

Hamilton Friends December 2018 Newsletter



Advices and Queries

28. Every stage of our lives offers fresh opportunities. Responding to divine guidance, try to discern the right time to undertake or relinquish responsibilities without undue pride or guilt. Attend to what love requires of you, which may not be great busyness.

Coffee List

Dec 9: Carol Leigh and Glenna

Dec 16: Christina



Calendar

December 16th: Members of our First Day School will offer their annual Christmas presentation at the end of Meeting for Worship! No doubt there will be singing afterwards. This is always a wonderful event, and we hope everyone can be there. Our custom is for all of us to bring a little something to share -- cookies or cheese or fruit or vegetables -- so that we have a very special chat and snack time (and we don't need lunch afterwards!).

December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1 January 2019	2	3	December 2018 www.hospitalsupplies.com	

January 6th: next business meeting

January 20th: Next Potluck is at 12:30. Dick Preston will give a presentation on Truth and Reconciliation and Friends.

January 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1 February	2
3	4	5	6	7	January 2019 www.hospitalsupplies.com	

MAY YOU GROW STILL ENOUGH TO HEAR
THE SMALL NOISES EARTH MAKES IN
PREPARING FOR THE LONG SLEEP OF
WINTER, SO THAT YOU YOURSELF MAY
GROW CALM AND GROUNDED DEEP WITHIN.

MAY YOU GROW STILL ENOUGH TO HEAR
THE TRICKLING OF WATER SEEPING INTO
THE GROUND, SO THAT YOUR SOUL MAY
BE SOFTENED AND HEALED, AND GUIDED
IN ITS FLOW.

MAY YOU GROW STILL ENOUGH TO HEAR
THE SPLINTERING OF STARLIGHT IN THE
WINTER SKY AND THE ROAR AT EARTH'S
FIERY CORE.

MAY YOU GROW STILL ENOUGH TO HEAR
THE STIR OF A SINGLE SNOWFLAKE IN THE
AIR, SO THAT YOUR INNER SILENCE MAY
TURN INTO HUSHED EXPECTATION.

~ BROTHER DAVID STEINDL-RAST

Sign up to help the Syrian newcomers!

We have set up a system for sharing the work of helping the Syrian family we are sponsoring to settle in to Hamilton. The system could be very helpful to us, but it requires everyone who is interested to let me know. We are circulating this message not only to the members of the refugee committee, but to everyone on the Hamilton Meeting email list, as there may be some of you who could do a little, occasionally, who have not been actively involved to date.

The way it works is this: you tell me you are willing to be notified of needs of our Syrian family. **YOU ARE NOT MAKING ANY COMMITMENT!!** Even helping once by driving someone somewhere over the next couple of months would be appreciated.

When you give me your name, I will pass it on to Glenna. She will go to the 'lotsahelpinghands' website and it will send you an invitation. It is important that you respond to the invitation so you can sign up on the website. **STILL NO COMMITMENT!!**

Then when a need for a ride or some other task is identified, Glenna will post it on the site, where there is a calendar; and everyone who is signed up will be notified of the need. You can decide if it is convenient for you to respond. When someone takes on the task, that is posted on the site and the need is cancelled.

It is that simple; let me know that you are ready to sign on, and then when the website sends you an invitation, reply to it.

My email address is <donwoodside@gmail.com>

with thanks in advance from the refugee committee
don woodside

Important Notice

Friends, as you know, Subhi and Mamdoha are now safely in Canada and residing in our Meeting House, for which we're very grateful. They and our refugee committee are working hard to get Nisreen and Laila here, too. **UPDATES WILL BE PROVIDED MONTHLY IN THE NEWSLETTER**, and whenever applicable after Meeting for Worship on Sundays. **PLEASE** don't call members of the refugee committee to ask about how things are going; they're all working hard and are getting somewhat stressed. If you want to help, write to Don Woodside and ask to be put on the Lotsa Helping Hands list and you'll be notified of tasks and services Friends can render.

Report from HMM's Refugee/Newcomer Committee

In 2015/2016 Hamilton Monthly Meeting decided to sponsor two Syrian refugee family groups:

- Mamdoha and her husband Subhi
- their daughter Nisreen and granddaughter Laila

It has been a long process to get them here, and we are not done yet. They were all to come to Canada together on October 25th, but at the last minute Nisreen and Laila were turned back at the departure gate.

