

SPOKANEWORD

September
2026



Spokane Friends

1612 W Dalke

Spokane, WA 99205

(509) 327-7852

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

Programmed 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

LISTENING AS PEACEMAKING

by Krista Maroni

Take a moment to consider conversations you have had in the past. Recall a moment when you were trying to share something important, but you knew the other person was not listening. It seemed like the person on the receiving end of your story did not understand you. Ponder this for a moment.

Those stories are important for comparison. Now consider a time when you felt heard. When you knew the person receiving your story was really listening.

How did you know they were listening? How did it feel to be heard?

In second Corinthians, Paul explains that part of our new creation in Christ is that we are now ministers of reconciliation. This is perhaps the greatest appeal of the Christian life to me, that we are called to be active-peacemakers in the world. It is the aspect of the Friends tradition that most pulled me in when I was 19 and searching for a relationship with both Church and God that resonated with this call to peacemaking I felt.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling [b] the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making God's appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

In wanting to take this call of reconciliation seriously, I want to understand it. I want to know what it takes to start the process of reconciliation between individuals and groups. I think this reconciliation gives space and motivation for people to reconcile themselves to God.

What I have learned through studying conflict resolution is that the foundation of reconciliation is listening to each other. This month I spent 32 hours over two weekends in an advanced mediation class. The entire method is asking clarifying questions, repeating what the parties say and summarizing until both sides start to hear each other. We were not allowed to do anything else. No advice giving, no suggestions, no affirmations, nothing. It is called transformational mediation and the goal is to remain invisible. If I do my job well as a mediator, I am invisible because the parties are listening to each other.

In my first counseling class in college, the only class Jon and I took together, we read Michael Nichols, The Lost Art of Listening. I read this quote to my student leaders every year.

Genuine listening means suspending memory, desire and judgement - and, for a few moments at least, existing for the other person. --Michael P. Nichols

True listening is exhausting. So exhausting that I will only plan three individual meetings a day with students, because if I add a fourth within those eight hours, I cannot actually listen to them. I do not have the mental energy to fight off distraction, to remove my self-interest, and to focus on hearing what the student has to say. If I am truly listening to someone, I do not exist for myself. I am not speaking of every conversation I have, I am not talking about every dinnertime chat or a phone call to a friend. What I mean is when I know someone needs to be heard. When someone says, "I need to talk. I need to process this."

(continued on next page)

Or when I know someone just received challenging news or experienced a personal failure. Those are the moments I believe listening needs to be selfless.

This selfless listening is active listening. Listening that takes work. The best way to listen to someone is to employ a few simple tools.

1. **Repeat what you hear.** It is robotic and tedious, but effective. When someone says, “Yesterday I argued with my mom about how much money I owe her.” You respond with “So you’re in an argument with your mom about how much money you owe her.” This feels redundant but this is how you know you are paying attention. If you can do this consistently in a conversation, you actually have to intently follow the words being spoken to you. Your mind cannot be drifting to the next thing to say.
2. **Ask clarifying questions.** To understand someone’s story, you must demonstrate curiosity. Open-ended questions that bring more understanding to what someone ALREADY SAID, not to what you assume they have said. The best way to do this is avoid yes and no questions. Ideally, a question would have specific words repeated or a synthesis of what someone has said. “I noticed you said frustrated few times. What did you find most frustrating about your situation?” This type of question demonstrates that you were paying attention and that you are curious about their full experience.
3. **Pay attention to nonverbals and affirm emotional responses.** When someone is displaying emotions, addressing this is helpful. Pay attention to the whole person. “You seem nervous to tell me this. I notice you tear up when you talk about your friend. Wow, this seems like it was really hard for you.” These observations do not impose your own judgment or assumption, they just acknowledge how someone feels and bring that into your understanding.

Knowing what you should be doing is helpful. Perhaps more helpful is knowing what to avoid. I refer to these as Pink Flags. They are not red flags, but not quite white.

1. **Giving advice.** Advice is best received when it is asked for, and especially the first time you hear a story it is important to really understand it. Ironically, good listening will often be enough for a person to understand more of what they want to do next, no advice needed.
2. **Relating a story to yourself.** When someone shares something that happens to him or her, it is tempting to try to understand his or her experience through a similar one you have had or someone close to you has had. “That’s hard, when MY mother was diagnosed with cancer, this is how I coped...” but this is not listening. This takes the focus of the story from the person sharing and puts it back on you as the listener. This is natural but not usually helpful. Put this in the advice category and wait until someone asks if you have been through this experience before you share.
3. **Filling the silence.** Even as a Quaker, silence can feel awkward. My temptation is to fill it. When you feel the need to interject with a thought or idea, try to give someone 30 seconds of silence. This silence is gold for those people who need a little more time to form their thoughts. Often we are not listened to well and when we actually find someone willing to do the work of listening, it takes time to share all we need to.

