

# NOTES FROM FRIENDS

The monthly newsletter of West Branch Friends Church



What's inside this issue:

*Events pgs. 5 and 7*

*Volunteer opportunities pg. 6*

*Quakers around the world pg. 8*

On the next page of this newsletter you will find our query of the month. This month we are looking at integrity – one of our Quaker testimonies. In doing some work on this concept, I ran across some core values within our notion/understanding of integrity and I have listed them with the query. I am very interested to hear what you all think about them!

As I was reading and contemplating these I was struck by the last value: bearing witness. As I explored all of the things/qualities/traits/emotions that might keep me silent, I found these quotes on silence in a world of turmoil:

“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly” – Mahatma Gandhi

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.” – Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“Where you see wrong, or inequality, or injustice, speak out, because this is your country. This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on.” – Thurgood Marshall

What keeps us silent? How can we counteract what keeps us silent? How can we help each other?

*In Riotous Joy and Firm Resolve: Chris*



## *Query for the Month*

### **Core Principles of Quaker Integrity:**

- **Honesty and Truthfulness:**
  - Quakers believe in telling the truth, avoiding deception, and speaking plainly and directly.
- **Consistency:**
  - They aim for consistency between their words and actions, ensuring their lives reflect their values.
- **Inner Wholeness:**
  - Quakers seek to live with an inner integrity, where their beliefs and actions align, creating a sense of personal and moral wholeness.
- **Fairness and Justice:**
  - Integrity extends to treating others with respect and fairness, regardless of their background or beliefs.
- **Avoiding Misrepresentation:**
  - Quakers strive to avoid statements that are technically true but misleading, aiming for a high standard of truthfulness.
- **Bearing Witness:**
  - Through their actions and words, Quakers seek to bear witness to their beliefs and values, promoting truth and integrity in their communities and the world.

*Do you “walk your talk” so that the activities of your life show forth your values? Do you treat people with the same respect and genuine regard when they are present or absent? Do you work to possess an inner wholeness so that you have one set of ethics and expectations for all people?*

# Meeting for Worship



*Join us in meeting for worship Sundays at 10:30.*

This month we will explore kinship and the new beginnings of Easter

## Worship Servants

April 6

Greeter: Emily Peck  
Zoom Host: Jim Glasson  
Children's Message:  
Special Music:  
Piano: Gwen Senio

April 27

Greeter: Gordon Edgar  
Zoom: Maxine Koepp  
Children's Message: Kathleen Darling  
Special Music:  
Piano: Julie Tallman

April 13

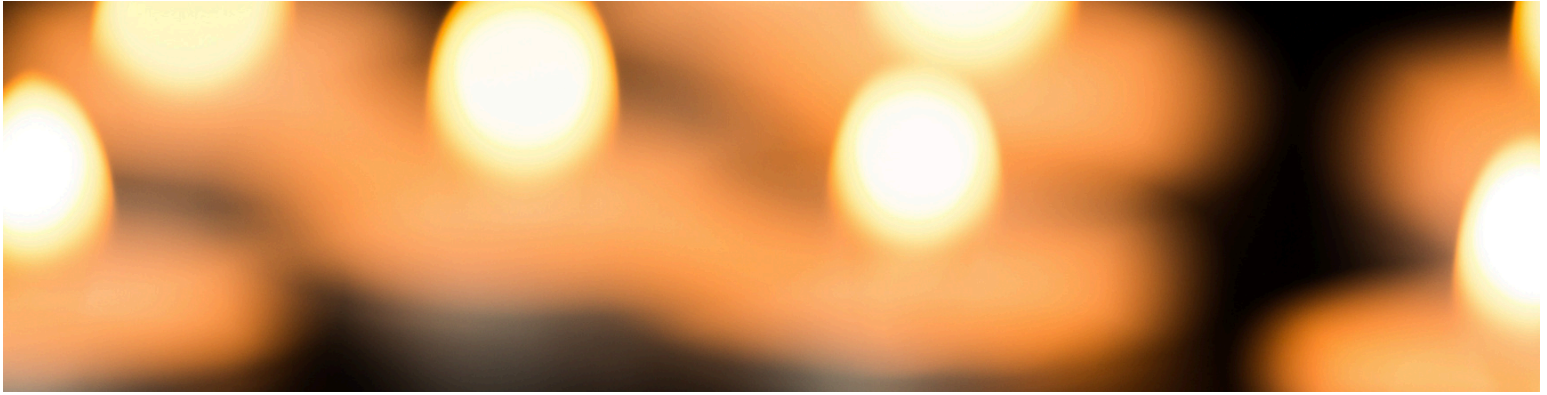
Greeter: Emily Peck  
Zoom Host:  
Children's Message:  
Special Music:  
Piano: Julie Tallman

