

December 2015

Wanda Coffin Baker,
editor

Western Work

Peace of Earth?

The words of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr....lie at the heart of our mission ...“*War is not the answer.*”

“Dr. King spoke those words during the Vietnam War, and they sum up the core conviction of the Friend Committee on National Legislation. But they are not merely an expression of our pacifist tradition, or of what is in our hearts.

They were then, and are now, a simple statement of truth.

“War is wrong. It is this simple truth that inspires and motivates us and the thousands of people of all races, religions, and cultures who generously support FCNL’s advocacy work. And its underlying wisdom is why we are growing.”

... “One U.S. government official summed up the problem our nation has created for itself, and pointed toward its solution:

“When you look at the tools in your toolbox, and the only thing you see is a hammer, all your problems start to look like nails.”

“Today, the U.S. sees its security only in terms of military might. But if real security is to be fostered – if we are to end the poverty and injustice that fuels war – diplomacy, development, and other tools of peace will have to be added to our toolbox.”

... “To many, accomplishing such an ambitious agenda would seem beyond reach. But I believe that all of us – every single man, woman, and child - are called upon not to retreat from challenge or wring our hands in despair, but to live in a world that is “now but not yet.” And by living in that world, we can ultimately bring it into being.”

War is not the answer.

We are the answer. All of us.

All of us who are weary of turmoil and conflict...

Who seek a world free of war and the threat of war...

Who seek a society with equity and justice for all...

Who seek a community where every person’s potential

May be fulfilled... who seek an earth restored.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Diane Randall, Ex. Secretary of FCNL



Calendar—January

- 1 Office Closed
- 8 Earlham Choir at Indianapolis First Friends, 7:30pm
- 15 Brent Bill Book-signing at Indianapolis First Friends
- 16 WYM Boards Day
- 19 Youth Worker Dinner, Stone Creek Restaurant, 6:30
- 20 Service of Prayer for Christian Unity, Allisionville Church, 7pm
- 20 Sundesmos Board, Office, 7 pm
- 23 Winter Retreat Com., 12 noon
- 29-30 Men’s Ground Hog Retreat at Q Haven

February

- 5-7 Winter Sneak at Q Haven
- 6 Chicago Area Friends, 57th St. Mtg, 10 am

March

- 19 Administrative Council at West Newton



Monthly Meeting News

Coloma Christmas Tree Ornaments. In 1982, the young women's group at Coloma Friends Church, the Quaker O.A.T.S., began a tradition of decorating the Christmas tree with shiny, name engraved ornaments of our precious little ones in the church family and community. From that time to present, babies and new church family children and youth are

presented their ornament on Christmas Eve to hang on the tree which beautifully decorates the Meeting-house. As of now, the ornaments number 195!



Shirley and Jim Walters, Lick Creek Meeting, living it up with Superintendent, Wanda Baker at Administrative Council.



Christmas at Hopewell Friends Meeting.

Sandcreek-Azalia had a goal of 25 shoeboxes to send to the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child shoebox project! We exceeded our goal by 14 boxes!!! We had a total of 39 boxes this year!! We were very excited to be able to share with children worldwide and help spread God's word!!!



Who is Jeff Wells?

Many Friends have asked me who Jeff Wells is. He is the pastor at Blue River Friends Meeting at the cross roads of Quaker Lane and Quaker Road, a little north and east of Salem,

Bob Holler, former Pastor of Blue River, and Jeff at the Blue River Bicentennial for the Hicksite Meetinghouse. They have worked well to support each other.





In response to the lack of empathy shown to Arab refugees, **West Newton Meeting** wrote a Minute calling for Light in the Midst of Violent Darkness.

“We of West Newton Friends Meeting call upon all, including our fellow Quakers as friends of Jesus, to do more than mourn the violence in this world, but to become active in the cause of peace for God’s sake. For our part, in addition to this minute denouncing the recent violence, West Newton Friends Meeting also commits to sending \$1,000 to

Christian Peacemaking Teams in support of those who put themselves in harm’s way to bring the gospel of peace in a war-wracked world.