From my perspective, active listening might just solve all of our problems. Conflict exists, but when we stop to understand a person’s story, it makes a huge difference in how we interact moving forward. When I take the time to listen to a student, hear their experience, their perspectives and what they are learning about themselves, they are more willing to respond well to critical feedback I give them. They are more willing to be corrected. It is easy to dismiss someone who does not listen to you, much harder to ignore someone who has put energy into understanding you.

When I think of Christ blessing the peacemakers, I picture great listeners. Listeners who understand people so well that they can enact change because they get it. They have willing followers because people feel understood.

May we be those listeners. May we be peacemakers. I’ll leave us with Michael Nichols’ quote:

Genuine listening means suspending memory, desire and judgement - and, for a few moments at least, existing for the other person. -- Michael P. Nichols

What does this mean for you as a listener? How can we listen to those around us in an effort to be active peacemakers?

This message was delivered by **Krista Maroni** during Sunday worship on February 3, 2019. Krista is Mila’s mom and Jon’s wife. She has worked for more than a decade as a student affairs administrator, helping young people navigate the early stages of adulthood at Whitworth University. Krista’s life calling is to help young people see dignity in themselves and easily spot the dignity of others.

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS

August 16, 2026



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

The Minutes of the last meeting were **approved as read**.

Elders Report: Elders sent a letter to Colin Saxton to inquire about possible connections between the three Friends meetings in our area who are not affiliated with a Yearly Meeting (Reedwood, North Valley, and Spokane). One result is that we are now on Reedwood's mailing list and receive their weekly newsletter.

Stewards Report: Discussion continues regarding how to change our outdoor sign to acknowledge the other two groups worshipping in our building. An ad hoc Committee with a member from each group will work on this under Kent Biel's leadership. Lyn Lindell volunteered to represent Spokane Friends on this committee.

Stewards reported that the Little Free Library has been installed on the Dalke Avenue side of the Meeting House. Sue Keehnen will be in charge of stocking it with books when needed. A small welcoming sign purchased at World Refugee Day celebration will be placed beneath the Little Free Library.

A question arose regarding whether we would continue fund-raising for the \$13,000 that Phase Two of our new HVAC system will cost or whether we should just take it out of our current funds. That decision will be made at the September Business Meeting. Kent Biel will talk with Bill's Heating and A/C about possibilities for removal of our old equipment.

Quaker Neighbor Support: Lyn Lindell was informed that Go-Go Heights where our Sudanese families live has been sold to another company and will be managed by Palouse Homes Property Management. There is currently no one in their Office, so Lyn's arrangement to use their Clubhouse for conversational English classes for eight Sudanese women has come to an end. Renegotiation with the new management does not look hopeful, since the Office is not currently staffed, so the group will need a new meeting place. Lyn also indicated how our work which started with one family is now reaching out to several other Sudanese families.

We also learned that Thrive International, a non-profit that has housed hundreds of immigrants and refugees arriving in Spokane, is in receivership for financial mismanagement.

A new committee called Friends and Fellowship will be working on arranging community activities. Please contact one of the Elders if you want to contribute to the Meeting in that way. We are also asked to send to the Office any ideas we have about a single-word description or a logo for the Meeting.

New Business: In response to the Fig Tree's request for an annual contribution for printing the Resource Directory, the Meeting, in a spontaneous show of generosity, approved increasing our normal contribution of \$50 to \$75.

Lois Kieffaber is facilitating a Book Discussion group that will meet weekly for a short period to read and discuss a book together in short sections. Those interested are asked to choose from three possibilities and suggest their preferred meeting time.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Jon Maroni.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Kieffaber, Recording Secretary



Financial Report



	<u>July 2026</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income:	\$ 9124.00	\$ 37,683.97
Expenses:	5496.64	27,016.93
Difference:	+ 3627.36	+ 10,667.04

Office Hours

Clark Pomerleau, Office Administrator
Wednesday morning 8:00 am - noon
Thursday morning 8:00 am - noon
509-327-7852
clark.spokanefriends@gmail.com



CARITAS FOOD BANK FUNDRAISER WALK FOR A BUCK ALL SEPTEMBER

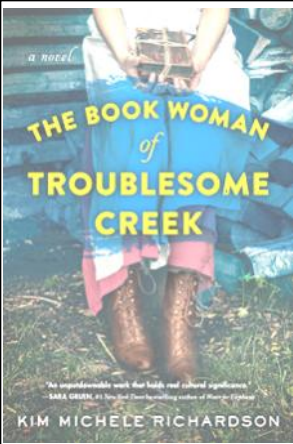
If you and your friends walk daily would you consider donating a dollar for every mile you walk? Keep track of your miles and put away a dollar for each mile you walked and at the end of the month donate the total \$\$ to Caritas.