Subhi and Mamdoha met in the departure lounge in Istanbul - he had flown in from Beirut, and met her there. This was the first time they had been together in over 3 years. Anyhow after the heartache for Mamdoha of leaving Nisreen and Laila their flight went well to Toronto where they were met by members of Hamilton Monthly Meeting.

Shirley and Betty and Wilf were there from our Meeting, together with Noura (their oldest daughter) who lives in Hamilton with her family.

It was a very moving evening - big smiles and happy laughter at the amazing concept of their being here safe with family in Canada, alternating with tears for those left behind. Noura hadn't seen her parents since coming to Canada in 2011, so she was just so very happy to have them here after all these years of waiting and missing them.

So now Subhi and Mamdoha are settled in to the upstairs apartment at the Meeting House. It seems to be a comfortable temporary home for them. They have been reunited with Noura and her family, and have spent a good deal of time with them.

They have all the necessary documents now, and have had various medical appointments. Subhi has become quite comfortable finding his way around on the bus. Mamdoha's mobility issues seem to be improving and she is hoping to use the bus/soon. They are well connected via the internet at the Meeting House and their cell phones. Many things have been much easier than anticipated because of Subhi's fluency in English, and the fact that Mamdoha also has some English as well.

Unfortunately Nisreen and Laila have faced unexpected bureaucratic hurdles and are still stuck in Istanbul, Turkey. As one might expect Subhi and Mamdoha have been very preoccupied by Nisreen's difficulties in leaving Turkey, but they have been instrumental in obtaining the custody documents she needs to bring Laila. At this point Subhi and Mamdoha are feeling somewhat isolated and a bit more visiting would be helpful. They have requested that this be pre-arranged rather than drop-in, especially if you haven't met them yet.

Things will change a lot when Nisreen and Laila arrive; there will be another flurry of visits to government offices and so forth, and the needs of the younger family will be rather different in terms of language, child care etc.

Through this long process, the HMM refugee/newcomer committee has worked hard and tirelessly. There is certainly still lots of work left to do. If you would like to be involved in helping then please contact Don Woodside, Glenna Janzen, or Wilf Ruland for more details.

-Submitted by Wilf Ruland and Don Woodside



Subhi and Mamdoha's Arrival
-Submitted by Betty Preston



"fridge climbs the stairs"
-Submitted by Don Woodside

Parliament of the World's Religions Report, Hamilton Monthly Meeting, Paul R. Dekar

In 1893 in Chicago, Illinois, some 4000 individuals attended the first Parliament of World Religions, held in conjunction with the World's Columbian Exhibition. In 1993, some 8000 attendees attended, again in Chicago, a centennial gathering generating *Towards a Global Ethic*, a powerful statement of the ethical common ground shared by the world's religions and spiritual traditions. Subsequently, there have been Parliaments of the World Religions in Cape Town, South Africa (1999); Barcelona, Spain (2004); Melbourne, Australia (2009); Salt Lake City, USA (2015) and Toronto (November 1-7, 2018). The movement's goal has been and remains the cultivation of harmony among global religious and spiritual communities to build a more just, peaceful and sustainable world. This year's theme was "The Promise of Inclusion, the Power of Love: Pursuing Global Understanding, Reconciliation and Change."

An estimated six to eight thousand from virtually every region and religion, and including pagan groups participated. There may have been exceptions [Adventists, Aga Khan Muslims, Druze, Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses] but the range of exhibits, films, issues, music, speakers, story-telling and workshops was so diverse I could have missed them. Plenaries each morning and evening featured noted speakers and musicians. Each afternoon, concurrent workshops and interest groups highlighted ways to express spirituality without formal institutional grounding.

