

# THE GAZETTE

*"a news-sheet, a periodical publication giving an account of current events"*

West Falmouth Religious Society of Friends

NOVEMBER 2020



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*Happy Thanksgiving!*

## From Howard Thurman's *Meditations of the Heart* (excerpt)

During these turbulent times we must remind ourselves repeatedly that life goes on. This we are apt to forget. The wisdom of life transcends our wisdoms; the purpose of life outlasts our purposes; the process of life cushions our processes. The mass attack of disillusion and despair, distilled out of the collapse of hope, has so invaded our thoughts that what we know to be true and valid seems unreal and ephemeral. There seems to be little energy left for aught but futility. This is the great deception . . . . Let us not be deceived. It is just as important as ever to attend to the little graces by which the dignity of our lives is maintained and sustained. Birds still sing; the stars continue to cast their gentle gleam over the desolation of the battlefields, and the heart is still inspired by the kind word and the gracious deed. There is no need to fear evil. There is every need to understand what it does, how it operates in the world, what it draws upon to sustain itself . . . . Over and over we must know that the real target of evil is not destruction of the body, the reduction to rubble of cities; . . . [but] to corrupt the spirit of man and to give his soul the contagion of inner disintegration . . . . [T]he evil in the world around us must not be allowed to move from without to within. This would be to be overcome by evil. To drink in the beauty that is within reach, to clothe one's life with simple deeds of kindness, to keep alive a sensitiveness to the movement of the spirit of God in the quietness of the human heart and in the workings of the human mind -- this is as always the ultimate answer to the great deception.

Howard Thurman, "Life Goes On," *Meditations of the Heart*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1981, pp. 110-111.

## **Officers**

**Fran Lightsom, clerk**  
(508-548-9186;

[fran.lightsom@gmail.com](mailto:fran.lightsom@gmail.com))

**Molly Cornell, recording clerk**

**Clyde Tyndale, treasurer**

## **Regular Events**

### **Adult Discussion Group**

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

### **Peace and Social Order**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday at 12:00 p.m.

Larry Jordan, convener

### **Growth and Learning**

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 12:00 p.m.

Sunny Davidson, convener

### **Empathy Practice (NVC)**

Usually 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday 9:30–11:45

Brenda Nolan, convener

### **Restorative Circle Practice**

Usually 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday 1:00–3:00

Brenda Nolan, convener

### **Ministry & Counsel**

Deborah Bradley, convener

(508-564-4744)

Carolyne Jordan

Sunny Davidson

Larry Jordan

Cynthia Rankin

Abigail Young

### **West Falmouth Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**

Usually 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday

(November 22, December 27)

## **Upcoming Events**

### **New England Yearly Meeting**

#### **Beacon Hill Friends House – Simple Morning Meditation**

**Practice** – Held via Zoom **Monday through Friday** from 8:00 – 8:30 a.m. The meditation is 15 minutes long, and begins and ends with a brief introduction to the practice. Orientation for newcomers begins at 8:00 a.m. and practice begins at 8:10. Join once or join regularly! The meditation is free and open to the public. See <https://bhfh.org/virtualprograms/simple-morning-meditation-practice-5/>.

**JYM Retreat** – For children in grades 2 – 6. For this first retreat of the school year we will ponder the theme “Is God on Zoom?” Friday, **November 6** at 6:30 p.m. through Sunday, **November 8** at 11:00 a.m. For more information and to register, see <https://neym.org/events-calendar/2020/11/jym-retreat-november-6-8-2020>.

**Walking with the Bible**— Cosponsored by Woolman Hill and Beacon Hill Friends House the **two remaining sessions** of this monthly series of Bible hours will take place Sundays, **November 1** and **December 6** from 3:45 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. At each session Peter Blood-Patterson will welcome a different Friend as guest leader and we will have a chance to hear what role the Bible plays in each of these Friends’ lives. We will hear from Adria Gulizia (November 1) and Colin Saxton (December 6). Following the individual presentations, we will spend some time reflecting on a passage that is rising for our guest leader. All are welcome regardless of previous experience with the Bible! For further information and to register see <https://donorbox.org/walking-with-the-bible>.

### **West Falmouth**

**Weekly Sunday Worship** is being held via Zoom. We invite Friends from Yarmouth and East Sandwich to join us. An e-mail with the specifics on connecting to this virtual format will be sent a day or so before. The Zoom meeting opens at 9:30 a.m., giving everyone time to log in, get questions answered and greet one another. Starting at 9:50, we will enter the space quietly and begin to settle into worship. A designated Greeter will welcome us at 10 o’clock and again after an hour has passed. The “meeting room” will remain open for visiting until 11:30 a.m. Scheduled meetings, such as committee meetings, meeting for business and special programs, will begin at approximately 11:30 a.m.

