

December 2020



# The Friendly News

<b>San Antonio Quakers</b> 7052 N. Vandiver (at Eisenhower) San Antonio, Texas 78209	Message Phone: 210.945.8456 Website: <a href="http://www.sanantonioquakers.org">www.sanantonioquakers.org</a> Facebook: @saquakers
--	--

Dear Friends:

COVID-19 is increasing again in San Antonio. The city's COVID Dashboard (<http://bit.ly/3qWSKRq>) still reads "Moderate", but the components of that scale that measure virus spread are high. We will thus be cautious about continuing hybrid Sunday Meetings for Worship on the Meetinghouse porch. If the situation looks dangerous and/or the weather is inclement, we will meet by Zoom only.

***Please read our Thursday morning email each week to see  
if we will have hybrid Meeting for Worship on Zoom and on the porch.***

***Or check our website on Saturday: [www.SanAntonioQuakers.org](http://www.SanAntonioQuakers.org)***

***We continue our Zoom worship as usual: Sundays 10-11am***

ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077 – See page 2

Other things to note inside:

- Forum Dec 9<sup>th</sup>: "Quakers and the Nativity" (**page 3**)
- Two special events: Hatchback Party on Dec 10<sup>th</sup> & Christmas Eve Worship on Dec 24<sup>th</sup> (**pp 2, 4**)
- Proposed roster of nominations for 2021 (**pages 5-6**)
- "Choose Joy", "Quaker Activism", and "Scenes from our Meetinghouse" (**pages 7-9**)
- Storm damage in Central America (**page 10**)

-- Jim Spickard, Clerk & Newsletter Editor



## December Query

**As we move toward year's end, what is your inner voice telling you to do?**

### Weekly Events (by Zoom)

Here are the direct links for our weekly Zoom events. You do not need a Zoom account to join.

- **Meeting for Worship – Sundays 10-11am**, followed by check-in and discussion: [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
  - ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
  - Check the meeting website each Saturday to see if we will also be meeting in-person on the Meetinghouse porch.  
[www.SanAntonioQuakers.org](http://www.SanAntonioQuakers.org)
- **Course in Miracles discussion – Tuesdays 7-8pm**; led by David
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
  - ID # 988 3173 6394; passcode: 724708
- **Midweek Events – Wednesdays 7-8pm**
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
  - ID # 991 4427 4366; passcode: 143247
    - December 9: **“Quakers and the Nativity”** (see page 3)
    - December 16: **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**
    - December 24: **(Thursday): Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship** (see below)
- **Friday Morning Meeting for Worship – Fridays 8-8:30 am**
  - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
  - ID # 921 1215 1035; passcode: 023644

*For ALL Zoom Meetings: by telephone at +1 346 248 7799, then enter ID#*

### Special Events

- **Dec 10<sup>th</sup>: Friends Hatchback Party, Meetinghouse Parking Lot – See page 4**
  - **5:30-6:30:** Greet & Eat; **6:30-7:00:** Meeting for Worship; **RSVP to** [dialpsd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dialpsd@sbcglobal.net)
- **Dec 24<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship**
  - **7:00-8:00: on ZOOM** – use candles to illuminate yourself on screen
  - If the weather is warm and COVID is tame, we may add the opportunity for hybrid participation from the porch. Stay tuned!



### Contents

- p 2: December Query Weekly & Two Special Events
- p 3: Dec 9<sup>th</sup> Forum on Quakers & the Nativity
- p 4: Dec 10th Friends Tailgate
- pp 5-6: From the Nominating Committee
- p 6: Dream Week Event
- p 7: “Choose Joy”
- p 8: National Quaker Concerns
- p 9: Scenes from our Meetinghouse
- p 10: Storm damage in Central America

## Midweek Forum on Quakers and the Nativity

Led by Gary Whiting

**On Wednesday, December 9th, you are invited to a Worship Sharing session focused on the Nativity scene.** Below is a short essay which hopefully deepens the sense of the richness and mystery of this simple tableau (in all its varied elements) and allows us to experience it as central to our Quaker witness.