For more of this letter, contact West Newton Friends Meeting, Sylvia Graves, clerk.



The Earlham College Choir will perform at **Indianapolis First Friends** on Friday, Jan. 8, 2016 at 7:30 pm. The 55-member choir should fill the hall with music. All are invited.

Quaker Affirmation Class for Adults will begin at Indianapolis Frist Friends during Sunday School hour (9:00 a.m.) on January 10th in the parlor. The curriculum that our young people experienced will be used with some revisions for our adult group. We plan to offer this through 3 months and encourage anyone that would like to go deeper into our history, testimonies, theology, structure, worship and organizations to join us. Beth Henricks and others will lead the class.



Winter Chicago-Area Friends Gathering

There will be a gathering for Chicago-area Friends on Saturday, February 6, 2016, hosted by 57th Street Meeting. This will be a time for singing, worship, programming for children, fellowship, and ice-skating.

–and remember, they have a big pond near them! (editor)



Live Out The Gift of Peace

While the goal of Christmas is joy and fellowship that may not be the case for many. This year we find our world peppered with all sorts of violence. Many people from other countries have lost their homes and families due to war. We are all perplexed with how to deal with those who bring violence on the innocent and the innocent themselves.

The answer was uttered two thousand years ago by the angel who met the shepherds in the field. "13And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased." 15When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us."...(Luke 2:13-15).

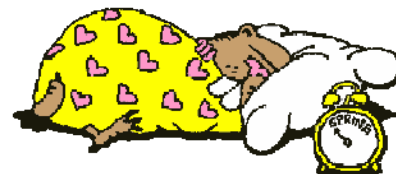
Peace on earth is a divine issue. We may make attempts at peace but true outward peace must be that which comes from an inner disposition. Only Jesus can make that happen I am convinced. The road to peace is also the road of self-denial and putting others first. Peace on earth will have to do with submitting to the one and only true authority—God Himself fashioned as the babe in Bethlehem who grew to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

So while the answer to our outward circumstances on a global level are in fact complex and depressing, the actual "What can I do to help?" is found in the simplicity of daily living, a life of intentional peace that is from God and not of ourselves.

Merry Christmas



Mark your calendars for the **Ground Retreat** at Quaker Haven this January 29th and 30th. The cost is the same as last year, which is \$60.00. This includes lodging and breakfast and lunch on Saturday.



The speaker will be Mr. Dana Brady - from the Development office at White's Residential in Wabash. This is a time for Western and Indiana Yearly Meeting men to get to know each other better.

Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis

As of Dec. 8, the Board of Directors voted to close the Church Federation of Indianapolis due to lack of support from the Christian community these last few years.



The closing Celebration of Thanksgiving was Tuesday, Dec. 15, 6-8pm in the Krannert Room on the second floor of the Indiana Interchurch Center, 1100 W. 42nd St., Indianapolis. "We celebrate all that the Federation has done over the past 103 years, and pray for the future of the ecumenical movement wherever God leads it into the future."





Administrative Council met at Paoli Friends Meeting. The program was put on by the Southern Area Pastors. Chris Lindley shared a presentation of the migration of Friends into southern Indiana and beyond. Many Friends spread out from Lick Creek Meeting, east of Paoli into the nethermost parts of the territory.

The **Minute Books** were not ready to be passed out due to a mechanical failure. You should have received the Minute Books for the officers of the Meetings. However, the WYM **Study Book for Monthly Meeting Elders** was distributed to Meetings that were present. The study book is “intended to be used for regular instruction and discussion that will strengthen the understanding of the roles and responsibilities involved in the spiritual leadership of your Meeting.” This section is for Year 1. There will be two more sections published over the next three years.

I Don't Mean to confuse you, but ...

I recently and dutifully sent out a flyer about a change in FUM's address. Someone in the Yearly Meeting wrote with a question. So I asked and was told that none of the FUM addresses had really changed.