**Post-Election Gathering** -- There will be an opportunity for West Falmouth Friends to gather the day after the election, Wednesday, **November 4**, via Zoom. Watch for details.

**Quaker Women** – We are meeting weekly via Zoom on **Thursdays** at 7 p.m.

### Also of Interest

Inspired by Tibetan prayer flags, **Allen’s Neck Friends Prayer Flag installation** bears witness to deaths caused by gun violence. Visit the flags at the First Unitarian Church at the corner of Union and County Streets in New Bedford, Massachusetts. “Spirit-led social witness supports transformative changes in our society. It is our hope that this installation will spark heartfelt reflection and dialogue within communities.” See <https://sites.google.com/view/prayer-flag-witness/home>.



Photos by Marilyn Packard-Luther, Allen’s Neck Friends Meeting

**Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story** – See this very interesting PBS documentary on the life and work of Howard Thurman at <https://www.pbs.org/video/backs-against-the-wall-the-howard-thurman-story-cgv9gi/>.

## Here it Began: 2020 Hindsight or Foresight – Virtual Indigenous History Conference

There are *five remaining weekend sessions during the month of November*. Co-sponsored by Bridgewater State University, Plymouth 400, Inc., and the Wampanoag Advisory Council, this virtual event is free of charge. Learn more at <https://www.plymouth-400inc.org/events-and-programs/signature-events/>. View and download the full conference agenda at [https://www.bridgew.edu/sites/bridgew/files/media-/pdf\\_document/IndigenousHistoryProgram\\_v2.pdf](https://www.bridgew.edu/sites/bridgew/files/media-/pdf_document/IndigenousHistoryProgram_v2.pdf).



**Weekly Taizé service.** Thursday evenings in **November** (5, 12, 19, 26) at 7:00 p.m. This is a style of worship that comes out of an ecumenical monastic order in central France with a strong devotion to peace and justice through prayer and meditation. The service will include recorded chants, spoken prayers and readings, and about twenty minutes of traditional Quaker silent waiting worship. See <https://neym.org/events-calendar/2020/10/weekly-taize-service-online>.



**2020 Alternative Gift Market Cape Cod** -- Saturday, **November 7** – Sunday **November 15**. Shop online or by mail for family and friends. Choose from 24 global, national and local charitable organizations, one of which is the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project. See <https://alternativegiftmarketcapecod.org/> and the flyer attached to this mailing. West Falmouth Religious Society of Friends is a supporting congregation of the 2020 Alternative Gift Market.

Join Woods Hole librarian Margaret McCormick for a Zoom discussion of *Superior: The Return of Race Science* by Angela Saini. Wednesday, November 11 at 7:30 PM. Register at <https://zoom.us/j/95458538331?pwd=-RzJuaXhiOFBvc-GlEMjRDaU81djlSUT09>.

**Thanksgiving Donation Day** is **November 22**, 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.

This year the Center is accepting *frozen turkeys only* and is in need of many! *No other food items*, please, and, unfortunately, no volunteers due to state and local COVID guidelines. See the attached flyer for further information on Thanksgiving and Holiday Toy Donation plans.



**Belonging to Each Other** -- Many thanks to all who participated in Belonging to Each Other's recent, very successful online auction which raised over \$10, 000 to assist our homeless brothers and sisters in Falmouth.

## Falmouth Voters -- Vote by Mail:

Completed **Vote by Mail Ballots** may be:

**Mailed** using the postage pre-paid (white) envelope received with the ballot; or

**Hand delivered** to the "Town Hall Drop Box," the grey mail box on the left of the walkway to the main entrance to Town Hall.

Once your ballot has been returned to Town Hall, **your vote is final and you cannot take your ballot back or vote again.**

**Vote by Mail Ballots must be received by 8 pm on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3.**

If you decide not to mail your ballot back, or your ballot doesn't reach Town Hall by Election Day, you can still vote in person at your polling place.

You can track your ballot at <http://www.TrackMyBallotMA.com>.



**Vote In-Person on Election Day: Tuesday, November 3, 2020 from 7:00 a.m. -- 8:00 p.m.**

For a list of polling locations and for information on planned safety precautions see <http://www.falmouthmass.us/662/Next-Election>.