---

### **The Nativity Scene**

Where is tenderness and the joyousness of the Christian message more evident than in the Nativity scene? Where is hope for a better future, for a safe and loving world, more manifest than at the birth of a child? Quakerism is part of an ongoing mystical tradition. That there is that of God in each person - a divine spark of life or a "seed" infused with Light - is central to our sense of a higher calling for humanity and the world. This hope is imaged in the Nativity scene. The first of the "Rhine-land mystics", Meister Eckhardt (1260-1328), implores us to ready ourselves for this birth:

"Here in time we make holiday because of the eternal birth which God the Father bore and bears unceasingly in eternity is now born in time, in human nature...We intend to speak of this birth as taking place in us, as being consummated in the virtuous soul; for it is in the perfection of the soul that God speaks his Word."

For Eckhardt, the humble soul that is "poor in spirit" becomes a "shelter" (Hut in German) - becomes a simple manger. The cold darkness of a winter's night, homelessness and being turned away in need - these conditions provide the necessary backdrop for renewed life and hope. The light that "shineth in the darkness" appears, like the Star. What are the conditions for this experience to come to pass in the soul? Silent night, holy night:

"All voices and sounds must be put away and a pure stillness must be there. In stillness and peace...there God speaks in the soul and expresses himself fully in the soul."

As the soul practices perfect silence, emptied of all words and deeds, vain strivings and even of all concepts, it makes a "clearing" for the Birth, for the speaking of the Word. And in this receiving, the soul learns the language of response, which is the soul's reflection of the fullness of the Word it has been given. Our Christmas carols resound with the richness of this gift, and its promise:

"The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love..."

What allows the soul to partake of such an honor? One last quote from Eckhardt names the qualities which allow for this gift, virtues which are often spoken of in our Quaker heritage:

"Only the ground of the soul is pure enough and simple enough to receive God; and only God is pure and simple enough to enter the ground of the soul."

"Let every heart prepare Him room, And Heaven and Nature sing!"

*All Eckhardt quotes are taken from the translations in: J. Caputo, The Mystical Element in Heidegger's Thought, Chapter III, "Meister Eckhardt's Mysticism", Fordham University Press, 1986.*



## **Special Event : Hatchback Party #4!**

NOTE THE EARLIER STARTING TIME

# FRIENDS HATCHBACK PARTY



**When:** December 10, 2020  
5:30pm - 6:30pm Greet & Eat  
6:30pm - 7:00pm Silent Worship

**Where:** Meetinghouse Parking Lot  
7052. Vandiver Road

**RSVP:** REQUIRED for planning purposes

By Dec. 9, 2020

[dialpsd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dialpsd@sbcglobal.net)



### The Plan

- Cars will be parked for appropriate distancing. You will be directed upon arrival.
- Bring your own food, drinks & tailgate setup.
- Meetinghouse & Rooms will be closed
- Bathrooms will be open
- MASKS are REQUIRED when not eating or drinking.
- Keep to 6' distancing at ALL times.

## **For the Nominating Committee**

Quaker Meetings have no ‘hireling ministers’. We depend on Friends to heed the call of the Spirit and contribute their talents so that the Meeting work gets done. Each year, our Nominating Committee asks Friends how they feel called to serve. The names in regular text, below, are continuing until the listed date. The names in **bold** are proposed to fill open positions. **If you have concerns or questions about these nominations, please speak to a member of the Nominating Committee before December Meeting for Business. You may write to them at [nominating@saquakers.org](mailto:nominating@saquakers.org).** The committee members are Gretchen Haynes, Julie Crum, Kellie Price, & Oliver Gerken.

