friends but has yet to become a Friend.

Spiritual Baptism is spiritual cleansing and it is the heart of the religious experience for Friends. Water baptism is a public sign of what has happened inside; it is not necessary for Quakers.

Barclay, Robert — Early Quaker scholar and writer

Quakers read the Bible and try to understand and interpret it by their own experience in the Light and Presence of God.

Calling — A powersense of being destined and required to act on a specific concern.

Centering down — A process by which we still or direct our conscious thoughts and open our minds in order that we may hear God speaking directly to us; a way of concentrating on God and putting aside all other matters.

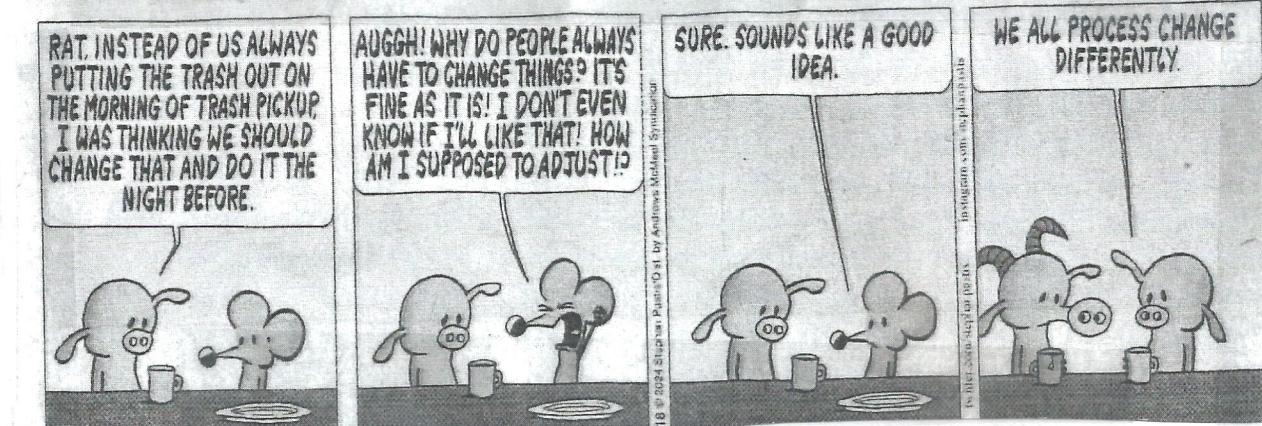
Christocentric — A Quaker whose inspiration is essentially Christian and who holds that the Religious Society of Friends is essentially a Christian denomination.

Clearness (clarity) — A condition in which there are no perceived obstacles to a proposed course of action by an individual Friend or a meeting. We have Clearness or clarity as to what God wants us to do with our lives.

Clearness committee — a group of Friends appointed to assist a person or a meeting to clarify a decision or concern.

Clerk — the individual who provides order to a Meeting for Business. (to be continued in later issues)

Pearls Before Swine



From the
Spokesman-
Review last
month.