If interested please submit your name at
staff@caritasoutreachministries.org

The walker with the largest donation will have an opportunity to select from dinner certificates, camping equipment, etc.

September's Book Club Selection THE BOOKWOMAN OF TROUBLESOME CREEK

By Kim Michele Richardson



In 1936, tucked deep into the woods of Troublesome Creek, KY, lives blue-skinned 19-year-old Cussy Carter, the last living female of the rare Blue People ancestry.

The lonely young Appalachian woman joins the historical Pack Horse Library Project of Kentucky and becomes a librarian, riding across slippery creek beds and up treacherous mountains on her faithful mule to deliver books and other reading material to the impoverished hill people of Eastern Kentucky.

Some mountain folk are suspicious of Cussy's damselfly-blue skin and the government's new book program; a Blue is often blamed for any whiff of trouble. If she wants to bring the joy of books to the hill folks, she's going to have to confront prejudice as old as the Appalachians and suspicion as deep as the holler.

WE WILL DISCUSS THIS BOOK AFTER WORSHIP SERVICE ON SEPTEMBER 27 AT THE MEETING HOUSE.



Coming our Way this Month
from Right Sharing of World Resources
A Virtual Workshop

Money, Self and Community

Money is often taboo — something worldly and uncomfortable to talk about. Yet money profoundly shapes our lives, our relationships, and our communities. In tis workshop we'll delve into our personal and ancestral histories with money, how this shows up in our relationships, and choices we can make as we let our lives speak.

We'll meet weekly on **Thursdays at 4:40 pm PDT** for four 80-minute sessions (starting **September 17** and ending **October 8**). This is a pay-as-led workshop; we'll invite donations of support at the end of the workshop. Registration will open on August 1.



A Blessing for Labor Day

by Meta Herrick Carlson

Today is for those
whose work is minimized,
whose rights are marginalized,
whose needs are not yet prioritized.
We affirm those for whom rest is hard
or work has become identity.
We revel with those who break from routine
or let go of responsibility for this moment.
We stand with those who work vulnerably
or need support and rights yet unrealized.
We bless children to be children,
so they do not shoulder
the weight of adulthood just yet.
We honor those who must still work today,
to ensure rights and safety for others.

From her book Ordinary Blessings, 2020.

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 Fellowship 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

Poet's Corner

Improvisations

"The practice of resurrection encourages improvisation on the basic resurrection story." — Eugene Peterson

The day Grandma died
something quickened in the atmosphere.
A breeze sashayed
through the cherry orchard.
Unseen stars kicked up their heels
in the day-blind sky.

Cancer ward. My friend Sandi
fights nausea. Hope hides
its bright face but refuses
to disappear altogether.
Outside in the evening
pond frogs croak,
"Kyrie eleison.
Kyrie eleison."

Peter turns seven.
At his request we go to Red Robin
for hamburgers. As the waiters
gather at a neighboring table
to sing a loud and public "Happy Birthday,"
Peter leans in and announces,
"They're going to do that to me next."
And they do.

On my early morning walk,
hundreds of calendar-defying daffodils
greet me all of the grinning
like stewardesses.

Dwayne's death stuns. My friend
and colleague, a husband, father,
grandfather. Running on the beach.
Not old. Not old at all. It's like
those something-is-wrong-
with-this-picture puzzles I did
as a child. Lord, help us trace our way
through the shadowed places. Splash
in some resurrection hues.

by Nancy Thomas in her 2016 collection of poems "Close to the Ground." She served alongside the Bolivian Friends Church for over 25 years. Her areas of ministry while on the field were in theological education and the training of local writers. She has a PhD in inter-cultural studies from Fuller Theological Seminary, Nancy is a member of North Valley Friends Church, and is currently the poetry editor for Friends Journal. We chose this poem because it honors our dear friend Dwayne Williams, father of Jonathan Williams, and former member of Spokane Friends.

Quaker Connections

- ⇒ Spokane Friends Church now receives the weekly information from **Reedwood Friends** (another unaffiliated Quaker meeting). If you would like to be on the email list for Glance (their monthly newsletter) or their Weekly Announcements, you can subscribe at <https://reedwood.org>
- ⇒ As the **Evangelical Friends Mission Board** (EFM) continues the search for its next Executive Director, Christy Neifert has agreed to serve as Interim Executive Director. Christy has faithfully served EFM for many years, first as a member of the Board of Directors and now as a member of our staff.
- ⇒ Love international travel? **Right Sharing of World Resources**, (the Quaker organization for whom we save stamps) is offering the opportunity to travel to Guatemala with their team November 8-11, 2026. 10-14 people will have a full day of orientation and training in Guatemala, prior to traveling to regions where RSWR works. Priority will be given to those who respond by September 11. Contact rswr@rswr.org for details.
- ⇒ THEEQUAKER is a Quaker media project that aims to reach spiritual seekers and self-identified Quakers and invite them to take the next step on their spiritual journey. And we **REALLY WILL** feature it in next month's Newsletter.