Recent AFSC Blog posts on ***Ending Mass Incarceration:***

***It's time to stop federal executions and repeal the death penalty --***

Peniel Ibe of AFSC's Office of Public Policy and Advocacy writes that in July, "the Justice Department began carrying out death sentences for the first time in 17 years—flying in the face of moral values,

common sense, and history." Since July the Department of Justice has executed seven people with an eighth person scheduled to be killed in November. See <https://www.afsc.org/blogs/news-and-commentary/its-time-to-stop-federal-executions-and-repeal-death-penalty>.

**Reflections on AFSC's history in the penal abolition movement --**

Laura Magnani, recently retired director of AFSC's California Healing Justice Program, reflects on thirty years of work in the area of social justice. She describes three different aspects of AFSC's methodology in working for healing justice—appealing to people's hearts and creative sensibilities through art, contributing comprehensive analysis about the existing system and a new vision, and centering the voices of the people directly impacted by the system." Read more at <https://www.afsc.org/blogs/acting-in-faith/reflecting-afscs-history-penal-abolition-movement>.



**FCNL Virtual Events –**

**Witness Wednesdays**, Silent reflection, together, in community:

**November 4** at 5:15 p.m. Extended Witness Wednesday Silent Reflection with a Concern for the Condition of the Country. Join

F/friends to share resolve and hold one another and our country in the Light the day after the general election. Register at <https://act.fcnl.org/event/quaker-welcome-center/1872/signup>.

**November 11** at 5:15 p.m. Silent reflection. Register at <https://act.fcnl.org/event/quaker-welcome-center/1873>.

**Thursdays with Friends**, Biweekly Conversation Series:

**November 5** – *Talk with an Election Expert*. Join Diane Randall and Myrna Perez, director of voting rights and elections democracy at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School for a special Thursdays with Friends for a post-Election Day conversation. Register at <https://act.fcnl.org/event/thursdays-with-friends/1825>. 4:00 – 4:45 p.m.

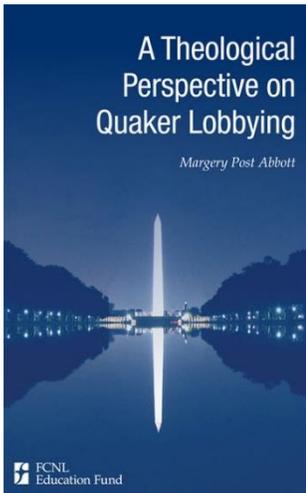
**November 19** – *Living as an Undocumented Migrant*. For more information and to register see <https://act.fcnl.org/event/thursdays-with-friends/1826>. 4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

**December 3** -- *Looking Forward to the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress*. Features special guest Diana Ohlbaum, FCNL Senior Strategist and Legislative Director for Foreign Policy. Register at <https://act.fcnl.org/event/thursdays-with-friends/1827>. 4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

**\*\*\*\*\* Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute 2020 -- November 14-17, 2020 \*\*\*\*\***

There’s still time to register for FCNL’s virtual *Annual Meeting and the Quaker Public Policy Institute*. Amplify the wider Quaker call for racial justice and police reform and lobby for the Justice in Policing Act. Quaker advocacy has never been more important! Register and access annual meeting resources at <https://www.fcnl.org/-updates/annual-meeting-and-quaker-public-policy-institute-2020-27>.

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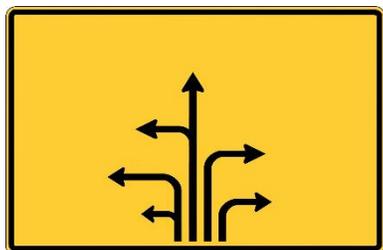


“Quakers live with paradox: They are law-abiding people, but they wrote the book on civil disobedience.” -- Margery Post Abbott, *A Theological Perspective on Quaker Lobbying*.

Bobby Trice of FCNL notes that, “Abbott’s explanation of how Friends have carried their concerns into the world [shows] how Quakers grapple with pragmatism and prophecy, respect and dissent, and civil obedience and loyalty to God as they seek to influence government and live faithfully.” Read more at <https://www.fcnl.org/updates/remembering-the-roots-of-quaker-advocacy-3048>. For a free copy of *A Theological Perspective on Quaker Lobbying* see <https://www.fcnl.org/about/policy/a-theological-perspective-on-quaker-lobbying>.

