

SPOKANENWORD

June
2026



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 8:30 a.m. or
when first person sits down

Gathering worship 10:00 a.m.
In-Person and Via Zoom
See Website For Link

INUUC Worship Service 11:30 am

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

WE CAN SEE JESUS

by Leann Williams

We come this morning along with people all over the world to celebrate Easter, a symbol of the new life and the energy of spring, the end of winter darkness and the spring equinox that brings increasing light. For Christians it is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus after his death on a Roman cross. For me, it is a lesson that in the darkest of times the story isn't over. There can be life after death. The bible is full of stories where things looked hopeless, but the story was not yet over. Abraham was promised by God that he would be the father of a great nation. When Sarah, his wife, was old and still childless, it looked hopeless. She carried out a plan to have a child through Hagar, her servant. But that was not God's plan, and the story was not over. At 90 years old Sarah finally had her child, Isaac. Hagar and her son, Ishmael, were sent out to the desert. It looked like they were going to die there, but the story was not over. God led Hagar to a well. They did not die and Ishmael also became the father of a great nation.

Other stories come to mind. A favored younger brother, Joseph, bragged to his brothers and caused them to resent him. They put him in a well and sold him to a caravan as a slave. It looked like a disaster for Joseph, but it was not the end of the story. With many twists and turns to the story Joseph became a powerful man in Egypt and saved Egypt from a famine and was reunited to his family. Jonah ran from God's instruction to preach to Nineveh and headed to Tarshish in a ship. He was thrown overboard and found himself in the belly of a great fish. It looked like the end for Jonah, but the story was not over. He was spit out on the shore, preached as he was told and Nineveh repented despite Jonah's bad attitude.

Easter is a reminder to me that whatever story we find ourselves in, the story is not over yet. There is room for hope.

When I realized that the Easter message for Spokane Friends would be my responsibility this year I was a bit concerned. I grew up in church hearing pretty much the same message every year. What could I add that would bring a unique perspective? It turns out that I didn't need to create a new slant. There was a story within the story that I had never really heard before. I'm sure I read it but somehow missed it. So, before I begin, I'd like to state that any resemblance to current political persons or events are purely historical and should not be construed as a political commentary by this speaker.

There's a conspiracy going on in the account of Jesus death and resurrection. It's important to understand who the players are to follow the story. The main character is Jesus, a poor and homeless indigenous person living in a territory occupied by the powerful Roman Empire. He was born to an unwed Jewish mother in a small farming community about 6 miles outside of Jerusalem and raised the son of a carpenter in Nazareth about 60 miles north. When Jesus grew up, he became an itinerant teacher or rabbi and gathered followers along the way. He claimed to have authority from God to perform miracles of healing and to interpret the Jewish scriptures. He gained attention and popularity among the religious and sinners alike.

His popularity and nontraditional teaching caused the Jewish religious leaders to take notice of him. The Pharisees interacted with Jesus most often. They were generally laymen representative of the common working folk. They held oral traditions to have equal authority with written scriptures. They believed in the resurrection of the dead and an afterlife of reward or punishment. They also believed in angels, (continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1) demons, and spiritual realms. The Sadducees represented the wealthy Jewish ruling elite, the high priests. They held to a literal interpretation of the scriptures and considered oral tradition to be manmade holding no authority. They did not believe in resurrection, an afterlife, or spiritual realms. They had a vested interest in keeping the Romans happy so that they could retain their wealth and power.

The Sanhedrin was something like the Supreme Court of Israel. It included both Pharisees and Sadducees. When crowds started following Jesus, the Romans started paying attention to him as a potential threat to their authority. The Pharisees and Sadducees of the Sanhedrin united to conspire with the Roman authorities to have Jesus put to death.

Jesus preached the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Any talk of a kingdom other than the established Roman rule could be a threat to the political system. When Jesus entered Jerusalem for the celebration of Passover, crowds welcomed him. The Romans were quick to put down any sort of insurrection. Though Pilate, the Roman governor, found no evidence of insurrection, the sign he had hung above Jesus on the cross identified Jesus with the words, "This is the King of the Jews."