### **Friends Meeting of San Antonio Proposed Roster 2021**

<u><b>Trustees</b></u>	
Carol Redfield (Clerk)	2021
Pat Sweet (Secretary)	2021
Bill Sweet (Treasurer)	2021
Marian Carter	2022
Bill Wilkinson	2022
<u><b>Monthly Meeting</b></u>	
<b>Jim Spickard (Clerk)</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Kellie Price (Recording Clerk)</b>	<b>2021</b>
Bill Sweet (Treasurer)	2021
Bill Wilkinson (Recorder)	2021
<u><b>Ministry &amp; Oversight</b></u>	
Val Liveoak (Clerk)	2022
<b>David Bristol</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Joni Mize</b>	<b>2022</b>
James Goslin	2021
Gretchen Haynes	2022
<u><b>Finance</b></u>	
Pat Sweet (Clerk)	2022
Carol Redfield	2022
Bill Wilkinson	2022
Bill Sweet (Ex Officio)	2021
<u><b>Property</b></u>	
James Mize	2021
Joni Mize	2021
<b>David Hayes (Clerk)</b>	<b>2022</b>
Pam Spurgeon	2021
John Tyska	2022

<u><b>Nominating *</b></u>	
Gretchen Haynes	2021
Julie Crum	2023
Oliver Gerken	2023
Kellie Price	2023
<u><b>SCYM</b></u>	
Val Liveoak (Meeting Rep.)	2022
Bill Sweet (Meeting Rep.)	2022
<u><b>FCNL</b></u>	
Julia Hitz	2022
<u><b>Community Engagement</b></u>	
_____ (Clerk)	2022
Jim Spickard (Newsletter)	2021
Bill Sweet (Handbook)	2021
James Goslin (Website)	2022
Gretchen Haynes (Scheduling)	2021
Katherine Fitzgerald Hernandez (Long Range Planning)	2022
Emily Wood (Facebook, Instagram)	2021
Petra Ramirez	2022
Mary Tyska	2022
<u><b>Peace &amp; Social Concerns</b></u>	
_____ (Clerk)	2022
Val Liveoak	2022
Veronica Gard	2022
<b>Donna Dickerson (IWC)</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Oliver Gerken</b>	<b>2022</b>

\* The Nominating Committee is appointed in May, to give the members time to match openings to Friends callings.

*Continued on next page*

<u>Long-Range Planning</u>	
Lydia Ramirez	2023
Kellie Price	2023
Joni Mize (Property Rep.)	2021
Carol Redfield (Finance Rep.)	2021
Val Liveoak (M&O Rep.)	2023
Katherine Fitz Hernandez (Comm. Engagement Rep.)	2023
Bill Wilkinson (Clerk)	2023

<u>Religious Education</u>	
Clerk (Open)	
Danielle Linde	2022
<b>Joni Mize</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Ben Hernandez</b>	<b>2022</b>
Gary Whiting	2022
Greg Koehler	2022
Oliver Gerken	2022
Karen Ball	2021
Jacob Connerly (Resource)	
Mimi Moore (Resource)	
Annabelle Ball (Resource)	

## *Looking Ahead to Dream Week*

For the last several years, Friends Meeting of San Antonio has presented films at our Meetinghouse as part of San Antonio's Dream Week celebration. about the Civil Rights Movement, Black Lives Matter, and other topics. Recent films included "Selma" and "A Long Walk Home".

We clearly cannot host an indoor evening event this year. Dream Week has gone virtual, so we will, too. FMSA has invited Pamela Boyce Simms to speak at a public Zoom event on Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. Her topic is:

### **The Legacy of Martin Luther King in Troubled Times: Dialogue with Pamela Boyce Simms on lessons from Dr. King to us Today**

Ms. Boyce Simms, a Quaker thought leader and activist, will challenge the participants to apply the principles of nonviolent action to the situation we find after the inauguration of President Biden. Dr. King called for a broad coalition to address the problems of his time. We are called now to rebuild trust and respect in a divided country through coalitions. We will explore our options together.



The February 2019 MLK March





## Choose Joy

by Maria Popova

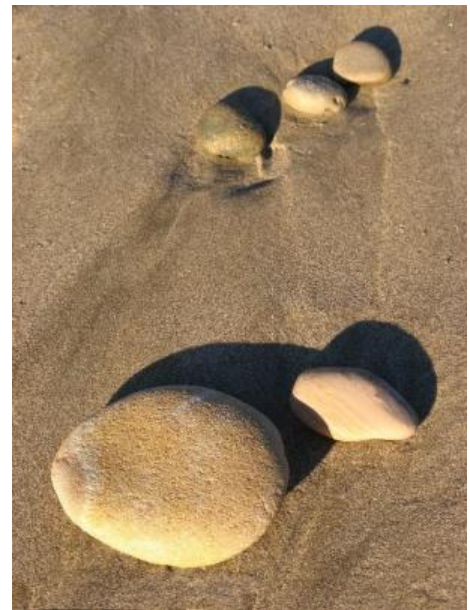
From “On the Weight of the World and the Weight of the Sky.”