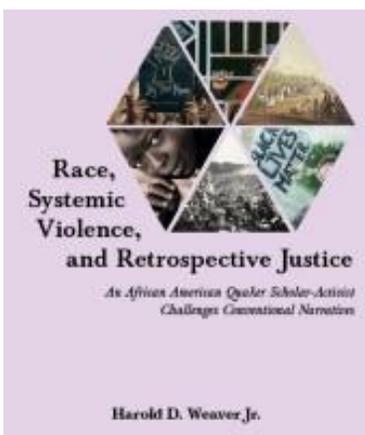
## Pendle Hill Events --

**Daily worship** via Zoom from 8:30 – 9:10 a.m. See <https://pendlehill.org/explore/worship/join-us-online-for-worship-in-the-barn/>.



**First Monday Lecture with Eileen Flanagan: What Happens Wednesday? Preparing Ourselves for the Work Ahead. Monday, November 2, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.** via Zoom. Whoever wins the presidential election, whether or not the result is contested, we know there will be much work to be done. How do we prepare when we don't know what is coming? For more information and to register see <https://pendlehill.org/events/wh-what-happens-wednesday-preparing-ourselves-for-the-work-ahead/>.

**Arts for Spiritual Discovery**, online sessions led by Jessie White, Arts and Spirituality Coordinator at Pendle Hill. Tuesdays, **November 3, 10 and 17** from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. For more information and to register see <https://pendlehill.org/events/arts-for-spiritual-discovery-online/>. \$15 per session. Space is limited.



**New! Online Reading Group** – This monthly online reading group, free and open to all, will focus on a mix of Pendle Hill Pamphlets and other Quaker materials. Each month we will consider queries about the reading in a spirit of worship-sharing. In November, we will read Pendle Hill's most recent pamphlet, Dr. Harold Weaver's *Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice: An African American Quaker Scholar-Activist Challenges Conventional Narratives*. Wednesday, **November 11** from 6:30 -- 8:00 p.m. via Zoom with Janaki Spickard Keeler. See <https://pendlehill.org/events/-pendle-hills-reading-group-november/>

**Opening to the Heart of Worship.** A weekend workshop via Zoom with Christopher Sammond, Friday, **December 4** at 7:30 p.m. – Sunday **December 6** at 12:00 p.m. For more information and to register see <https://pendlehill.org/events/opening-to-the-heart-of-worship/>



## News of Friends

### **Alta Mae Stevens and Jim Gould Resume an Earlier Conversation**

*Ed. Note: Eighteen years ago, in a wide-ranging conversation, Alta Mae Stevens spoke with Jim Gould of East Sandwich Meeting about his experiences in World War II, his subsequent work in the U.S. Foreign Service and in the Peace Corps, and his lifelong interest in history. Interested readers will find a copy of the original interview in an attachment to this mailing. A few weeks ago, in early October, Alta Mae and Jim met again, this time by phone, to update their original interview. A lightly-edited transcript of their conversation follows.*

AS: My gosh. (laughs) Oh, it's so good. I'm so glad to have this opportunity because I know you're flying far away and I won't know you and I haven't known you very much even when you were around. You're leaving in November?

JG: We leave on November 18 for Seattle where I will probably join the University meeting which is a large meeting. I've been there many times. It should be a good home.



Alta Mae Stevens at the Meetinghouse  
January, 2019

AS: Yes, I would think. All very like-minded people. So, I'll open the interview by saying eighteen years ago, on December 11, 2002, I interviewed you and the record of this interview is still available. Following is today's installment done on Thursday, October 8, 2020. Now I have to ask you the leading question – briefly, what has happened to you since those chaotic times that preceded your moving to Sandwich?



Jim Gould with Courage of Conscience  
Award, October 2017.

JG: The main thing I can think of, I have produced three books and many, many articles, mostly on history, and of those three books, two have been published and the other one is about to be published. The first one was a history of the Unitarian Universalists on Cape Cod. A fascinating story with my colleague David Martin. The second was a family history which I have been writing with my cousin for, I don't know, thirty-five or forty years. The third book which will be published shortly is *Barnstable Women*. This

started as a blog. I have a blog that's about women in Barnstable. The most famous one everyone knows, Mercy Otis Warren, but there were lots of other wonderful, wonderful women, among them Quakers. That will be published, it's been held up by the COVID virus.

At any rate, a lot of my time has been on those books, but I've published lots and lots of articles, mostly on history, the history of Marstons Mills. Also, I just had a preservation award from the Town of Barnstable thanking me for my work in conservation, historic preservation which I was doing for thirty-five years or so. So that was a nice tribute to my efforts.

So that's the main thing I've been involved in and doing those eighteen years. The other thing I'm very happy with is the website called Women in Peace which celebrates women peacemakers. (See [https://www.womeninpeace.org/.](https://www.womeninpeace.org/))

AS: I assume you've included Eleanor Roosevelt.

