

SPOKANE WORD

June
2025



Spokane Friends
1612 W Dalke
Spokane, WA 99205
(509) 327-7852
www.spokanefriends.org
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
Gathering 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

SEARCHING FOR TRUTH IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES

by Leann Williams

Bruce and I have regular discussions these days about how to know what is true. As I listen to my clients, there is a vast difference in how individuals interpret current events. I have been thinking about the nature of truth. My heart directed me to Jesus words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

Let's step back into the scene where Jesus makes these statements. Jesus is nearing the time when he will be arrested and eventually killed. Jesus is trying to prepare his disciples during their last meal together for what is coming. He tries to tell them he is going to die, he will be betrayed, he is leaving. They don't understand. John 14 records Jesus saying,

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Here, in this text, the disciples, mostly good Jewish people, have been living with, learning from, and following Jesus for about three years. They have seen him perform miracles, have listened to his parables and preaching, and have seen him move among all sorts of people showing a different way to live. He has shown them how to love all kinds of people they would have considered not worth their time.

When Jesus said, "I am the way" a Jewish person of the time likely would have heard the concept of the Jewish word HALAKHA. The root word meant to go or to walk. It came to represent the way a faithful Jew would walk out their faith including the laws, traditions, and customs of the Jews. Rabbi Art Green explains Halakha is the way we walk out our faith. It's not an obligation, it's a relationship. The rabbi says, "As I act in faith, I feel the voice of God." Early followers of Jesus were called "The Way" signifying that following Jesus is a process, a journey of faith, a path of faithfulness. Quakers would call this "Gospel Order." Jesus is the true embodiment of God's law in daily life even when, perhaps especially when, he did not follow the rules. Jesus shows us the way, prepares the way, provides a way to a meaningful life, to finding our purpose, to live out the values of God's kingdom. Jesus accompanies us on our way.

The bible is clear that the truth matters. In Psalm 15 David asks God, "Who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?" In other words, who gets to hang (continued on next page)

(continued from page 1) “Walk straight, act right, tell the truth. Don’t hurt your friend, Don’t blame your neighbor. Despise the despicable. Keep your word even when it hurts you. Make an honest living. Never take a bribe.

Psalm 52 describes a person who is a disgrace in the eyes of God. In the NIV it reads, “Why do you boast, you mighty hero? Why do you boast all day long? You practice deceit, your tongue plots destruction, it is like a sharpened razor. You love evil rather than good, falsehood rather than speaking the truth. You love every harmful word, you deceitful tongue.” After pronouncing judgement, the psalmist concludes, “He trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others.” This psalm was likely written about 1,000 years before Jesus walked the earth. Authoritarian leadership is an ancient problem.

So, telling the truth is important, but what is truth itself? Philosophers have debated that question since ancient times. There are three major streams of thought about truth. The Correspondence theory states truth is what corresponds with reality. A statement is true if it accurately reflects the way things are in the world. Truth is a property of a statement.

Here are some problems with the correspondence theory. Something can be factual without my knowledge or awareness of it. Two people can experience or witness the same thing and give two very different reports of what they saw or understood. Take current events as an example. What is reported as truth is vastly different depending on who is reporting. What we once knew as fact such as “the earth is the center of the universe” becomes untrue when new knowledge emerges. So, the Correspondence theory is a problem if you are trying to get to the truth.

The Coherence theory of truth states that truth is a proposition or belief within a system that logically fits together. If your statement fits with the accepted beliefs of the system, does not contradict other beliefs, and makes sense, it is true. The problem here is that two totally different systems of belief can exist that are in complete disagreement as to what is true. Some would argue that there is only one system of absolute truth. I can believe in absolute truth. I just don’t believe humans are able or trustworthy to know it.

The Pragmatic theory of truth says whatever is useful to you, or beneficial for you, is true. Truth is a quality which is confirmed by its effectiveness. The problem here is that what works for one person may not for another.