An article in the *Globe/Mail* (Monday, 5 Nov 18, A8) characterized this as "a microcosm of how the world could be." I recalled ideas developed when I studied Australia's counterpart of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Tasmania's eco-justice movement associated with saving wilderness areas and the Earth Bible project led by Adelaide-based Biblical scholar, Norman C. Habel. Reworked for this report, context, Key principles include:

- 1) No scientist can synthesize, no economist can price and no technology should be allowed to undermine the integrity of religious values for humankind.
- 2) A second principle is that of interconnection. All things are connected.
- 3) A third principle is the indivisibility of ecological justice, social justice and peace. What we do to the Earth, what we do to others, we do to ourselves.
- 4) A fourth principle is custodianship of Earth. We should protect in perpetuity religious values for the sake not only of ourselves, but also of plants, animals and for Earth. If we care for future generations and Earth, we must care for one another.
- 5) A fifth principle is resistance, especially of contemporary xenophobia.

I participated in 6 of 7 days. Each focused on a theme: indigenous people; women; youth; climate action; interfaith relationships; ways forward. Feeling I have lived into interfaith resolve, I sensed *déjà vu* or *déjà vécu*. Yet recollection and recommitment empowered me and, I trust, all participants to reflect on ways by which to actualize the conference theme. Given the urgency of this moment, now is the time to marshall action for the common good, to look ahead seven generations, to overcome cultural, familial, political and religious forces tending to division, hatred and violence and to move forward in global understanding, reconciliation and resolve. One speaker, Karen Armstrong, introduced one such action, signing a charter of compassion: <https://charterforcompassion.org/>. If interested more, <https://parliamentofreligions.org/>.

Who or What is a Quaker?

On the Transition Quaker website there is an article by Craig Barnett looking at the difficulties modern British Quakers (and equally true for Canadian Quakers) are having because they no longer share the same religious/spiritual stories. Early Quakers were entirely focussed on Christian, biblical stories which grounded their Quaker life and practice, even if they interpreted them differently from most Christians of that era. Within this Christian context they had a common language for describing worship, business meeting, testimonies and more. They had a common language used during vocal ministry, and a set of stories for teaching children in First Day School. Even if it was difficult to explain, one could encourage newcomers that they would learn the Quaker way if they took part.

He says that since the 1960s, that has changed. We now come to Meeting with diverse backgrounds and stories for understanding our spiritual journeys; Christian, Buddhist, Jungian, ecological, humanist, atheist. Many of us are reluctant to give voice to our beliefs, and when we do, don't know how they are being understood by others. His thesis is that it is essential to share our stories, in order to develop a new Quaker language and theology we can all participate in.

This article touched a chord in me; for many years I have felt that the lack of a shared central belief system is a huge issue for Canadian Quakers. The new CYM Secretary who spoke at Pelham Half Yearly Meeting which Harriet and I attended expressed his concern that many Canadian Quakers rely on the 'testimonies' as their statement of faith. It may be more that we haven't found a new language for a shared sense of the divine. To get to one we will need to be more open with each other. To read the article, go to

<https://transitionquaker.blogspot.com/2018/10/quaker-stories.html?fbclid=IwAR3LKhRmBBkTyQo4316rzJIP1rEZXSAsuZHPFVGsO5P5NKbcwS9zbrNQXBE>

-Submitted by Don Woodside

Christmas 2018

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

And God saw the Light, that it was good.

First Day is every day. This is the Lord's Day. It is our day.

Penitents kneel before the mystery of God's Truth.

"Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new."

Open heart surgery is a matter of choice. Death is a real possibility.

One's earthly will for God's sake is preparation for right ordering.

Material matters are immaterial to life restoration itself.

Surgical skill, procedure, deftness, freezes timeless in the intensity of moment.

A life is at stake. Concentration accelerating efficiency is paramount.

Attention, eyes, ears, hands, bodies, and hearts focus.

Incision is precise, swift, and sufficient.

Light and apparatus are needed and activated.

Surgery unfolds the drama this time as though for the first time.

Step by step, moment by moment happens in lock step wonder.

Precision anchored by care preserves still another's life.

The Breath of Life restores a living soul.

Wonder, faith, hope, and love

Transform prayers into stirrings.

Anesthetic numbness gives way to memory, acknowledgement, and gratitude.

The light of Christmas burns ever brighter.

The light of Christmas is the time of thanksgiving.

The light of Christmas speaks to headwaters, waterfalls, and living streams.

I am who I am.

Re-newed life is conscious of God's gift of Being, gazing into Eternity.

"Old things are passed away. Behold all things are become new."

Sheldon H. Clark ©

23 November 2018