Jesus taught with authority that challenged the Jewish religious system. Jesus took his followers beyond the "thou shall nots" of the 10 commandments to the heart of the commands. He expanded "do not commit murder" to stating that if you are angry with a person without cause, you are guilty. He expanded "do not commit adultery" to if you even look at a person with lust you are guilty. He expanded "love your neighbor" to love your enemy as well. Jesus did not advocate strict adherence to the law but rather encouraged his followers to look to the spirit of the law which requires greater sensitivity and discernment and is more difficult for authoritarian leadership to control.

In Matthew 12 and Mark chapter 2 we read the story of Jesus and his followers pulling off the heads of ripe grain and eating them on the Sabbath because they were hungry. Any work on the Sabbath was forbidden by Jewish law. Jesus declared that the Sabbath was made for man. Man was not made for the Sabbath. I understand that to mean that religious or spiritual practices are intended to deepen our spiritual lives. Our lives are not to be lived to serve a religious system. Following this event, Matthew 12:8 states, "Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against him how they might destroy him."

In Mark 12 Jesus is asked what the most important commandment is. His answer was to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and your neighbor as yourself. A scribe responded that doing that would be better than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices put together. Jesus declared that the scribe was not far from the kingdom of God. Also, in that chapter a group of Sadducees came to Jesus with a hypothetical situation. They describe a woman whose husband dies and leaves her with no children. By Jewish law a brother of the deceased husband would be required to marry the woman and have children on behalf of his brother. They ask Jesus, "What if there are six more brothers who all marry the woman and fail to have children? Whose wife is she in heaven?" Jesus responds by telling them essentially, "You don't understand your Bible or how God works. God is not the God of the dead but of the living! You are greatly mistaken."

Jesus' teachings introduced an entirely new approach to God and understanding of God. He advocated a walk with God not directed by rules and regulations but by principles and values that Jesus showed us in how he lived his life on earth. The Jewish leaders of his day could not tolerate the challenge to their authority, so they had him crucified.

Soon after Jesus died, a follower of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea, went to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus to place in a new tomb that he owned. He prepared the body of Jesus for burial, placed it in the tomb and had a stone rolled against the opening of the tomb. The next day the High Priests and Pharisees went to Pilate. The Message version of Matthew 27:63-66 records them saying, "Sir, we just remembered that that liar announced while he was still alive, 'After three days I will be raised.' We've got to get that tomb sealed until the third day. There's a good chance that his disciples will come and steal the corpse and then go around saying, 'He's risen from the dead.' Then we'll be worse off than before, the final deceit surpassing the first." Pilate told them "You will have a guard. Go ahead and secure it the best you can." So they went out and secured the tomb, sealing the stone and posting guards."

At this point, a little historic information is helpful. The seal on the tomb was a string or rope tied across the face of the stone fastened on both sides of the opening to the tomb with wax or clay. Of course, the rope could easily be broken. However, the wax or clay was stamped with the official seal of Rome which was a sign that only the Roman government had the authority to open the tomb or break the seal. The guard was never a singular soldier. It was generally a minimum of four and up to sixteen soldiers who would take shifts guarding the tomb in pairs. If a guard fell asleep on the job, the punishment was death. If the seal of a tomb was broken, the entire group of guards could be put to death.

(continued on page 4)

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS

May 17, 2026



The meeting was called to order by Clerk LaVerne Biel with prayer.

The Minutes of the last meeting were the meeting and **approved as corrected**. The correction noted that the church's internet was changed from Central Link to TDS Fiber, in addition to the telephone service.

Refugee Families Report: Lyn Lindell updated the meeting on her activities with the Sudanese community. She also reported on her Quaker Kids group who are planting herbs in one of our raised beds as they learn about the Quaker SPICES. She particularly thanked us for a generous financial contribution, which was made good use of and is now depleted.

Treasurer Report: The report showed \$31,748.10 attributed to Maintenance and Upkeep of the Building; we assume that it (or some similar amount) had been paid to Bill's Heating and AC for completing the installation of Phase 1 of our new HVAC system. We now have mini-splits installed in the sanctuary, the office suite and library, and the fellowship hall and eastern classrooms downstairs. The installation took two days and occurred the week following our Spring Work Day.