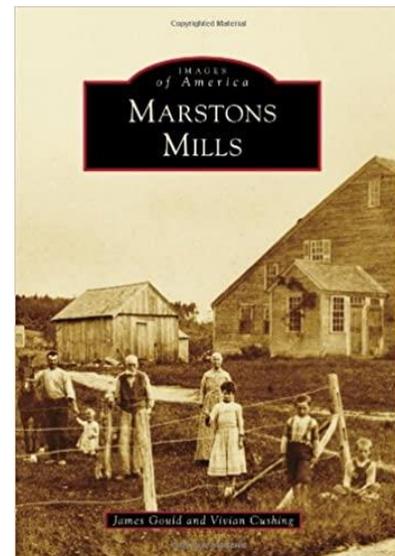
JG: Of course. Name any more you want. I think they're on there. You can search for your favorite woman peacemaker, maybe Amelie Scheltema or Lucretia Mott, you name her, and if she isn't on there, I will add her (laughs) after I consult the criteria. She has to have not only liked the idea of making peace but to have actually done something concrete. It's a wonderful website. I keep adding to it. And then as a sideline on that there's something that's very unique. You can probably find biographies of people like Eleanor Roosevelt in other places but what is unique is that if you want to know any event that has been a peacemaking event by a woman, this shows up on the website. I haven't found any other place on the internet or Euclid or any library where you can find a list of women's peacemaking activities. It's something that isn't easy to find on my website but for every day, if you go on for today, below the list of women peacemakers there is a list of all the events that I know of where women succeeded in peacemaking action.

JG: So, that's what I've been doing for the last eighteen years. And the result of that is that if you want a list of every Quaker woman who was a peacemaker, it's there. I have not made a count but there are well over a hundred women Quaker peacemakers. I've turned this over to the person who is doing the museum, or the display in the old meetinghouse and whether they want to put a list of women Quaker peacemakers I don't know. But they did ask me about prominent Quaker women and I've given them a list of prominent Quaker women. A rather selective list and also, I gave them a list with short biographies of all of the prominent Quaker men leaders. That's been a sort of a side product of my researches in the last eighteen years.

AS: Are you talking just about English-speaking women or are you talking about women all over the world and is there a translation accompanying it?

JG: All over the world. I have translated or tried to make or provide a good translation of the most common things those women said. So, if you want to know the best quote I could find on Lucretia Mott, it's there.

AS: Lucretia Mott. She must have been a very feisty lady.



JG: No, she wasn't really, she was just determined to be heard. She had wonderful insights, spiritual, and they were very well expressed. And I would say, I think a lot of people in her day would have said she was too outspoken, but she wasn't exactly feisty, she just told the truth.

AS: Uh, huh. Well, that's bad enough.

JG: Yes. Look her up. It's a little bit of a pain. I'm sorry the website isn't easier to use, but it was our first experiment in making a website. By the way, when I say we, this is a creation of a professor at the University of Washington was the one who really got it going, my two daughters in Seattle, and we have a website manager in Doshisha Women's University in Japan. So when I say we, all I do is just dig up the facts, and all the others are contributors, critics . . . .

AS: You stimulate the whole thing by your researches. Isn't that wonderful?

JG: It's fun, I love it.

AS: So, what else is happening to you besides all this incredible amount of labor? What do you do for fun? Or is this your fun?

JG: Finding women peacemakers, yes, that's very fun!

AS: I have so many questions now. I don't want to divert you, but is there any pattern to women becoming peacemakers? Does it have anything to do with the way they're brought up in their families, for example?

JG: That's a good question and I have to really think about it. There is certainly something in the Quaker ethos that produces more. My guess is there are probably more Quaker women peacemakers than there are in any other religions except Judaism. There is something that I have not been able to precisely define but there is no question that there are . . . . No, let's start with the facts. There are more Jewish-raised women, Jewish religious activists, Jewish women among peacemakers than any other group. Largely Ashkenazi women and I think there is a social requirement in the Jewish religion that makes women very caring. It's not only their families, but they're very conscious of social relationships. So there are tremendous numbers . . . . Just name a famous peacemaker, she's probably Jewish. I haven't done a study of this, I need to get together with Jewish feminists or scholars, but there's no question that the Jewish background really encourages peacemaking women. They're either, for some reason, caring about people, or just caring itself is something that Jewish women are exposed to. They ought to be proud of it!

AS: So, what else did you find? Did you find that this caring business is it restricted to a particular age or does it begin at infancy and go on until death?