So I asked Eden Grace, what will people get when they try to get someone at [@friendsunitedmeeting.org](mailto:friendsunitedmeeting.org)? Eden replied, “I think it will just bounce.”

“I'm sorry for the recent confusion about our email and web. In fact, none of FUM's addresses have changed. We're in the process of rebuilding the website, so it will be skeletal for a while longer, but all the same addresses are still in place.”

So the suffix for FUM's address is @fum.org.

Associated Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs

Please note that Horace Smith is no longer treasurer. Funds should be sent to Tom Harper, P.O. Box 5 , Greentown, In 46936. Thank you.

This came into the office this week. I thought I would pass it on. W

Dear Friends, it has been good working with you as a great friend and for all these years you have been a support to my ministry. The year 2015 was very challenging to our family but we appreciate your support through prayers in Jesus name.

The year began with challenges of sickness where my wife was diagnosed with breast cancer level 2, but we thank God it was contained and she is doing well. We give glory to God. The same year has ended with the loss of Rose's father. The Bible says count it joy when you experience such challenges. We rejoice in the Lord for the many things he has done in our lives.

I would like to take this gracious opportunity to wish you A HAPPY, PROSPEROUS, BLESSED AND EVER FULFILLING NEW YEAR 2016. You have been a great friend and we look forward to our continued relationship.

Blessings and more blessings, John Afanda Muhanji, Director, Africa Ministries Office.
E-mail: muhanji@gmail.com .

— Listening to Christ: A simple faith that transforms lives.

The Leadership Team of the **Illinois Conference of Churches**, in light of recent acts of terrorism, issues the following policy statement and invites our members, which includes 13 Christian denominations (of which WYM is a part through our Chicago meetings), to join us in affirming our responsibility to welcome refugees who seek asylum in our country. We trust the screening process for refugees, already in practice, to do what it is intended to do. We call on [our Governor] to follow federal law relating to refugees. We are particularly offended by the suggestion that any group of people would be singled out for exclusion and particularly by the suggestion that any group would be asked to wear labels or have separate registration. By giving in to fear we are creating further division in our communities. We strongly denounce all acts of terrorism and offer condolences and sympathy to all victims and their families. In making this statement we are keenly aware of the scriptures on which our faith is based and how our savior was once a refugee seeking shelter in a foreign land while fleeing oppression.



USFWI-QMI Triennial

The United Society of Friends Women International and Quaker Men International are preparing a Triennial Gathering in Cedar Rapids, IA for July 7-10, 2016.

“This promises to be a time of fellowship and fun along with fantastic seminars and generous helpings of Midwestern food. We have specialty banquets being planned, diverse daily activities and exciting programs for adults, children, and youth. A nursery will be available for your little ones with care given by a certified day care provider.

“Our goal is to make this a time of refreshment and relaxation for you as you mix with Friends from all over the world and walk closer to our God. Bring the entire family as there will be something for everyone.”

More detailed information is available in the **Advocate**. On line registration can be done at <https://www.regonline.com/usfwiqmitriennial2016> .



Fox Tale Alert!!!

Liz (Merrill) Nielander and her husband, Dave, suffered a home fire late in December. We all need to keep them in our thoughts and prayers as they go about making plans to recover from this disaster. Liz is editor of the WYM USFW **Fox Tales**, and she lost the contact information – email and snail mail from the loss of her computer in their house fire.

If you are a single recipient of **Fox Tales**, please send Wanda Coffin Baker your contact info at the Yearly Meeting Office. If you are part of a USFW group and you want **Fox Tales**, why not do it as a group and send everyone’s contact info for **Fox Tales** at one time? This is for people who use the internet and for people who use the post office to receive their newsletter. If you have not received one before add your contact info or send it directly to Wanda Coffin Baker, Po Box 70, Plainfield, IN 46168, or wandacbwym@gmail.com . Wanda will gather the info and pass it on to Liz. Thank you.