Elders Report: Sunday speakers have been arranged through July. Elders would like to have a dedication of the new HVAC system. Our Office Manager Diana Davis has given two weeks notice, as she wants to spend more time with her grandchildren. Diana has served us well during her time with us. Clark Pomerleau, a member of the INUUC community, applied for the position and was interviewed by the Elders. He was hired, thus relieving the dismay felt by all at the prospect of having to begin another new hiring process. Elders also asked the meeting to consider whether we are ready to consider the possibility of hiring a pastoral care person,

Stewards/Trustees Report: The committee has had a very busy month. Members of all three worshiping groups using our Building regularly participated in the work day on May 9th. The kitchen, fellowship hall, and kitchenette were cleaned from top to bottom, the sanctuary and foyer were vacuumed and dusted. The old desk in the Office was removed and replaced by a newer and larger set of office furniture from Walter Simon's former office.

Outside the building, bushes were trimmed, trees removed, leaves and trash cleaned out from under bushes, and flowers planted. The raised beds in the Peace Garden were cleaned and weeded and are ready to use. Anyone from our groups wishing to use them should let one of the Stewards know. Windows were power washed and then cleaned inside and out by professional window cleaners. Stripes were put onto the steps at our main entrance.

The new fiber-connected internet and phone system were installed by TDS. Office computers were cleaned up, and arrangements were made for professional help to address the problems created by a major crash of the office computer last month.

The INUUC group has agreed to a new monthly contribution of \$2000 in view of their increased use of the Building. A new two-year contract will be worked out in June, to begin in July.

LaVerne Biel brought a request on behalf of the Music Team to raise our CCLI service to the next level, which will allow for transposing music into different keys. The Meeting **approved this request**. She also would like us to have our own Quaker logo and asked each of us to bring to the next business meeting a one-word description of Spokane Friends.

The meeting was dismissed with prayer by Jon Maroni.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Kieffaber, Recording Secretary

You can **give to Spokane Friends** via the QR code on the right!

Or via the offering plate at the back, our website,
your weekly worship info email,
your bank's free Bill Pay service, or mail.



Wish to designate your gift to our
Heating & Air Conditioning System?
problem, scan the QR code on the left!



Caritas Food Bank

seeks volunteers
to assist clients in choosing
from the Caritas food options
one Wednesday monthly 4-6:30 pm.
Contact Caritas at
509-326-2249.

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

(continued from page 2) While Jesus body was placed in the tomb and it was sealed and the guards took their places, Mary Magdalene and another Mary watched. The next morning there was an earthquake. An angel came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. The guards shook for fear, knowing that their lives were in danger. The angel spoke to the women telling them, “Don’t be afraid. I know you seek Jesus. He is not here. He is risen. **Come and see** the place where he lay. Go quickly and tell his disciples. The NIV version says the women hurried away from the tomb **afraid yet filled with joy**. As they were on the road **Jesus met them**.

I think some of us come today with the same condition as the women. Our world looks far different than anything we imagined. We are afraid and also filled with joy. Jesus is alive and available to us today which brings us joy and we are also afraid. Jesus will meet us here in our fears. Jesus tells the women, “Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, there **they will see me**.”

Meanwhile, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the Chief Priests. They were Roman soldiers and should have reported to a military or government official. When the Chief Priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, “You say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ If this report gets to the governor, we will bribe him and keep you out of trouble.” So, they took the money and did as they were instructed. Matthew says, “And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.”

I had known earlier of the conspiracy among the Jewish leadership and the Roman government to put Jesus to death. I had not paid attention to the conspiracy to cover up his resurrection. And I have never heard it mentioned in an Easter Sunday message. Perhaps it’s our current events that drew my attention to this conspiracy. Political and religious powers conspiring together to retain wealth and power sounds like a familiar story. But the story is not over.

The book of Matthew ends with the disciples meeting Jesus in Galilee. Matthew reports when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; **but some doubted**. Jesus gave the disciples instructions and then assured them, “**I am with you always, even to the end of the age**.”

I want to repeat some of the phrases that stand out to me from Matthew’s gospel.

