

# Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

## February 2023



***Approach old age with courage and hope. As far as possible, make arrangements for your care in good time, so that an undue burden does not fall on others. Although old age may bring increasing disability and loneliness, it can also bring serenity, detachment and wisdom. Pray that in your final years, you may be enabled to find new ways of receiving and reflecting God's love.***

*Advices and Queries #29*

# Upcoming Events and Announcements

On Sunday, February 12, immediately after Meeting for Worship, we will be endeavouring to straighten out and tidy up around the Meeting House to make all of our rooms more welcoming. Everyone is welcome to join us!

There will be a Quaker education session on Sunday, February 19 at the Meeting House at noon. Please bring a lunch if you are so inclined.

The next meeting of the Reading group will be on Sunday, February 19 from 3 to 4 p.m. in our Zoom space. We will be discussing the introduction to the book on which we are about to embark: *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings*. Note that the edition we are using is the one edited by Douglas V. Steere (334 pages), and NOT the abbreviated version of the same name (which has a forward by Rick Moody, and is edited by Emile Griffin and Douglas V. Steere). Please contact Shirla (shirla766@gmail.com) to be added to the participant list.

On Sunday, February 26 and Sunday March 26, we are going to have a modified hybrid meeting, where the two streams – online and in-person – will run in parallel, rather than as one combined meeting. This means that neither stream will be able to hear ministry arising in the other stream. This is a temporary experiment to try to improve the experience of all meeting participants. Feedback will be solicited during the Meetings for Worship for Business that will occur on the following weeks as to whether or not this is a congenial modification and should be made a regular feature of the worship schedule.

The Peace and Social Action Committee will be meeting on Monday, February 27 at 7 p.m. on Zoom. To be added to the list and receive the Zoom link, please contact Dick Preston (prestonr@mcmaster.ca).

An invitation from Carol Leigh: I feel that Hamilton Monthly Meeting does fairly well with right ordering of our business and other things we do, but this might be something that HMM Friends would like to read and consider.

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/>

An invitation from Pete Cross: Those who read this newsletter may be interested in signing an online petition to protect the greenbelt and repeal



Ontario Bills 23 and 29. The petition can be found at:

[https://www.moniquetaylormpp.ca/protect\\_the\\_greenbelt\\_and\\_repeal\\_bills?recruiter\\_id=5991](https://www.moniquetaylormpp.ca/protect_the_greenbelt_and_repeal_bills?recruiter_id=5991)

An entreaty from Bev Shepard: If anyone knows the whereabouts of a missing piece of furniture please let me know. It's a small easy chair which was in the back room on the main floor pre-pandemic, light blue, upholstered in a shiny plush fabric. I believe it is a swivel chair. It was one of the pieces used to turn that room into a pleasant place to have coffee and chat in a quieter spot than the meeting room, perhaps for a small committee to meet. Many things got moved when the painting was done, but I can no longer find that comfy chair to help in restoring our meeting house to a more welcoming condition, as we discussed at Meeting for Worship for Business on Sunday. So if you can tell me where it is, or what has happened to it, I'd appreciate it! [<beverly\\_shepard@sympatico.ca>](mailto:beverly_shepard@sympatico.ca)

The next Meeting for Worship for Business will be held on our regular Zoom link on Sunday, March 5 at 1:30 p.m.



# Notes from the Library Committee

Greetings, Friends! Your recently reconstituted Library Committee is glad to be working for you!

News Flash! **The check-out period for library materials is increased to four weeks from the previous policy of three weeks**, with the option to renew. However, *please come in and re-date the card* if you wish to renew. Also, when checking out books or pamphlets or periodicals (it's easy! just put your name and date and contact info on the card from the back pocket and place the card into the file box provided) please *also include your email address* along with your telephone number. Also, please remember to return them to the wooden box.

Some of you have received phone calls and/or emails as we try to track down books that are still listed as having been checked out in your name. Please search your shelves if you have not found them yet, or let us know if they are missing so that we can discern replacing books. Some books appear to have left the library without having gone through the actual checking-out process, so if you think a book could have entered your home this way, we'd still like to have it returned. (Even the most careful among us sometimes may be subject to absent-mindedness.)

We hope to continue to increase our library's usefulness as time progresses, so if you have a particular favourite book you'd like to recommend, please write an email or note with the title, author, and a little bit about the book and/or why you think the HMM library should have it. We'd love to hear from you!

~ the Library Committee (Jane MacKay Wright, Shirla Schellenberg, Glenna Janzen, and Carol Leigh Wehking)

# Trust

by Sheldon Clark

Charles stood up from his walker near the end of the table where he was in the habit of sitting for his meals. His stoutness permitted him to bend just enough from the waist to retrieve his bib from the walker's basket and hand it into thin air in anticipation that one of his friends or care-givers would field the garment. A sympathetic friend carefully took it from his hand. Charles turned a bit, pushed the chair's arm back and away so that he could step into the space between his chair and his place at the table. Without looking, he reached for the chair's arms and sat down heavily with a comfortable sigh and waited while he caught his breath. His friend waited, too.