From **Quaker Haven Camp** Newsletter: “Each year we hire young adults to serve here at QHC. They work hard at keeping the grounds clean and looking beautiful, serving great food, and watching out for people’s safety. If you would like to be on staff, look for applications on our website in February 2016!

Seamstresses, have you read that Quaker Haven Camp needs buttons for their corn hole game bags? They also need tractor weights, spades to move trees and several other things. Look at the QHC Newsletter on line, or call the camp for a complete list.

Youth Worker Dinner

Western and Indiana Yearly Meetings would like to offer support to those who are pouring into our young people, giving them the love of Jesus.

On January 19, we invite any paid or volunteer Youth Workers from your church to a free dinner at Stone Creek Restaurant in the Hamilton Towne Center right off of I-69 at 6:30 pm. This will be a time of fellowship as well as a time where some folks from WYM & IYM will be sharing about some work that has been done to develop teaching points and lessons for all the Youth Workers.

Again, the dinner is free of charge, so please encourage your Youth Workers to attend. We are asking for RSVPs to be sent to Pat Byers at pat@iym.org by January 12th.

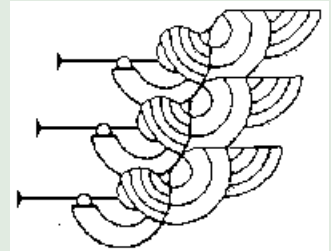
As Way Opens

Just before a meeting this morning at Christian Theological Seminary, I paused for a moment of quiet reflection and prayer in the Chapel. No one was there. The high ceilings allowed in the gray light of morning. Water bubbled and fell from the baptismal fountain. The lectern and altar were spread with Christmas trim. And it was quiet. Very quiet. I was glad for a place to rest in silence.

So much of our world is filled with fear. We call out against the darkness of those things we cannot control and do not understand. We try naming things, people, institutions, in order to make them comprehensible. We try to differentiate ourselves from others in order to find comfort in who we are.

Out of this dark, confused, frightening chaos comes a voice, ringing out, again and again: “Do not fear!” “Do not fear!” The angels sang it long ago: “Do not fear... for unto you is born this day a savior...” God is born, the One who saves us from... our fears! *Today, and every day!* Just as God told the shepherds, God has come! God is with us! In humankind, through humankind, for humankind. God who knows our fear and anguish is also the one whose presence we know and can trust in.

How do we *respond* to fear? Do we allow it to grow larger, or do we expose it in the light of God’s power and light? Do we run from fear, naming it over and over again? Or do we acknowledge our fear, trusting God to help us find a way through it? Do we hold ourselves and others accountable, changing fear into faith? God gave us the answer to fear when he gave us His Son. Christ did not live in fear. We need not either. Emmanuel – God is with us. Hallelujah!



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Purpose

*Seeking the guidance of the
Holy Spirit,*

*Western Yearly Meeting equips Friends
Meetings in the Gospel of Jesus Christ by
exercising mutual care and extending
cooperative ministries.*

*Through various expressions of our
Christian faith, we strive to inspire minis-
try and the release of gifts of leadership.*

I saw a tree
And it touched me.
The boughs of green
With snow between.
The berry vine was intertwined
To feed the bird with reddened
breast
That had a nest
Within its rest.
The pointed spire
That touched the sky
That felt the wind and winter chill
It held steadfast and grew on still.

A squirrel ran up its

Many branches and
Made its home in the
Great expanses.

A young boy came to
Cut a limb, he was
Alone, no one with him.
To feel the sap to smell the fir
He was alone with purpose sure,
A wreath to make a
Circle round.
A gift for mom he knew he'd found.
The branch was curved the
Ribbon tied. The berry color
All on one side.

The tree a prize to boy and bird and
squirrel
A beauty always to unfurl.
The place where love and peace will start
A gift from heart to heart to heart.

*By Dan Burger,
West Newton*