

Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

November 2022



Do you recognize the needs and gifts of each member of your family and household, not forgetting your own? Try to make your home a place of loving friendship and enjoyment, where all who live or visit may find the peace and refreshment of God's presence.

Advices and Queries #26

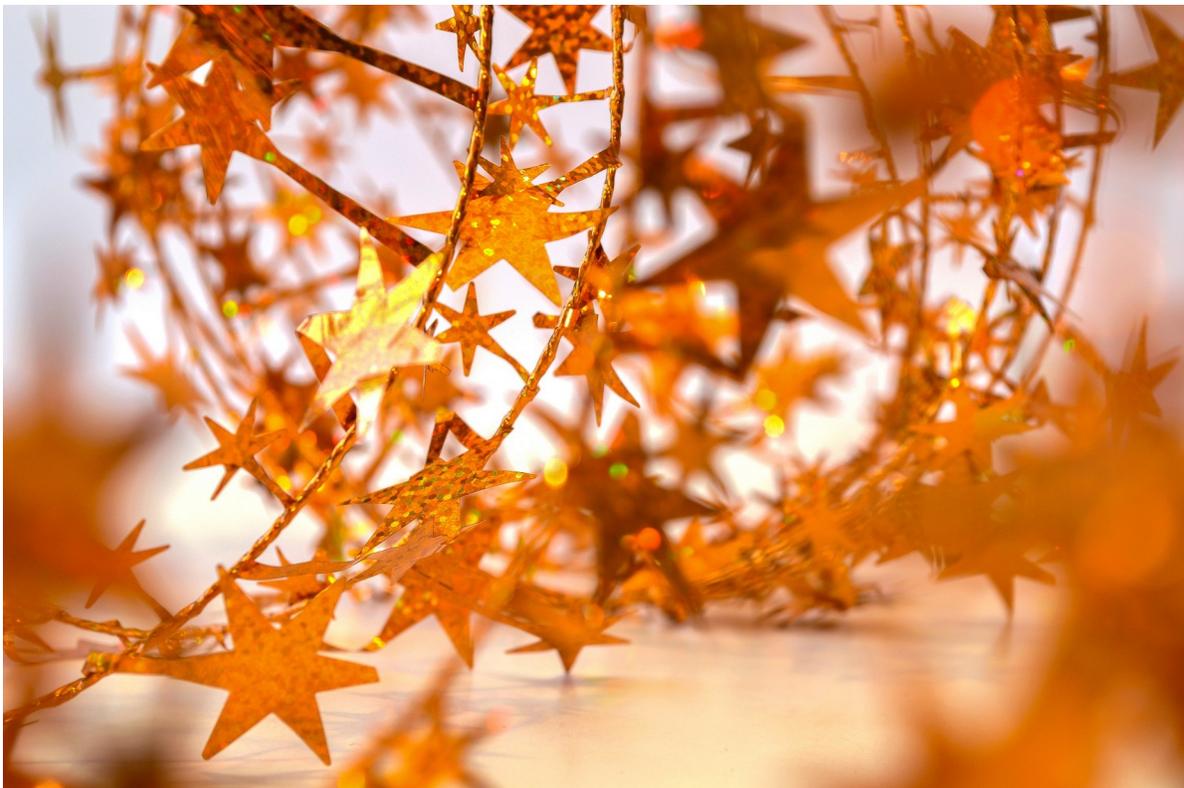
Upcoming Events and Announcements

The next meeting of the Reading group will be on Sunday, November 20 from 3 to 4 p.m. in our Zoom space. We will be discussing the final three chapters of Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* (pp. 348-386). Please contact Shirla (shirla766@gmail.com) to be added to the participant list.

The Peace and Social Action Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, November 26 at 7 p.m. on Zoom. To be added to the list and receive the Zoom link, please contact Dick Preston (prestonr@mcmaster.ca).

The next Meeting for Worship for Business will be held on our regular Zoom link on Sunday, December 4 at 1:00 p.m.

Canadian Friends' Service Committee is seeking youth or young adults who grew up with an incarcerated parent or caregiver. They are working to raise awareness, educate and move towards positive changes in the criminal justice system, and would value perspectives and direct experiences that could inform their work. Honoraria would be provided. For more information, please visit <https://quakerservice.ca/news/join-our-youth-advisory-group/>