JG: So, Greta Thunberg is an example. Some of best peacemakers today are under 20.

AS: Really? That's a good omen. That's so wonderful.

JG: Yes, Greta Thunberg, she lives in Stockholm. A famous climate activist. She must be 17 now. She started when she was around 14. Go on my website. And see what she has said about peace. Let me know what you think of it. Try a few of your Quaker women friends.

AS: You are talking about women of peace. Now does this mean that there is an absolute trend throughout history for women to be the peacemakers as compared to men?

JG: No, no. (laughs) In history, history written by men, the men come first.

AS: (laughs) Of course. You are so right!

JG: Take, for example, the first name that comes to mind if you mention Indian peacemakers is Gandhi. But what about his wife? Why don't we talk about some of these great women who sacrificed themselves but they didn't write about themselves the way Gandhi did? He got the publicity. The men still get the publicity. For instance, today if I were to ask you to name the most important expert on peacemaking, nonviolent peacemaking, what would you say? Gene Sharp or some man? Why not Erica Chenoweth? Never heard of her! Of course, you haven't heard of her because the media is still dominated by men.

AS: Well who is she? Who is Erica Chenoweth?

JG: She is a professor at New York State, I've forgotten which one of the branches. At any rate, you can find out about her in any Wikipedia article. Go to [womeninpeace.org](http://womeninpeace.org) and see about Erica Chenoweth. She is absolutely top notch.

AS: Well, that's wonderful. And you are wonderful! You have had the most remarkable life. I was rereading our original interview. You have done everything! Except standing on your head at the top of the Empire State Building! But everything else you've done.

JG: No, I've not done enough. I haven't done any real peacemaking. I would not qualify for women in peacemaking! Even if I were a woman!

AS: OK. I want to ask you one more question before we wind this up. How have you benefited from being involved in the East Sandwich Meeting?

JG: East Sandwich meeting is a special place for me. It is where Quakerism began in America. The oldest meeting in the country and on that spot when I go into that meetinghouse where I think of all the

**WOMEN IN PEACE** ABOUT WOMEN PEACEMAKERS RESOURCES BLOG CONTACT US

Greta Thunberg  
"We are facing an existential threat. This is the biggest crisis humanity has ever faced. First we have to realise this and then as fast as possible do something to stop the emissions and try to save what we can save."

*Celebrating Women Peacemakers*

Welcome! Women in Peace advocates for a world without war and violence. We believe that women have a unique perspective on achieving peace. We celebrate women peacemakers' birthdays, peaceful contributions, and their insights on how to create a nonviolent world.

*Thanks for visiting us today!*

Explore Women Peacemakers

CALENDAR NAME REGION

wonderful people, John Woolman and all the other wonderful Quakers who worshiped there, it's like communion with all the great spirits, among them the people who reopened the meeting, Margot Hutchinson and people like that, they're really wonderful. To me East Sandwich Meeting is a dynamo of love. When you are worshipping inside there, you pick up the love of all the people who are participating. And so, to me it's a very special place.

AS: That's wonderful. Well, you know how much they will miss you. But I think, on the other hand, how much fun it'll be for you to join a new meeting and meet new people.

JG: Oh yes. Lots of fun. (laughs)

AS: I think you probably had lots of fun throughout your life.

JG: I'm an optimist. I think eventually we will get over using violence. There are lots of people, including Quakers, who don't think we'll ever stop killing and using violence, but I think we're making progress. Just look at the last one hundred years and what it was like in 1920. What has changed since then? Now the word "non-violence" is a commonplace. People talk about it all the time. In 1920 it was unknown except for a few exceptional people like Gandhi who talked about it but it was all pie-in-the-sky in 1920. And nobody really thought that you could use nonviolence to change things and today people try it all the time. Get out and protest various injustices, racism and so on and all the problems we have, we've got a long way to go, no question, but there is great progress. If you go back another hundred years there was only one person who believed that nonviolence worked.

AS: Who was that?

JG: One Quaker. Even the Quakers had articulated nonviolence in an ineffective way. But there were Quakers. There was probably more than one. Can you think that in 1820 no one had declared that nonviolence was a social goal? It wasn't until 1838 that anyone, and a bunch of women, by the way, declared that nonviolence -- they called it "nonresistance" -- could solve the problem of slavery and other problems. So, there is definite progress. Gandhi hadn't been born. Tolstoy was one of the pioneers. If you haven't read any book other than *Anna Karenina* or *War and Peace*, he was one of the pioneers. He kind of developed a whole philosophy of nonviolent resistance. Quakers had it pretty much from the beginning with George Fox. George Fox, in his statement, said he told them that he knew that it's greed that creates war. Greed is wanting to take possession of other people's property. George Fox knew and expressed it, but his wife was even better (laughs). Margaret, Margaret Fell, you don't know about Margaret, Margaret was my first Quaker peacemaker and she obviously influenced Fox. He was dedicated to her. She was great.