Brainpickings 10/22/2020 (<http://bit.ly/3ojU6dE>)

Choose joy. Choose it like a child chooses the shoe to put on the right foot, the crayon to paint a sky. Choose it at first consciously, effortfully, pressing against the weight of a world heavy with reasons for sorrow, restless with need for action. Feel the sorrow, take the action, but keep pressing the weight of joy against it all, until it becomes mindless, automated, like gravity pulling the stream down its course; until it becomes an inner law of nature. If Viktor Frankl can exclaim “yes to life, in spite of everything!” — and what an everything he lived through — then so can any one of us amid the rubble of our plans, so trifling by comparison.

Joy is not a function of a life free of friction and frustration, but a function of focus — an inner elevation by the fulcrum of choice. So often, it is a matter of attending to what Hermann Hesse called, as the world was about to come unworlded by its first global war, “the little joys”; so often, those are the slender threads of which we weave the lifeline that saves us.

- Delight in the age-salted man on the street corner waiting for the light to change, his age-salted dog beside him, each inclined toward the other with the angular subtlety of absolute devotion.
- Delight in the little girl zooming past you on her little bicycle, this fierce emissary of the future, rainbow tassels waving from her handlebars and a hundred beaded braids spilling from her golden helmet.
- Delight in the snail taking an afternoon to traverse the abysal crack in the sidewalk for the sake of pasturing on a single blade of grass.
- Delight in the tiny new leaf, so shy and so shamelessly lush, unfurling from the crooked stem of the parched geranium.



I think often of this verse from Jane Hirshfield’s splendid poem “The Weighing”:

So few grains of happiness  
measured against all the dark  
and still the scales balance.

Yes, except we furnish both the grains and the scales. I alone can weigh the blue of my sky, you of yours.

*Popova’s blog at [Brainpickings.org](http://Brainpickings.org) is a constant source of inspiration and intelligence. Read it, subscribe, and contribute if you can.*

## *National Quaker Social Concerns*

### *Two Requests from Friends Committee on National Legislation*

By Julia Hitz

1. Each year, the FCNL Annual Meeting Planning Committee offers queries for worship sharing. This is a time where participants can stop, take a breath, and connect at a deeper level with each other. In this time of reflection and recommitment, this month FCNL offers some of those queries to you and your community.
  - What do I need to grieve right now so I can envision a better world?
  - Are there ways that I have become well-adjusted to injustice?
  - What does it look like for me to recognize, support, and love that of God in every person in this moment?
2. The Justice in Policing Act (H.R. 7120/S.3912) was passed by the House and is currently before the Senate. This bill would ban the use of choke holds, institute a national “necessary” use of lethal force standard, end the militarization of civilian police departments, and implement other badly needed police reforms. Even if it is not passed before the end of the year, we can lobby now for its passage in the next session of Congress.

Please write your members of Congress and ask them to co-sponsor this bill or advance legislation that includes the provisions outlined above. Our lawmakers must take swift action in response to ongoing police killings and other violence against Black people across our country. You can email your representatives by following this link: <https://fcnl.quorum.us/campaign/25330/>