If the philosophers don’t seem to be able to help us understand what truth is, maybe we are looking for truth in the wrong places. Jesus did not say I have the truth, but I AM the truth.

If we look at definitions of the word “TRUE” we come to a different stream of ideas. “True” can mean accurate or exact. It can also mean correctly positioned or aligned, balanced, upright or level. Or “true” can mean loyal or faithful as in a true friend. These definitions move into a way of being.

In his book To Know As We Are Known, Parker Palmer encourages us to think of truth NOT as an object to own, statements and systems of belief, but as a way of being. He explains that our English word “truth” came from the word TROTH. It was a word that meant a promise or pledge of loyalty. It was used in wedding ceremonies. The bride and groom would say, “I pledge thee my troth.” They were betrothed. The word troth became our word truth.

In the book The Courage to Teach, Palmer defines truth with these words:

“Truth is an eternal conversation about things that matter, conducted with passion and discipline. Truth is the process of inquiry and dialogue itself, that keeps testing old conclusions and coming up with new ones. It is a commitment to the conversation.”

Quakers have understood that we come closer to the truth (what we should do, how we should respond, what we should value) when we discern together. We each have a piece of truth, an understanding that is unique to our experience that when fit together with others creates an understanding that can be measured against our core values, our testimonies to determine the right course of action. Those values are simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship.

“Truth is an eternal conversation about things that matter, conducted with passion and discipline. Truth is the process of inquiry and dialogue itself, that keeps testing old conclusions and coming up with new ones. It is a commitment to the conversation.”

This definition fits exactly as I see Jesus by his words and action calling into question the beliefs and practices of his times.

John 4:8 John tells us that God is love. In John chapter 1 Jesus is described as “full of grace and truth”. I don’t think “full of truth” to John meant Jesus was full of words accurately reporting verified realities, nor do I think Jesus was full of statements and propositions that fit within a system of belief.

(continued on page 4)

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS SUMMARY OF MINUTES

May 18, 2025



The meeting was called to order by LaVerne Biel who prayed that Christ be the center of our business meeting.

The Minutes of the April Business Meeting were read by Recording Secretary Bob Wiese and **approved as read**.

Treasurers report: Jon Maroni reported that our income was slightly higher than our expenses for May, but the year-to-date statement is still thousands of dollars in the red. He reminded us again that we need to find ways to increase individual giving.

Elders Report: Sunday speakers are scheduled through June. Written guidance for worship leaders is now available from Elders.

The “downstairs” Quaker Worship Group has sent a letter (attached) cancelling their request for a change in the time of our Sunday Worship.

The Elders also discussed church leadership and responsibilities for new members who would like to contribute to the meeting as far as their talent and abilities allow.

Stewardship/Trustees Report: Don Hyslop volunteered to provide weed spraying for the property. A discussion followed regarding a time to spray safely with no chemical danger for neighbors and passersby. They are looking into other products for organic/safe weed control.

Stewards are commended for hosting a recent Alternatives to Violence workshop in the Fellowship Hall; the workshop was very well attended and brought in some income.

LaVerne Biel brought a request from World Relief for our Meeting to help with services for a family from Sudan that has arrived in Spokane as immigrants. They need help with such things as transportation, English language assistance, and cultural understanding of America and Spokane. The Meeting expressed interest in helping, but we asked for more information, including a list of particular needs and the estimated time to provide services to meet each need. LaVerne will follow up on this.

Walter Simon, our publicity coordinator and fund raiser, reported that he plans to maintain his services to us for one more year, health and age permitting. He reiterated his need for a younger person that he can train to take over when he retires. He also announced that he is starting a fund for the Peacock family, since our Meeting's financial support of them ends in June. The Meeting also discussed other ways to provide individual support of the Peacock Family by helping with practical needs and personal support for Amy.