April 20 (Easter Sunday)

Greeter: Maxine Koepp  
Zoom Host: Teresa Winder  
Children's Message:  
Special Music:  
Piano: Gwen Senio



# Time for Prayer



## Joys & Concerns

### Pray for Our Elders

*Darlene Baum  
Pat Bradley  
Maria Denmead  
Fran Fritz  
Mary Humrichouse  
Pat Langrehr  
Donna Mortenson  
Larry Reiner  
Lois Semotan  
Nancy Stacks  
Mildred Torkelson*

- Feena did not get the results she was hoping for in her scans and will need radiation to further treat the lymphoma. Prayers for peace and comfort and for good care from family.
- Fran Fritz has lost a lot of weight and is very tired. Prayers that doctors may find the cause.
- Cliff Hinkhouse's wife Monica died this week. Her services are next Saturday, March 29th
- Malia's close friend, B.J., is in rehab following hospitalization due to addiction. Prayers that he will stay the course and be able to live a healthy life.
- Joan's niece, Nancy, who is the primary caregiver for Joan's brother had a cyst on her wrist from which a severe infection had her in the ICU for several days. Prayers for her recovery.
- Joy that the daffodils around the meetinghouse are in bloom.

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle for April

Mar. 30-Apr. 5: *Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia*  
Apr. 6-Apr.12: *The Balkans: Albania, Bosnia&Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia*  
Apr. 13-Apr. 19: *Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania*  
Apr. 20-Apr. 26: *Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine*  
Apr. 27-May 3: *Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia*

### Gratitude for Renewal:

"God, thank you for the beauty and promise of spring, a time of renewal and new life. May we be open to the changes and opportunities that this season brings,".

### Prayer for Hope and Growth:

"Lord, as the world awakens around us, fill our hearts with hope and inspire us to grow in faith and love. May we embrace the season's beauty and find strength in your presence,".

### Prayer for Peace and Healing:

"God, as the earth awakens, may we also find peace and healing in our hearts. Help us to let go of the past and embrace the possibilities of the future with hope and joy,".

## **Ecumenical Women's Group NOT MEETING THIS MONTH**

Our Ecumenical Women's Group will pause this month and ponder our next study materials. We hope you will join us as the group re-gathers next month. Looking for spirited discussion, nurturing your faith, and meeting new f/Friends? Join us on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 beginning again May 1. Invite a friend – the more the merrier!



## **Friends of the Wild Sunday, April 13, 4:00 pm**

**This month, we will meet at the Hoover Visitor Center Parking Lot and carpool to the woods surrounding the Friends Cabin (postponed from last month due to mud)**

**Reflection for the Month:**

### **Consider Your History**

**What is the history of your relationship with/to the nonhuman world? How would you like this relationship to continue or change?**



# Volunteer Opportunities

## Juneteenth Community Celebration

Humans for Racial Justice is an ecumenical community group formed through our meeting after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020. This group works on anti-racism education and programming, MLK Day observances and other activities focusing on strengthening relationships and eliminating racism. Currently, they are working with the City of West Branch on several ideas for a community event commemorating Juneteenth. June 19, 1865 is the day that the enslaved people in Texas learned of the Emancipation Proclamation and received their proclamation of freedom -- nearly 2 years after President Lincoln issued the original proclamation emancipating all enslaved people. This date has been celebrated as Juneteenth in Texas since 1866. It was named a federal holiday in 2021.

Many different activities and educational opportunities are being planned. Our meeting is also working on efforts to replace/improve the educational marker located at the Springdale Cemetery which commemorates the Underground Railroad activity here in our area. If you would like to help with planning, set-up, working on a specific activity -- all hands are welcome! Please contact Gwen Senio or Jim Glasson to find out how you can help!

## Ronald McDonald House Meals

The Ronald McDonald House of Iowa City provides a place for families to stay while their child (age 21 and under) is undergoing medical treatment at local hospitals and clinics. Any family traveling from at least 20 miles away is eligible to stay. The House provides all basic linens and towels and all guest rooms have a private bathroom. An evening meal is provided as well as self-serve breakfast, lunch, and snacks for all families staying at the House. The common kitchen is stocked with food staples as well as leftovers for families to enjoy. The House's common areas include living room areas, quiet spaces, a game room, and a playroom as well as an outdoor playground, playhouse, and relaxing deck.