Imagine!

We need your imagination . . .

As I constantly engage with my growing number of Sudanese friends, I continually review the basic needs of these wonderful people that might be altered positively. Sometimes most of us don't let our imaginations drift amid our hustle & bustle of responsibilities, activities, & American culture. But there is incredible light & reward in trying to imagine how friendship can go beyond donations & charity. I have a few names of Quakers who are interested in helping for a simple array of needs. I would like to propose informal discussion of potentially a more focused development of a local Quaker plan that unifies all who have an interest in our Sudanese friends (which could maybe become more multicultural). Please consider joining me after Quaker Service on the 2nd Sunday of the month in space available (library, downstairs, etc.) to discuss a more focused longer range plan. All viewpoints are welcome. If any are out of town and wish to be included, I will make arrangements as best I can to inform & receive comments. Please use text for phone, or email; listed in Directory. I look forward to an actively engaged group sharing ideas, goals, thoughts, proposals.

A note from Lyn Lindell





Out and About with Spokane Quakers



Spokane Friends Meeting was represented by **Leann and Bruce Williams** and **Lois Kieffaber** at Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting's Annual Session in mid-July. They then continued on to Newberg, OR where they attended Sunday worship at North Valley Friends and connected with former friends, **Nathaniel and Gina Ankeny** and their two children. Nathaniel has just received tenure at George Fox and Gina is the Director of Christian Education at North Valley. They also saw **Shawn McConaughy** and his mother **Karen**. Later in the afternoon they visited **Friendsview Retirement Community** where they took the tour, collected information to bring back, and visited former SFC pastor **Lorraine Watson** and **Carol Twichell**, now living there. While in Newberg, they stayed in a "barn-dominium" atop a mountain (or was it just a big hill?) outside the town.

Pam and Bill Emery were spotted providing emergency to a fellow Quaker with a dead car battery.

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), facilitated by **Alan and Kristine Binney**, meets the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30 - 6:30 pm at the Community Building downtown. They worked hard recently to get signatures from "concerned faith leaders" on a letter to Senator Patty Murray, urging her to protect Congress's authority over federal spending and ensure the budget reflects shared moral values by funding peacebuilding, humanitarian aid and human dignity. This resulted in an invitation for an in-person meeting with her, possibly yet this fall.

On many Saturday mornings you can find **Don Hyslop** (with wife **Lorna** when she is not caring for her mother in Seattle) at the Hutton Settlement encouraging a group of young entrepreneurs who are engaged in roasting coffee, complete with their own equipment and direct supplier of coffee beans. The HOPE Neighborhood Roastery (Hutton Opportunities for Professional Exploration) invites the public in on Saturday mornings to learn how their business provides not only paid apprenticeships and entrepreneurship education, but also links them to global cultures through the fostering of a relationship with coffee farmers and advocating for fair pay practices, women empowerment, and agroforestry efforts on a global scale.

Spokane Friends Meeting got a mention in **Spokane Pride 365**, a Queer & Inclusive Resource Guide for Spokane and the Surrounding Areas after one of their members visited a worship service here.

Quaker Refugee Support included transporting and accompanying Sudanese children to New Life Church on Nevada St. on a recent weekend for a half day of games, lunches & carnival treats (snow cones & cotton candy) and each child's personal selection (3-4 options of shoe styles & colors) of a new pair of quality athletic shoes for school — with socks! **Lyn Lindell** says it's wonderful to see & experience our larger Spokane community & churches uniting to provide in so many ways basic needs & opportunities which make a difference for any who are in need.....spiritually & concretely. School now for the children of our Sudanese friends begins with each child experiencing a greater sense of belonging, happiness, & friendship despite the difficulties that accompany acculturation.

Spokane Friends Meeting partnered with **International Refugee Committee (IRC)**, a non-profit organization that helps refugees and asylum seekers survive, recover, and rebuild their lives. Spokane Friends building became the backup location for an IRC group of lively teenagers doing gardening on Friday mornings in July and August, in case rain or too much smoke from wildfires made it unsafe to work outside. **Sue Keehnen** and **Lois Kieffaber** served as door-openers and hosts for this group.

Almighty God, in whom we live and move and have our being,
you have made us for yourself
and our hearts are restless until in you they find their rest.
Grant us purity of heart and strength of purpose,
that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing your will,
no weakness from doing it;
but that in your light we may see light clearly,
and in your service we may find our perfect freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
— St Augustine (354-430)