A Friend from the meeting brought a statement regarding the blockade of food and medical supplies for people in Gaza for over two months. Food is being used as a weapon of war and many people are starving in Gaza, including women and children. FCNL is also taking action on this matter, asking our Congressional representatives to pressure Israel to lift the blockade. The Meeting agreed that such a statement should be a moral statement, not a political one. Those who wish to help craft such a statement are asked to contact Lois Kieffaber.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with prayer by Linda Pierce.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Wiese, Recording Secretary



A NEW HOME FOR CARITAS

Caritas is an ecumenical nonprofit established in 1992. Spokane Friends Church was one of its original founders and we also housed Caritas for a number of years before it moved to a location with a larger space. Caritas seeks to serve neighbors in need by providing food, hygiene supplies, fuel vouchers/ bus passes, and utility assistance.

Now Caritas is moving again to a much more visible location. It will be closed May 19th to May 30th for the move to their new location at 4718 N. Ash Street (across from Value Village) in the basement of the former Sunrise Church of Christ. They plan to re-open on Wednesday, June 4th, 2025. Clients are asked to **please remember to bring bags** because the carts cannot leave the building. Congratulations and best wishes to Caritas in its new location.

(continued from page 2) I think Jesus is full of truth that that exemplifies ways to align ourselves to God and one another in faithfulness and a commitment to God who is love.

Jesus is the way showing us what a journey of faithfulness to God's values looks like. Jesus is the truth, a true way to align ourselves to God's love and grace. Finally, Jesus states he is the life. Most interpreters of this passage emphasize the exclusivity of Jesus being the only way to access God, the one and only true God, and the only way to achieve eternal life. I am not opposing that interpretation of this passage. But, as I put myself in the text, imagine myself there, I see another way to view Jesus statement, "I am the life."

In the upper room Jesus is acutely aware that his betrayal, arrest, trial and death will all be taking place very soon. He has been trying to prepare his followers for the upcoming events. He says, "Don't let your hearts be troubled." The book of Matthew records that shortly after their time together in the upper room, Jesus and his followers went to a garden where he prayed as he was overwhelmed with sorrow. This is a time of deep confusion, apprehension, and fear.

Life under the Roman occupation had been hard for all the Jews. The system of domination where the Romans demanded taxes and unquestioned obedience to their cruel requirements of service to the empire was dehumanizing. Jesus offered an alternative way to live within an oppressive regime that was not violent returning evil for evil nor passive cooperation. Jesus taught his followers to respond to the laws in ways that exposed their lack of justice and abuse of power.

Ultimately, Jesus' betrayal, trial, execution, and death expose the oppressive systems of Roman government and the failures of the Jewish religious system. The most advanced political system of the time, the Roman Empire, and the most developed religious system of the time, the Jewish sacrificial system, ultimately led to Jesus' death. I believe that one of the reasons Jesus died was to give us an example that human systems which rely on domination and fail to acknowledge the sacredness of every life will eventually lead to death. Perhaps Jesus declaring, "I am the life" is a foreshadowing of his giving his life to liberate us from the oppression of sin, and the foolishness of trying to live a life independently of God.

Our times are troubling. It's often hard to discern the correct responses to life events. Jesus gives us an example of how to live in a world where power and wealth are valued above the dignity and the inherent value of every person. As we live in faithfulness to the way of Jesus, we continue to question and challenge the false perceptions of truth as Jesus did, and trust that the life Jesus gave for us can provide liberation from our sins and those of the world around us.

May the way, the truth, the life and grace of Jesus guide each of us on our path today.

Leann Williams and her husband Bruce are long-time members of Spokane Friends. They founded and shepherded a group in Coeur d'Alene which is called Friends in Common. Leann is a recorded minister in Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting. After a teaching career, she became a licensed massage therapist. The message above was given during Sunday worship at Spokane Friends on May 4, 2025.

QUAKER VOICE ON WASHINGTON PUBLIC POLICY visits Spokane Quakers

Just as Quakers of all stripes have united to advocate for public policy at the national level through FCNL, so Quakers also advocate our state lawmakers in Olympia. On May 10th approximately a dozen Friends from both the Spokane Quaker Worship Group and the Spokane Friends Meeting attended an informational session about Quaker Voice on Washington Public Policy and its advocacy work. Presenting were Jacob Squirrel and Alan Mountjoy Venning from the Olympia Monthly Meeting and Ranae Hanson from University Friends Meeting in Seattle. They shared why they do this advocacy work and how we can help if called to do so.