AS: Well, I want to thank you for this. It's been a joy to hear you speak again and I hope you keep on speaking to all sorts of audiences of all sorts of ages because, God knows, that's what we need right now.

JG: We do. Well, thank you very much.

AS: Well, thank you so much, dear Jim, and I hope you have a lovely experience the rest of your time here and an even lovelier experience with your family in the west.

JG: Thank you.

## **Readers Write**

### ***Beginning a Year of Discernment on Racism and the Climate Crisis***

*Steve Gates and Gail Melix  
W. Falmouth and E. Sandwich Meetings*

It is with considerable joy that we can report on the beginnings of the year-long discernment process in our New England Yearly Meeting on the intertwined issues of racism and the climate crisis. Last weekend, we had the pleasure of presenting the “Call to Urgent, Loving Action for the Earth and Her Inhabitants” twice, first to the Sandwich Quarterly Meeting (SQM), and then to the Northeast regional meeting for Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC). Beth Morrill, clerk of the Racial, Social and Economic Justice Committee joined us for Quarterly Meeting and Reb MacKenzie of the Earthcare Ministry Committee for FWCC.

At SQM, we of course knew many of the participants, but this was our first opportunity to share with our own quarterly meeting. We hope to present our Call to all eight of the Quarterly Meetings in our yearly meeting (by Zoom), as well as to individual monthly and preparative meetings. One of the interesting observations from that meeting was that there seemed to be a strong desire by a number of Friends who are engaging in social justice activities for a way to work together as a broader community.

The Call was well-received. For example, one attendee from West Falmouth wrote, “The videos in particular were clear and compelling. ... I appreciate your efforts! I think your presentation lays a good foundation for Meetings to begin a ‘year of discernment.’”

The FWCC meeting was a weekend-long one, with participation from the Philadelphia, New York, Canadian, and New England Yearly Meetings. Interestingly, PYM had already heard a similar call for working together on social justice, and has formed a collaborative on racism (see <https://www.pym.org-/anti-racism-collaborative/>). This apparently is one of several collaboratives within PYM which support related activities across their yearly meeting. We also heard an inspiring plenary talk by a mother-daughter team about their climate work, songs in Swahili from a new meeting in NYYM, and a great deal more. All of this leads us to ask whether our three preparative meetings in SMM would be interested in beginning their own “year of discernment” soon? And what can we do to help?



## Vigil in Dire Times Part II

Bill Holcombe

### East Sandwich Preparative Meeting

Well, we've been at it now for over two months. Monday through Friday across from the Sandwich Post Office holding our signs, waving to cars, and engaging in the odd conversation here and there. Fellow vigil keeper, Ron Larrivee, pictured below with the Ruth Bader Ginsberg memorial poster, noticed on the day after she died that the flag outside the P.O. was still flying at full mast, so I checked with the staff and they lowered it. Chances are they were too busy to read the official notification of her death since they report being overwhelmed by chronic cuts and understaffing as well as volumes of packages likely linked to Amazon and COVID purchases. How much of this relates to our redoubtable Postmaster General is hard to say. They won't say and probably shouldn't as it might put their jobs at risk. Another vigil keeper, Mike Sullivan, comes out nearly every morning to join me and Ron and whoever else can join us that day.

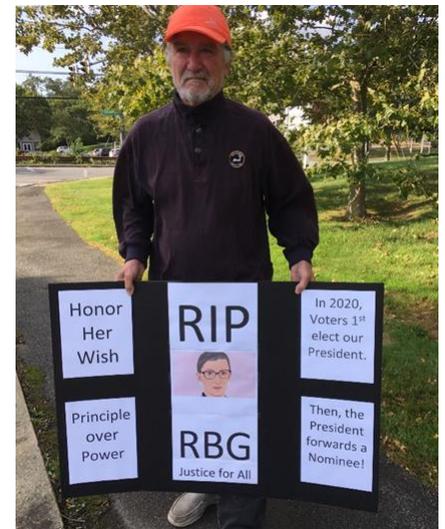


Kathy Olsen,  
East Sandwich Meeting

Most vehicles show us support one way or another. Many presume we're postal employees. Most get the idea we don't favor the current D.C. Administration. Our signs started neutrally favoring local postal employees. They have evolved into more creative works. Many pickup trucks give us thumbs up, counterintuitively against type. A few let us know, more or less peacefully, that we're on the wrong side and a very few not so peacefully.

