

SPOKANEWORD

October–
November
2026



Spokane Friends

1612 W Dalke

Spokane, WA 99205

(509) 327-7852

www.spokanefriends.org

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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

POVERTY OF SPIRIT

by Philip Yancy

*Blessed are the poor in spirit
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
Matthew 5:3

Why would God single out the poor for special attention over any other group? What makes the poor deserving of God's concern? I received help on this concern from a writer named Monica Hellwig, who lists the following advantages of being poor:

1. The poor know they are in urgent need of redemption.
2. The poor know not only their dependence on God and on powerful people but also their interdependence on one another.
3. The poor rest their security not on things but on people.
4. The poor have no exaggerated sense of their own importance, and no exaggerated need of privacy.
5. The poor expect little from competition and much from cooperation.
6. The poor can distinguish between necessities and luxuries.
7. The poor can wait, because they acquired a kind of dogged patience born of acknowledged dependence.
8. The fears of the poor are more realistic and less exaggerated, because they already know that one can survive great suffering and want.
9. When the poor have the gospel preached to them, it sounds like good news and not like a threat or a scolding.
10. The poor can respond to the call of the gospel with a certain abandonment and uncomplicated totality because they have so little to lose and are ready for anything.

In summary, through no choice of their own — they may urgently wish otherwise — poor people find themselves in a posture that befits the grace of God. In their state of neediness, dependence, and dissatisfaction with life, they may welcome God's free gift of love.

As an exercise I went back over Monika Hellwig's list, substituting the word "rich" for poor," and changing each sentence to its opposite. "The rich do not know they are in urgent need of redemption . . . The rich rest their security not on people but on things." (Jesus did something similar in Luke's version of the Beatitudes, but that portion gets much less attention: "But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.")

Next, I tried something far more threatening. I substituted the word "I." Reviewing each of the statements, I asked myself if my own attitudes more resembled those of the poor or of the rich. Do I easily acknowledge my needs? Do I readily depend on God and on other people? Where does my security rest? Am I more likely to compete or cooperate? Can I distinguish between necessities and luxuries? Am I patient? Do the Beatitudes sound to me like good news or like a scolding?

(continued on page 2)

(continued from last page) As I did this exercise I began to realize why so many saints voluntarily submit to the discipline of poverty. Dependence, humility, simplicity, cooperation, and a sense of abandon are qualities greatly prized in the spiritual life, but extremely elusive for people who live in comfort. There may be other ways to God but, oh, they are hard — as hard as a camel squeezing through the eye of a needle. In the great reversal of God's kingdom, prosperous saints are very rare.

I do not believe the poor to be more virtuous than anyone else (thought I have found them more compassionate and often more generous), but they are less likely to pretend to be virtuous. They have not the arrogance of the middle class, who can skillfully disguise their problems under a façade of self-righteousness. They are more naturally dependent, because they have no choice; they must depend on others simply to survive.

I now view the Beatitudes not as patronizing slogans but as profound insights into the mystery of human existence. God's kingdom turns the tables upside down. The poor, the hungry, the mourners, and the oppressed truly are blessed. Not because of their miserable states, of course — Jesus spent much of his life trying to remedy those miseries. Rather they are blessed because of an innate advantage they hold over those more comfortable and self-sufficient. People who are rich, successful and beautiful may well go through life relying on their natural gifts. People who lack such natural advantage, hence unqualified for success in the kingdom of this world, just might turn to God in their time of need.

Human beings do not readily admit desperation. When they do, the kingdom of heaven draws near.

Philip David Yancey is a retired American Christian author known for his works about spiritual issues. His books have sold more than 15 million copies in English and have been translated into 40 languages, making him one of the best-selling contemporary Christian authors. This short essay is taken from a collection called Following the Call; Living the Sermon on the Mount Together, compiled and edited by Charles Moore, Plough Publishing House, 2011.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Friends, this is the Newsletter for both October and November. November 27 is the day after Thanksgiving, when Americans have the tradition of major shopping expeditions in preparation for Christmas. The ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ two essays (for two months) in this issue of the Newsletter are meant to help us consider our **Views of money**. ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Thinking about it now, rather than the day after Thanksgiving, might help us control our desire for ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ things, and even for **money itself**. John Wesley says:

■ "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth . . ." This is a flat positive demand full as clear as ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ "Thou shalt not commit adultery." If you will add house to house, or field to field, why do you call ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ yourself a Christian? You do not obey Jesus Christ. . . Why do you name yourself by his name? ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord," saith he himself, "and do not the things which I say?" ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

LASTING TREASURES

by Basil the Great

The wealth you handle belongs to others; think of it accordingly. Not for long will it delight you; soon it will slip from you and be gone, and you will be asked to give strict account of it. Yet you keep it all locked away behind doors and sealed up; then you are sleepless at night worrying about it. You take counsel about it inwardly but your only counsel is yourself. You ask: What can I do? How easy it would be to say: I will fill the souls of the hungry, open my barns, invite all the poor . . .