The work of Quaker Voice is accomplished primarily through virtual Working Groups of volunteers from Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups from throughout the state, although at this time they are located primarily in Western Washington. These groups choose priorities to work on throughout the year. Some of the priorities from past years include **environmental stewardship** (climate change, fighting degradation of the Washington environment, etc.), **criminal justice** (incarceration and re-entry, circumstances in prison), **economic justice** (housing and homelessness, income and wealth disparities, universal health care), and human rights (LGBTQ+, immigrant rights, etc.) .

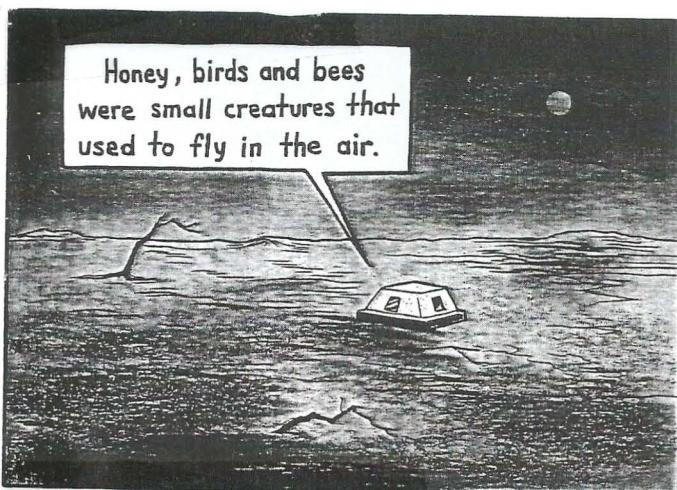
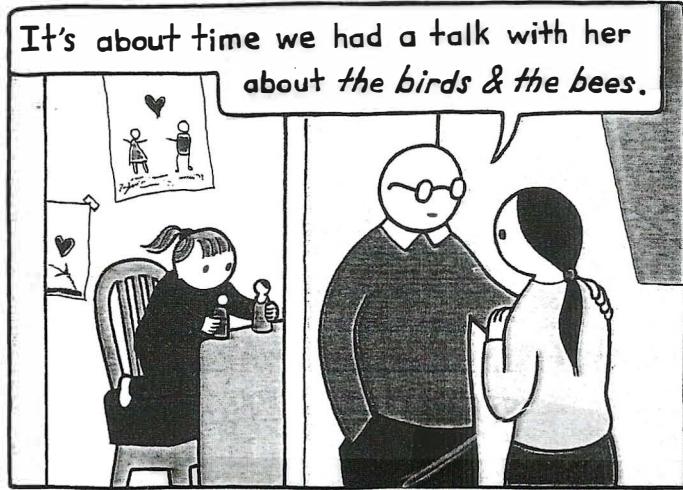
For more information and to work with Quaker Voice, see their website QuakerVoiceWA.org.



Thank you for giving to Spokane Friends!

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 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.



Nicholas Gurewitch



NADINE JOYCE ASHER

1943 – 2025

Nadine was called to her home in heaven May 5, 2025. She was born February 7, 1943, to Wilhelmina Ruth DeYoung and Ernest Ray Vanderau and grew up on a farm near Lewiston, MN. In 1965 she graduated from Winona State College in 1965 and completed her M.A. in Library Science and Audiovisuals from the University of Minnesota. She moved to Forest Grove, OR where she was librarian/audiovisual person for 19 years.

While teaching, she met Milton Asher and they married in 1971. In 1976 they had a baby girl named "Sheera" (song). Milt loved to fish and hunt, so Nadine learned to help cut up venison, elk, and moose for the freezer.