- The angel at the tomb said, **Come and see**. On Easter and every day we are invited to see Jesus. In acts of grace and mercy, kindness to friend and stranger alike, in love and concern for the orphan and widow, immigrant and enemy, or whoever the other may be to you, we see the love and concern of Jesus. We are invited to come and see what the kingdom of heaven looks like here and now in this time and place.
- The women leaving the tomb were **afraid yet filled with joy**. There is no shame if you are here today filled with fear. Our times are full of fearful events. Alongside the fear is also joy. There is joy that we are here together. There is joy in the beauty that still remains in the world. New life is coming with spring and every day we can choose joy and gratitude in the midst of hard times.
- As the women hurried to meet the disciples, **Jesus met them**. In the days following Jesus’ crucifixion, his followers experienced disappointment, agonizing loss, deep confusion, chaos of heart, mind, and soul. And Jesus met them. Jesus will meet us whatever our condition today.
- Jesus gave instructions for his followers to go to Galilee and promised **They will see me**. In his teachings, parables, and examples in flesh and blood Jesus gives us instruction. When we are faithful to the principals and values he taught and lived on earth, we can expect to see Jesus in ourselves and others.
- **They worshiped Him; But some doubted**. Jesus disciples were witnesses of the risen Christ and yet there remained some doubt. Faith is not the absence of doubt. Doubt is evidence that you are taking your faith seriously. Faith is choosing trust in the middle of doubt. We can all pray with the father who came to Jesus with a tormented child, “Lord, I do believe, help my unbelief.”
- Jesus said **I am with you always, even to the end of the age**. Today we find ourselves in the middle of political and religious corruption, wars and rumors of wars, economic and environmental upheaval, and man’s inhumanity to man. AND Jesus is with us. God is with us and in us. Quakers hold the truth that there is that of God in every person. All creation is infused with the imprint of the Divine.

Jesus is alive with us always, even to the end of the age. We can see Jesus today if we are willing to look. **Happy Easter. Let us choose joy today**.

Leann Williams and her husband Bruce are long-time members of Spokane Friends. Leann is a recorded minister in Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting. This message was given during Sunday worship at Spokane Friends on April 5, 2026.

Quaker Sudanese Support

by Lyn Lindell

The month of May found Safia with a medically urgent conditions involving several urgent care/doctor tests and visits. Safia was allowed to stop her part-time SCC classes and her job to recover, hopefully picking up her classes and job again in June. Several Sudanese women participated in Saturday morning Food Bank trips supplementing their families' diets with provided groceries. The Saturday morning van trips are always a happy mixed Sudanese/English 1-3 hour trip, occasionally including additional stops at Winco, Walmart, and specific Arabian grocery outlets.



Safia

Hassan

Assistance continues with Hassan's family, transporting to/from doctor, dental appointments, and helping a high schooler, Mustafa, complete his initial training at Feast World Kitchen restaurant.** He also participates in once or twice weekly personal reading-in-English lessons. And he helps with simple yard work, beginning to save money for himself. His father Hassan continues to practice driving with Lyn, nearing his final Driver's License test. Lyn and Hassan review YouTube presentations in car care with his 2017 used car.

Hassan has developed a close translator relationship with Lyn, helping nearly daily with translations for any Sudanese and/or Lyn addressing ongoing identifiable needs and clarifying/interpreting written English notices, mail and customs.

Eid Al-Adha was observed in May by multiple Muslim Sudanese families, with fasting, prayers, no school for children, and an afternoon/evening of social visits sharing delicious meals, giving to those more in need in the community, and joyous home to home visits. Of the two Eid celebrations (the other being *Eid al-Fitr* at the end of the month of fasting), this is the more significant. Often referred to as "Big Eid," it honors Ibrahim's (Abraham's) devotion and obedience to Allah. It always coincides with the final day of the Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca.

Several families, particularly women, are continuing with an informal weekly conversational English class provided Sunday evenings.

Efforts for Sudanese children gearing up for summer water play (acquiring free swim suits, towels and flip-flop sandals) are underway. Additional assistance in transporting individual and families for necessary DSHS, work-related, and green card qualifications continues.

Lyn continues to seek volunteer assistance with any of the above activities, as well as apartment repairs, improvements, help moving, and costs of children's up-to-date shoes and clothing.

For Your Summer Calendar . . .