"I am wronging no one," you say, "I am merely holding on to what is mine." What is yours! Who gave it to you so you could bring it into life with you? Why you are like the man who pinches a seat at the theater at the expense of latecomers, claiming ownership of what was for common use. That's what the rich are like; having seized what belongs to all, they claim it as their own on the basis of having got there first. Whereas if everyone took for himself enough to meet his immediate needs, and released the rest for those in need of it, there would be no rich and no poor. Did you not come naked out of the womb? (Job 1) So whence came the wealth you now enjoy? If you say: from nowhere, you deny God, ignore the Creator, are ungrateful to the Giver. If you say: from God, then explain why it was given to you.

(continued on page 4)

MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS

October 18, 2026



The meeting was called to order by Clerk LaVerne Biel with prayer. Sixteen people were present, twelve in person and four via Zoom.

Minutes of the last meeting were corrected to replace the term “non-attenders” with the term “those attending via Zoom” regarding eligibility to serve on all Meeting Committees except Elders. The Minutes were then **approved as corrected.**

Treasurer’s Report: The report which was circulated turned out to be for the month of August rather than the month of September. Therefore we will need to see the financial reports for both September and October at our November Business Meeting.

Stewards Report: The installation of the final units of our new HVAC system has been completed and paid for, bringing a successful conclusion a project we have been working on for more than two years. We are all grateful. We learned that the units that are controlled by the same head unit must all either heat or cool; they cannot operate individually in different modes. The system loses considerable efficiency at temperatures below -15° . The boilers will remain in place through the upcoming winter.

The Stewards confirmed that all four raised beds behind the church may be used by the Youth Group and the Sudanese community for gardening.

Elders Report: Upcoming speakers for the remainder of the year were discussed. Included will be Taylor, now in Maine, and Sarah Scott will be asked to speak again. The consideration of Sarah as a part-time pastor for us is tabled indefinitely until she is settled in her new job. She is willing to accept as clients any members of our community in need of counseling.

The Elders discussed at length what it means to be an “exceptional” church in terms of responding to needs of the community and special interests of our people.

Colin Saxton replied to an inquiry about affiliation with other independent Quaker meetings. He asked us to be specific about how we could be helpful to one another with regard to such matters as writing our own Faith and Practice.

Our Office Administrator Clark Pomerleau will need some extra time off when his partner Samuel has surgery. Lois Kieffaber and Pam Emery can fill in for him during that period. Sue Keehnen will be discussing logistics of a possible craft sale with INUUC.

Sign Committee Report: Lacy reported that several designs have been received and are being collected by Clark. The plan is to have the suggestions drawn up by a graphic designer and presented to the three groups for feedback. All designs by either groups or individuals must be submitted by the end of October to be considered.

Logo Design: Attenders were asked to choose four words that best described our Meeting from a circulated list. The top choices will be given to a logo designer to guide them in drafting a logo. We request that AI be used sparingly during the creative process. We also read with interest a draft of short description of Quakerism that can be used when we table at events outside the building.

Upcoming Election: In response to the appearance of materials advocating for several state and local issues on the ballot this election, it was decided that Voters Guides presenting both sides of an issue should be offered instead to anyone interested. The current policy of not advocating for particular candidates within the Meeting room was affirmed once again, and we decided that a Quaker statement entitled “God’s Big Tent” (attached) which says that all political persuasions are welcome in our Meeting, would be included with the Bulletin in October of election years.

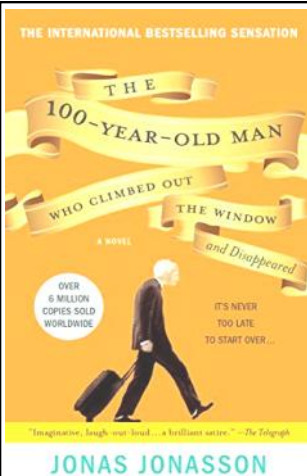
LaVerne Biel announced her intention to lead an on-line Book Study which would reach out to our out-of-town members who cannot participate in an in-person group. The book is The Principle of the Path by Andy Stanley.