In the 1990s, she was diagnosed with fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue so learned to live with limitations. She was a voracious reader and enjoyed Bible study groups. Always involved in sewing and crafts, she made hundreds of quilts and pillows for CASA, benefitting kids going into foster care.

Nadine had a big smile to greet others, was willing to help anyone, and enjoyed family and friends. She liked gardening with flowers and veggies, plus canning fruits and jams. In 1999, she became Nana to Faith, then Patience and Trinity. (Her favorite nickname was Nana!)

Nadine and Milt became members of Spokane Friends when they moved to Spokane in 1990. During her time with us, she was active in the Friends Acting Troop, served on the Nominating Committee, and faithfully supported the Hospitality Committee which is responsible for the Meeting's social gatherings. She was greatly missed when she left the Meeting in 2002, and we were thankful that she supported her husband Milt Asher's continued membership and leadership in music within our Meeting until his death in 2019.

Nadine was preceded in death by husband Milt, daughter Sheera, and sister Joan. She is survived by grandchildren, Faith, Patience, and Trinity; sister, Elaine Leadabrand (MN); sister-in-law, Cathy May (OR); and nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. Now God has given her a body without aches and pains. Always wishing she could carry a tune, Nadine can now make music to worship her Lord and Savior, Jesus. Be happy for her!

Poet's Corner

WHEN YOU HEAR I PASSED AWAY

When you hear I passed away,
rejoice!

God has prepared a place for me;
I have gone to my home in heaven.
be happy!

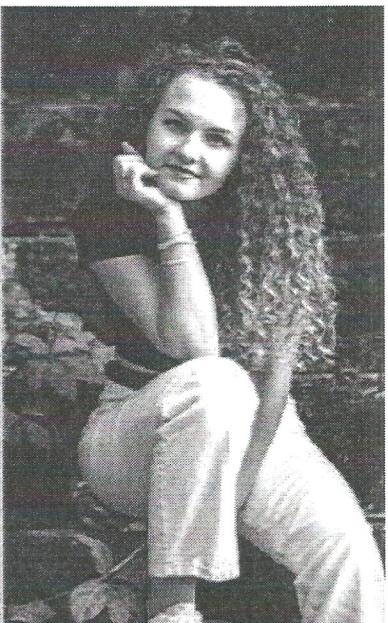
Jesus is my Savior and I have
My new body with no pain!
be glad!

I can finally sing in tune as I
always wished.
be thankful!

Remember the good times with
me, but celebrate what God has done!
again rejoice!

This poem by Nadine Asher was in the folder available from at
the memorial service for her.

Congratulations



Bria Cross

is graduating from
North Central High School
On Saturday, June 7

Celebrate with Bria and family
at an Open House
5:30—8:30 pm
3435 E. Courtland Ave.

Bring an appetizer to share
RSVP: text 509-720-4209

Park at Cooper Elementary
one block away

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

Quaker Connections

- ⇒ Attention, Quaker poets! **Fernwood Press** is putting together an anthology of **Quaker poets of the Northwest** (Idaho, Washington, Oregon, northern California) Please submit up to ten of your best poems (new or previously published, including publication details) to editor Nancy Thomas at hanathomas@prodola.org. Dates for submission are from May 2025 through August 2025. Send any questions to Nancy if you need more details. It will be a beautiful book!
- ⇒ The newly formed **FCNL Advocacy Team** succeeded in getting an in-person meeting with congressional aides of one of our members of Congress. More details will be available in next month's Newsletter.
- ⇒ **North Pacific Yearly Meeting** will hold Annual Sessions on July 9-13, 2024 on the University of Montana campus in Missoula. At that time, consideration will be given to whether North Pacific YM might affiliate with Friends General Conference.
- ⇒ **Sierra-Cascades Annual Sessions** will occur June 25-27 at Reedwood Friends Church in Portland, Oregon. Keep up with Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting at <https://www.scymfriends.org/events>
- ⇒ **Northwest Yearly Meeting's Annual Sessions** will be held at George Fox University, July 20-23, 2025.