We still get drop-ins and newcomers. It's not too late to join us pre- or even postelection day. Come to the Merchant's Square Sandwich Post Office any weekday morning between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., if only to toot your horn in support. We'll be there.

I've been a "convinced" Quaker since 2004 and have long advocated for more collaboration with other faith groups. In that spirit, I'd like to share some observations of fellow vigil keeper, Mike Sullivan, a Catholic, who has been with me from day one of the vigil.



Ron Larrivee

Mike Sullivan

Corpus Christi Parish, E. Sandwich

Almost every weekday, I head down to my local Post Office in Sandwich at what is, for me, effective sunrise, 9:00 a.m., and join a vigil protesting the changes made to Post Office procedures, the dismantling of mail sorting machinery, and the removal of postal boxes. While not wanting to be judgmental, the

thought has crossed my mind that these changes are designed to keep the vote in the Presidential election way down.

My small gesture of civil discontent sends a message to my children and grandchildren that I want in their memory of me: I have always acted when I could to prevent injustice. I have been in Mississippi as a civil rights lawyer and activist. I have chased muggers in New York City, and even caught one. To my children, my approach to decency is not news, but the grandchildren have never seen me marching, protesting, or getting arrested. Marching, I can't do anymore; my back won't allow it. Protesting, I would prefer that our leader called this a protest, so I could check that box once more, but he's a Quaker and prefers vigil. Getting arrested, that might cause a serious rift in my medication schedule. So, I hold a sign supporting the Post Office, and I wave to people, and it makes me happy. It's a quiet part of a minor legacy, but it's part of the one I want.



Photo by Gail Melix

## ***A Day with the Stone Walkers***

*Alan Burt*

*East Sandwich Preparative Meeting*

Dear Friends, I share here some reflections on an early-October Peace Abbey-sponsored Stone Walk in which the Global Pandemics Memorial Stone was pulled from the Swedenborg Chapel in Harvard Square to the Salvation Army Community Center on Massachusetts Avenue. This location was chosen because COVID disproportionately affects people of color, the homeless, immigrants, and those without means which is the main socioeconomic group the Salvation Army serves throughout the world. Because of the rise in coronavirus cases, the journey of the Global Pandemics Stone has been interrupted. Currently, the stone is on display on the grounds of The Life Experience School in Millis. Once it is safe to move the stone on public thoroughfares, it will resume its journey throughout Massachusetts and beyond. When Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui officially welcomed the bereavement stone to Cambridge in early October, she said, "May all who view and touch the stone find comfort in placing their loss in a global context for the human family suffers as one, and heals as one." See <https://www.peaceabbey.org/>.



### **A Day with the Stone Walkers**

It was a joy spending the day  
with each of you and the stone.

In a small and sweet way,  
we were whispering out to the world,  
one person at a time,  
who will then whisper to others,  
that now is a time for all people  
in the world to come together  
in loving compassion  
through mourning together  
those who have perished,  
and those who will perish  
from the pandemic upon us.  
And our whispers are like the wind,  
a wind that will blow around the earth,  
carrying peace, love and healing,  
bringing us closer to one another,  
closer than ever before.

Such is the depth, the breadth  
and the movement of our prayer,  
now in motion around the world.  
And unlike the pandemic upon us,  
our loving prayers are unstoppable.



“For if you go poking about the world, intent on keeping the candle of consciousness blazing, you must be ready to give thanks at all times. Discrimination is not allowed. The flame cannot gutter and fail when a cold wind whistles throughout the house.

Thanksgiving, thanksgiving. All must be thanksgiving.”

V.S. Owens, *And the Trees Clap Their Hands: Faith, Perception, and the New Physics*.  
Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1983, p.138.

***Happy Thanksgiving!***

**Next Gazette Deadline  
Tuesday, November 17**

*The Gazette* is a publication of West Falmouth Preparative Meeting  
*Rita O’Donnell, Editor; Alta Mae Stevens, Editor Emerita;  
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*Cover:* Butternut squash- Gail Melix

*Page 8:* Alta Mae Stevens- Rita O’Donnell;

Jim Gould- Paul Shoemaker

*Page 14:* Kathy Olsen and Ron Larrivee- Bill Holcombe

*Back page:* W.F. Meeting House, Steve Gates