The meeting was closed with prayer by David Roberts.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois Kieffaber, Recording Secretary

Cartoon in honor of
elections and
artificial intelligence



October's Book Club Selection

The 100-Year-Old Man Who Climbed out the Window and Disappeared

By Jonas Jonasson

After a long and eventful life, Allan Karlsson is ending up his life in a nursing home. The only problem is that he's still in good health and he turns 100 tomorrow. A big celebration is in the works, but Allan would like a bit more control over his vodka consumption. So he decides to escape.

He climbs out the window in his slippers and embarks on a hilarious and entirely unexpected journey, involving a suitcase stuffed with cash, some unpleasant criminals, a friendly hot-dog stand operator, and an elephant. It would be the adventure of a lifetime for anyone else, but Allan has a larger-than-life backstory: Not only has he witnessed some of the most important events of the twentieth century, but he has actually played a key role in them.

Starting out in munitions as a boy, he somehow finds himself involved in many of the key explosions of the twentieth century and travels the world, sharing meals and more with everyone from Stalin, Churchill, and Truman to Mao, Franco, and de Gaulle. **WE WILL DISCUSS THIS BOOK AT RISE OF WORSHIP ON OCTOBER 27.**



Out and About with Spokane Quakers



Spokane Friends Meeting and Spokane Quaker Worship Group were represented by **Lois Kieffaber** and **Lyn Lindell** respectively at Whitworth University's Ministry Fair, where incoming freshmen had a chance to learn about the churches in Spokane, in hopes of helping them find a church home for their years of

study in Spokane.

Alan Binnie was the signature gatherer for a letter to Senator Patty Murray and signed by 49 faith leaders in Washington State (see September issue). A result of the letter was a Zoom meeting with the staff of Sen. Murray's office in Olympia and the indication that faith leaders might get an in-person visit with her in the spring. In Spokane the FCNL Advocacy Group visited the office of Senator Maria Cantwell and spoke with her staff.

Nine Sudanese children received basic Halloween bags for collecting treats "witch" they personalized with artwork and stickers, in preparation for their very first American Halloween. Additionally they decorated mini-pumpkins and chose a simple mask and cape. **Lyn Lindell** explained procedures of knocking on doors, saying "Trick or Treat" and "Thank you," which they all practiced. Each has identified their costume selection, and the Quaker community is helping provide materials for simple costumes (princesses, Spiderman, vampire, Mother Nature, etc.)

In the meantime, a group of Sudanese women under Lyn's leadership are delighted that they will be able to garden in the Meeting's Peace Garden next spring.

Two Quakers from our Meeting House attended the Chile Cook-off Fund Raiser at Caritas. They tasted 10 different chili recipes, voted for the one they liked best, did not win a door prize, and came home with a large container of their favorite chili.

On October 7th, Spokane Friends Library was the venue for the Fall Regional Cluster Meeting of Faith Action Network (FAN). **Lois Kieffaber** represented our meeting at that gathering and supplied refreshments. Get ready for FAN's Annual Banquet, the major fund-raising event of the year, on November 8 at 5—8 pm at Gonzaga's Hemmingson Center.

Quakers are known for speaking truth to power and Letters to the Editor are one way to do that. During the last two months **Alan Binnie, Jeremy Street, and Nancy Street** have scored publication in the Spokesman-Review.

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

The Peace of Wild Things

by Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's life may be.
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

-from The Peace of Wild Things and Other Poems (Penguin, 2018)

A Bit More about Wendell Berry Wendell Berry, a Kentucky-born author who advocated a simpler life, died on August 31, 2026. He was a prolific writer who published more than 40 books. Berry shunned the unnatural world whenever and however possible. For decades, he and his wife ran a hillside organic farm in Henry County. They lived without computers, television or phones, but did install solar units in 2005, an act of defiance and of commitment to clean energy in a state powered by coal. In prose and poetry that mirrored the uncluttered and deeply felt life he advocated, Berry challenged modern assumptions about prosperity and happiness and renewed the mysteries of birth, love, work and death.

Cartoon in honor of the discussion group that is reading the book A Tender Time: Quaker Thoughts on the End of Life. It is from the Spokesman-Review, October 13, 2026.