### *From Quaker Action (American Friends Service Committee)*

Contributed by Gretchen Haynes

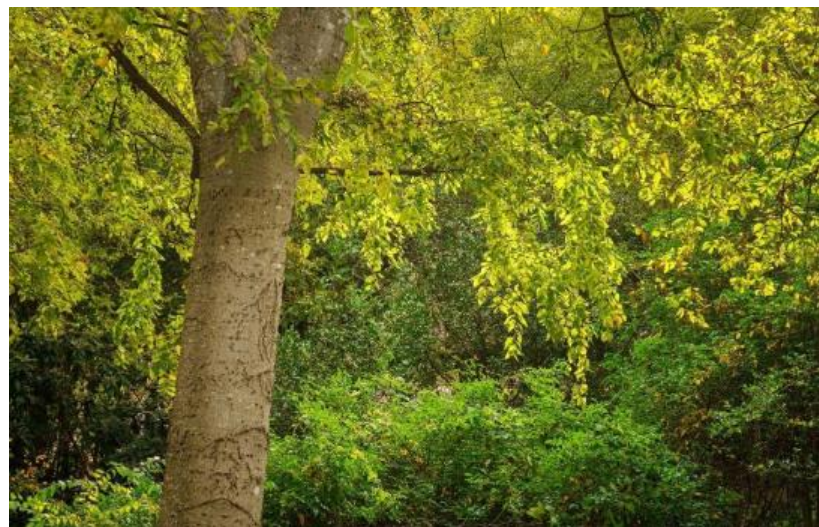
*click links to view details on the AFSC website*

1. [\*Progress for Palestinian rights\*](#): This month marks the third anniversary of the introduction of the first congressional bill in U.S. history promoting Palestinian human rights. AFSC’s Jennifer Bing talks with two activists involved in our No Way to Treat a Child campaign on the progress we’ve made—and our hopes for the year ahead.
2. [\*Tell General Mills: Stop manufacturing Pillsbury products on stolen land!\*](#): Join AFSC in holding General Mills accountable for doing business in an illegal Israeli settlement—and boycott Pillsbury products this holiday season and beyond until the company stops profiting from the occupation.
3. [\*As we move beyond the election, we can’t have healing without reckoning\*](#): It is time for a courageous human-centered approach that transcends political scores to address the deep and existential challenges of this nation, the communities within it, and the world.
4. [\*How to talk about defunding the police\*](#): The police murders of George Floyd and many others catalyzed protests nationwide—and now many of us are having discussions with family and friends about rethinking the role of police in our communities. Here are some tips you can use to guide these conversations and build support for alternatives that create community safety for all.



## *Scenes from our Meetinghouse*

Photos by Jim Spickard, November, 2020



## Storm Damage in Central America

Hurricanes Eta (and now Iota) have hit Central America hard. Friend Val worked in the region for years, most recently with Friends Peace Teams. She writes:

“A close friend in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, was rescued with her elderly mother when neighbors tore open their roof and pulled them out of water up to her chin (she is short, but....). They spent the night in a neighbor's 2nd floor with about 60 other people.

Now we need to worry about day-to-day survival where 300,000+ have been evacuated and likely lost everything and have all been exposed to Covid.

Throughout Honduras and N. Guatemala (and I presume N. Nicaragua, but we don't have partners there) flooding rivers have destroyed towns, and bridges and highways are also blocked with downed trees and mudslides, so getting aid to these communities whether large like

San Pedro Sula (2nd largest city in Honduras) or small, is problematic in the extreme. And yesterday the SPS airport was under water. One of the major cell phone companies has been down for 2 days, and electricity is out in some places making communication difficult.

As always in disasters, ordinary people are helping each other, and this is a source of strength and inspiration.”

Peace Baskets Project <http://bit.ly/3mvp159>



Peacebuilding en las Américas

### Hurricane Eta Devastates Central America



San Pedro Sula, Honduras

Hurricane Eta has hit Central America with devastating consequences. Partners in Honduras and Guatemala have been particularly affected. Bridges have fallen. Whole neighborhoods are under water. People line rooftops awaiting evacuation by boat. In many areas where houses have not flooded, there is no running. The situation, already dire due to Covid, hunger and violence, is now much worse.



Friends Meeting of San Antonio  
7052 N Vandiver  
San Antonio, Texas 78209

Subscribe by joining the Newsletter list at [SanAntonioQuakers.org](http://SanAntonioQuakers.org) and responding to the verification email.

---

*Sign up to receive an email when this newsletter is posted at the Meeting website.  
Write us at [newsletter@saquakers.org](mailto:newsletter@saquakers.org) if you wish a snail-mail copy.*