**"Crafts and Conversation"
Every 3rd Saturday, 2-5 pm
Friends Fellowship Hall, use back door to enter**

Join with friends old and new to work on your current craft project while catching up on conversation. Escape the heat or cleaning your house and come for any or all of the time to share in conversation while 'crafting'. Bring your current project (knitting, painting, collage, zentangle, embroidery, beading, etc.). Or come with no plans and join in whatever you want to! If you like, bring snacks to share, homemade or store bought.

**Interested in Mahjong?
Mondays, 1-4 pm
Friends Meeting Hall**

We welcome folks interested in knowing what Mahjong is, those who used to play and want to start up again, and experienced players who play multiple times a week! We have fun and don't take ourselves too seriously! The group is open to UUs, Friends, and others — all are welcome!

Any questions about these events? Contact Ann-Scott Ettinger bark4snow@comcast.net

Union Gospel Mission

You're Invited!


**LIFE RECOVERY
Commencement**

June 23, 2026 | 6:30 p.m.

Valley Assembly Church
15618 E Broadway Ave., Spokane Valley

Come to hear the stories of the men and women who've finished UGM's 18 to 24-month Recovery program and cheer them on as they take their next steps toward life-long recovery.

Current Office Hours

Clark Pomerleau, Office Administrator
Thursday morning 8:30 am - 12:30 pm
Friday afternoon 12:30 - 4:30 pm
509-327-7852

Poet's Corner

The Summer Day

Mary Oliver

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean—
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

"The Summer Day" by Mary Oliver appears in her 1992 collection
New and Selected Poems.

Quaker Connections

- ⇒ **Northwest Yearly Meeting** will hold this year's Annual Sessions July 19-22 at George Fox University in Newberg, OR.
- ⇒ **Sierra Cascade Yearly Meeting** will hold its Annual Sessions July 10-12 at Reedwood Friends Church in Portland OR.
- ⇒ **North Pacific Yearly Meeting** will hold its Annual Sessions July 22-26 at Evergreen College in Olympia, WA.
- ⇒ **American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)** staff in Gaza have provided life-saving assistance to **over 1.2 million displaced Palestinians**. Staff have provided hot meals, food parcels, and fresh vegetables, hygiene kits with soap, toothbrushes, and women's hygiene products. As of May 10, 2026, the staff, working with partners, have provided food for 937,300 people, drinking water for 199,600 people, baby formula and milk for 11, 300 children, and mattresses, blankets, winter clothes, tents, and plastic sheets for 12,800 people. Read more at <https://afsc.org/news/afscs-gaza-emergency-relief>.
- ⇒ **Camas Friends Church** in Camas, WA has been hosting a weekly protest focusing on immigration and ICE tactics on Wednesdays since February, when the Peace and Social Concerns committee approved the event. They are now taking a summer break and resuming on Sept. 2.



Out and About with Spokane Quakers

Visiting Sandpoint Friends in early May were **Alan and Kristine Binney, John and Erin Kinney, Bill and Emily Gillis, the Price family, Lyn Lindell, and Lois Kieffaber**. Friends were invited to a workshop with Tom Rawson, a traveling Quaker folk singer.



Nancy Street scored big with TWO letters to the Editor appearing in the Spokesman-Review in the same month.

The Quaker Worship Group bid farewell to **Claire Cushman** (who is headed for law school) at a luncheon party hosted by Bill and Emalee Gillis. Meanwhile Spokane Friends are planning a farewell party for **Taylor** who leaves for Maine next month.

Lyn Lindell's Quaker Kids are planting herbs in a raised bed in our Peace Garden as they learn about Quaker SPICES.

The Spokane Quaker Advocacy group managed by **Alan and Kristine Binnie** faithfully meet in person after the monthly Zoom meeting with the FCNL coordinator in Washington, DC. They are currently working on a letter to Senator Patty Murray thanking her for her past leadership and urging her to reassert Congress' power of the purse.

There were Quakers in attendance at the recent Federal trial in support of the "Spokane Three," recently convicted of "conspiracy" for being present at the same demonstration against ICE removal of citizens — even though those who attacked the White House on January 6, killing security officers and causing massive property damage, are not serving time for conspiracy and that event is now labeled a peaceful demonstration.

There was a Quaker presence at the Salish community's ground-breaking ceremony for the new Salish Language school and accompanying activity center on the banks of the Spokane River near Spokane Community College.