Local organizations often help out at the house by providing an evening meal for guest families. Currently, the cook at The House is out for medical reasons, so there is an even greater need for volunteers willing to help plan and prepare a meal for current guests.

If you are willing to help coordinate and participate in a small team to provide an evening meal for these families, please contact Chris Humrichouse at 319-210-4038 or [westbranchfriendschurch@gmail.com](mailto:westbranchfriendschurch@gmail.com)

## Invite a Friend Sunday

Easter Sunday is April 20 and our Ministry and Counsel team has also designated it “Invite a F/friend Sunday”! In addition to our joyous Easter worship, we will offer Easter Breakfast at 9:00 and the Annual Easter Egg Hunt at 11:30. Please plan to join us for this celebration and invite as many friends as you wish!

## New Earth Care Group Forming

10 people combined from Iowa City Meeting, West Branch Friends Meeting (conservative), and West Branch Friends Church to meet on Saturday, 3/29 at the Iowa City Friends Meetinghouse. We discussed how much we valued the time we spent together when the group met previously, 10 years ago at Don Laughlin's home in Iowa City. In those times, we built informed community with shared simple food, a speaker or movie about environmental issues, and personal sharing with each other. We decided to meet again monthly with a similar format to see who is interested in a personal, community connection with caring for our Earth. Our next meeting is Saturday, May 3 at 2 pm at Prairie Hill in their community room, 140 Prairie Hill Lane.

Jim Glasson

## Application Deadline Set for Peace and Justice Scholarship

One \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded to a West Branch High School senior, Scattergood graduating senior, home-schooled senior from West Branch, or a graduating senior connected to one of the members of our meeting. We intend to encourage and support high school seniors in their use of nonviolent means to build the tools for peace and to eliminate war, poverty, inequality and intolerance. **Applications are due April 25** and include a 600 word essay and 2 letters of recommendation. These forms are available at our church website, <http://westbranchfriendschurch.com> Questions can be directed to [westbranchpeace@gmail.com](mailto:westbranchpeace@gmail.com)

# News from Quakers Around the World

Met [Metropolitan Police in London, UK] smash down door of Quaker meeting house to arrest activists. Twenty officers handcuffed six women and took them to the police station in the latest accusation against the force of over-policing free speech and the right to protest.

Saturday March 29 2025, 7.00pm BST, The Sunday Time By Katie Tarrant

More than 20 Metropolitan Police officers broke down the front door of a Quaker meeting house to arrest six women who had met to discuss climate change and Gaza. It is thought to be the first time in the history of the famously pacifist Quakers that police have forced their way into one of their places of worship. The women, aged between 18 and 38, were sitting in a circle eating hummus and bread sticks on Thursday evening as part of a “welcome meeting” for Youth Demand, which calls itself a non-violent protest group. The police, some armed with Tasers, handcuffed the women, confiscated their belongings, took them to the police station and later raided some of their student accommodation.

A Met spokesman said six women had been arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to cause a public nuisance, amid fears of a sit-down protest in the capital. None have been charged. The spokesman said: “Youth Demand has stated an intention to ‘shut down’ London over the [coming] month. While we absolutely recognise the importance of the right to protest, we have a responsibility to intervene to prevent activity that crosses the line from protest into serious disruption and other criminality.

“On Thursday, officers raided a Youth Demand planning meeting at an address in Westminster where those in attendance were plotting their April action.” Quakers, including Elizabeth Fry, the prison campaigner who appeared on the £5 note, have historically stood for non-violent activism, including fighting for the abolition of slavery and supporting women’s right to vote.

Paul Parker, recording clerk for Quakers in Britain, who is responsible for oversight of the movement, said no one had been arrested in a Quaker meeting house in living memory. “This aggressive violation of our place of worship and the forceful removal of young people holding a protest group meeting clearly shows what happens when a society criminalises protest,” Parker said. He called for an apology from the Met for damaging the building and the “spiritual and emotional” integrity of the place of worship.

“I don’t think the British public wants to see people being dragged out of places of worship when they’re sitting peacefully sharing their concerns about climate breakdown and the situation in the Middle East,” he said.

It is the latest accusation of over-policing of the right to protest and free speech facing the Met, and follows an outcry in 2021 over the vigil for Sarah Everard, who had been murdered by a police officer, Wayne Couzens. Police were also accused of over-reacting to republican protesters at the King’s coronation in May 2023.