Quaker Connections

- ⇒ **Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends** (SCYMF, pronounced "skimf") met for their Fall Quarterly Gathering on Saturday, October 17, 2026, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at Eugene Friends Church and on Zoom
- ⇒ **World Quaker Day** was on 4 October 2026, and this year's theme was *Let Peace Be Among Us* with the supporting Bible passage, Hebrews 12:14, "Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy." **Spokane Friends** celebrated by singing Quaker songs and hearing Leann Williams speak on the Biblical basis of Quaker SPICES, followed by a potluck dinner.
- ⇒ **Friends World Committee for Consultation** (FWCC) Section of the Americas gathered at Friends Center in Philadelphia on World Quaker Day for an early celebration of FWCC's 90th anniversary, which officially falls in 2027. The gathering honored the Section's history and the Philadelphia Friends community's long-standing support.
- ⇒ **Evangelical Friends Mission** (EFM) sent a "Prayer Trip" to South Sudan October 12-20 to explore the possibility of sending field workers to the capital city of Juba, in cooperation with Rwandan missionaries already working there. EFM will be increasingly using the term "Field Worker" rather than "Missionary" to protect those serving in certain countries and to attract more cross-cultural workers.
- ⇒ The Spokane Quaker Worship Group invites Spokane Friends Meeting to join them as they host a "traveling Quaker" Workshop next spring on Saturday, April 3 here at our Meeting House. Quakers from Sandpoint and Moscow have also been invited to attend.

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)

Is God unjust when he distributes unequally? Explain why you are rich and others are poor. Surely it is so you can win the reward of being generous, of being a faithful steward. . . And yet you purse up everything in pockets of unsatisfied covetousness, thinking you defraud no one when in fact you defraud so many. Who is the covetous man? Is it not the one for whom enough is not enough. And who is the defrauder? Is it not he who takes what belongs to everyone? And are you not both covetous and defrauding when you keep for private use what was given to you for sharing?

When a man strips another of his clothes, he is called a thief. Should not a man who has the power to clothe the naked but does not do so be called the same? The bread in your larder belongs to the hungry. The cloak in your wardrobe belongs to the naked. The money in your vaults belongs to the destitute. You do injustice to every man whom you could help but do not.

Basil the Great was born in the year 330 in Caesarea in the Roman province of Cappadocia (in central modern-day Turkey.) He was on his way to becoming a famous teacher when he decided to begin a religious life of gospel poverty. His writings on the subject of wealth and poverty, although delivered in the fourth century, remain utterly fresh and contemporary. This short essay is taken from a collection called Following the Call; Living the Sermon on the Mount Together, compiled and edited by Charles Moore, Plough Publishing House, 2011.

2026 Fall Fund Drive



DONATE
Oct. 14—Dec. 1

**A time for renewing and new
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FOR YOUR CALENDAR: Two announcements from THE FIG TREE have arrived. Note that the Meeting has already made a donation which puts us in the Friend category . . . How appropriate !

Join us for the 2027

**Eastern Washington
Legislative Conference**

**'Creating a Culture of Heal-
ing, Peace & Justice'**

Saturday, Jan. 30

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

**Spokane Valley United Methodist Church
115 N. Raymond St. - Spokane Valley**

**PLENARY PANELS
BRIEFINGS
WORKSHOPS**

***religious rights & dignity, youth panel on art,
climate justice, briefing, racial justice, de-
mocracy, Indigenous issues, housing, budg-
et, finding common ground, environmental
issues, refugees/immigrants***

For information, contact

**(509) 535-4112 • (509) 358-4273 •
event@thefigtree.org**



- The first project, a **weekly Quaker podcast** began in Spring 2023, and by 2026 it had over 250,000 downloads from listeners in 151 countries.
- In Fall 2024, the second project was to add the **Daily Quaker Message**, which now has over 6000 subscribers who wake up every morning to Quaker wisdom.
- The third project, **Quaker Videos**, launched in 2025, explores this extraordinary faith in extraordinary times.

November 18 @ 4 pm PST

[The link for this program is not yet available but can be obtained from the Office when it is given to us.]



“Live up to the light thou hast, and more will be granted thee.”
— Caroline Fox, Quaker diarist, 1841



Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples

Join us for this interactive Zoom workshop:

**"Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change:
Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples"**

<https://friendspeaceteams.org/trr-workshop-dec-2026/>

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, and 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 the Library 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 and receive comments. Please contact me at 509-842-8333 (text) or llin-dell46@yahoo.com. I look forward to an actively engaged group sharing ideas, goals, thoughts, proposals.

A note from Lyn Lindell



A note from Lyn Lindell