The bib was ceremoniously placed as a cloak over his ample paunch and secured by the sound of a snap. Charles shifted his weight more upright and to the back of the chair. Secure and trusting, Charles readied himself for the short push-slide of the chair to the table. His arms had risen with the forward movement of the chair. He placed his arms on the chair's arms and reached for the silverware ready to enjoy steak pie in pastry enhanced with gravy, mashed potatoes, peas, and butternut squash. Charles said, "*Thank you.*" The routine completed, he could relax, tell stories, laugh at some simple joke, and slowly lift the nourishing supper from the plate to his mouth only spilling a little each time as he repeated the ancient ritual of addressing the cuisine before ingesting the meal. For the next three quarters of an hour Charles enjoyed conversation, laughter, food, and the pleasure of a peaceful meal in a healthy environment.

Charles did not think about trust *per se*. He knew from experience that a friend, a server, a nurse, a relative would not tease him in any way to make him anxious. He felt secure. He knew that the people around him would protect him from harm, would care for his needs, and could be trusted to be entirely faithful each and every time to the established form. His meals were free from anxiety. His slow deliberate pace was honoured by those around him by being patient, understanding, and supportive. The food was nutritious. The company was compatible. The expectation was of a carefully orchestrated preparation to dine,



to sit, to eat, to finish, and to go about his life as usual in a harmony of people, place, and activity.

Trust is the result of consistent words and deeds on everyone's part. We want to affirm life and the lives of those around us with whom we live and work and worship. We want to affirm that others are valued and appreciated as we would want to be. As community members we want to create a hospitable environment by recognizing the need to encourage positive attitudes and consistent predictable behaviours free from disrespect, avoidance, or neglect. In short, we want to create a community of trust by our good example.

Trust means that in our relationships, whether at home, places of work, places of recreation, or places of worship, each of us is willing to exhibit positive attitudes, initiate care, and express gratitude to each other. "Think before you speak or act" is proverbial. It is important to ask ourselves, "Is what I am about to say or do, true, helpful, inspiring, necessary, and kind?" Trust is earned. *"Thank you,"* says Charles.



# **Book Review: *Acts of Love and War***

## **by Maggie Brookes**

*by Beverly Shepard*

If you're a Quaker who still somehow finds time to read a novel, I recommend this one. Maggie Brookes is an ex-journalist turned novelist and poet, with a particular concern to tell the stories of strong women and of the power of friendship and love. This is her second novel, and those themes are important in it, as is her ability to ferret out the facts.

In *Acts of Love and War*, we meet Lucy Nicholson, a young woman who comes of age in England at the time of the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39. She has a complex relationship with two brothers who live next door: the three were raised almost as siblings, but the love she feels for them, and they for her, is not a sibling love. When the war begins, the two very different brothers respond in very different ways, and both go off to Spain to act on their beliefs. Lucy, distressed by both the danger they put themselves in and the conflict of their views, wants to follow them and try to persuade both to return home. She finds the opportunity to go to Spain in a helpful capacity when she learns of the Friends Service Council, which has begun and is maintaining services for internal refugees in Spain.

I recognized a couple of the names that came up and realized that Maggie Brookes was telling a true story. The reader is carried along with Lucy and a number of Friends, and friends of Friends, as they save lives, providing shelter and food and caring for many hundreds of people forced to flee from Franco's forces. Maggie Brookes researched the times, the war, and Quakers thoroughly, and she has shared her knowledge in a moving and engaging tale. There's nothing breathtaking about her writing style, but it certainly keeps one reading. If you read *Acts of Love and War* you'll find out not just what happens to Lucy and Jamie and Tom, but the amazing things Quakers did to save lives during a terrible, deadly time.

The book is available through the Hamilton Public Library.

# About this Newsletter / Submission Guidelines

This Newsletter is a monthly publication of news and announcements relevant to Hamilton Quakers.

It is also a venue for members and attenders to share creative works or articles they have written on subjects that may be of interest to our Quaker community. As a general guideline we are looking for submissions that are inspirational and related to Quaker concerns, as well as announcements and news. Members and Attenders are encouraged to submit works for the newsletter.

Requests for newsletter items are announced after Meeting for Worship and/or via email during the week before Meeting for Worship for Business. They are due by the Friday before Business Meeting. Submission of materials implies permission to publish. Copyright for original material resides with the author.

If the person submitting the article is unknown to the editor or if there are questions as to whether the article will be appropriate for the Quaker newsletter, the editor will consult with the clerk(s) who will together discern what will be included. Written permission to publish must be obtained from the copyright holder if a submission is not the original work of the submitter, unless the works are in the public domain, or are covered under the creative commons license.

Hamilton Meeting reserves the right to edit submissions for length or content in consultation with the authors. When opinion pieces are included a line will be added indicating "Submissions reflect the opinions of their authors, and not necessarily of Hamilton Monthly Meeting".

Submissions should be directed to the current editor, Siân Reid, [daywitch@gmail.com](mailto:daywitch@gmail.com).

*We acknowledge the land upon which Hamilton Friends Meeting House is located as the shared traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg, protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt covenant. This historic peace agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy, the Ojibwe, and allied nations represents a commitment to share and protect the land, water, plants, and animals, with respect. It is the privilege of Hamilton Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) to share in the tradition of stewardship of this land, which has been the environment of human beings in this territory for thousands of years. We honour the original Peoples of this land and express a commitment to and gratitude for the opportunity to work together toward restorative justice and reconciliation.*