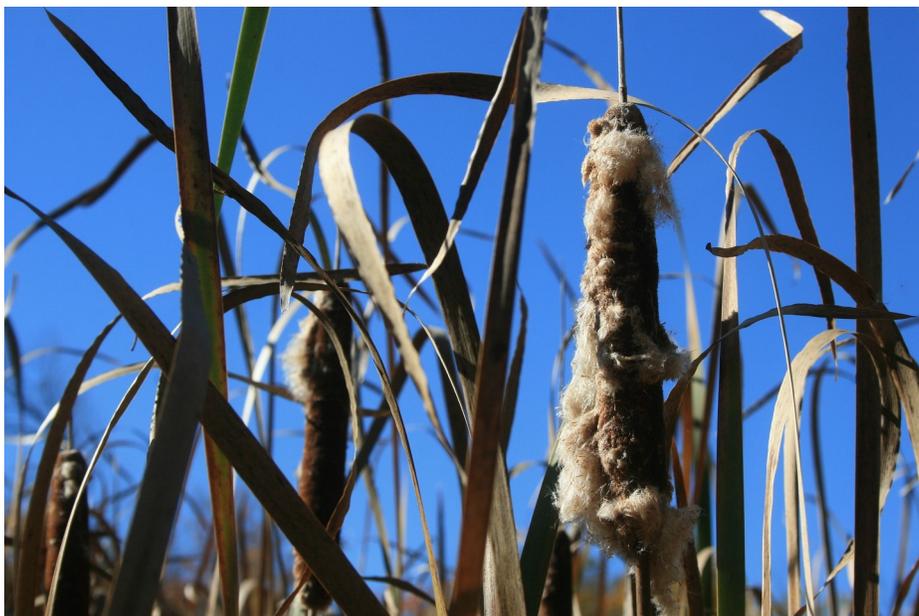


Swamp Forest, November

by Beverly Shepard

The ground is a carpet
of discarded leaves,
umber and fading,
dirt road that winds through it and away
scarcely catching the eye:
brown upon brown.
Here and there a patch of cattails,
seed heads exploded,
stands like a handful
of large and ancient cotton swabs.
Trees rise darker, more distinct,
etched against the sepia by a practiced hand.
They await, whether or not they know --
and I think they do --
the snow,
clean coverlet beneath them,
pure and fragile frosting on branch and twig.

It will be a different beauty



Book Review: Paul Dekar's *Journeying with Hope into a New Year*

by Sheldon Clark

In *Journeying with Hope into a New Year*, Paul Dekar writes, “Our wishes and intentions are personal and often involve praying for the greater common good” (63). In his choice of scripture, meditations, and prayers, Dekar illustrates the sentiment what is personal is most universal. Readers are in for a treat as they share the traditional journey of hope as hailed by the prophet Isaiah, and fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Chapter 17 Lamb of God, concludes, “God, awaken in me faith in You, love for You and certainty of Your presence today and always. Amen (35).

Evident on our globe are the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, Conquest, War, Famine, and Death. Given the desire for conquest in the Ukraine, war in the Middle East, unpredictability in the Americas and on the Korean peninsula, Covid-19 and its variants, starvation and death in Southeast Asia and Africa, hope and joy for 2022/2023 may seem like bizarre concepts. Alternatively, Dekar's down-to-earth focus on the Christ story is instructive and timely. Chapter 25 Blessed Are those Who are Persecuted, ends in this prayer of thanksgiving, “God, we give thanks for Jesus, and for faithful witnesses to His life and teachings. We remember what upholding righteousness cost Him and His early followers. Amen” (51).

Journeying with Hope into a New Year, is not naïve in emphasizing the love of God. The love of God, however conceived, is potentially rooted in all human hearts. Our times, like the *Pax Romana* in the first century A.D., of the middle-east, Europe, and North Africa, are dangerous. Even more unthinkable is the prevalent caution of being on a collision course with nuclear Armageddon. Paul Dekar's pastoral conversational style, focused meditations, and thoughtful prayers are crucial counter-point to the unthinkable. Chapter 29, Bearers of the Divine Image, includes the touching custom of setting the Christmas table with a white tablecloth symbolizing purity, and ends with this Orthodox Christian

prayer, “Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, present everywhere and filling all things, treasury of blessings and giver of life, come and abide in us. Cleanse us from every stain and save our souls, gracious Lord. Amen” (60).

Paul Dekar has fashioned a wonderful Advent book. Take the leap into this Advent journey of faith. Let your light shine for Hope, Faith, Joy, Peace, and Life.



Promise to a Wounded Child

by Beverly Shepard

My friend gave me a stone.
It shimmered softly purple, glowed
As if with life of its own.
Yet when I took it to hold
Between my palms,
I found it cold,
Hard, rough.
Within my clasped hands
I held it
Stilly, waiting,
Until it grew warm,
its edges seeming
To fit along my skin,
No longer an intrusion.
If I now passed it to another,
She would find it still a stone,
Still itself --
Purple and gleaming --
But warmed and gentled
In my silent keeping.



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, Síân Reid, 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.