

Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

October 2022



A long-term relationship brings tensions as well as fulfillment. If your relationship with your partner is under strain, seek help in understanding the other's point of view and in exploring your own feelings, which may be powerful and destructive. Consider the wishes and feelings of any children involved, and remember their enduring need for love and security. Seek God's guidance. If you undergo the distress of separation or divorce, try to maintain some compassionate communication so that arrangements can be made with the minimum of bitterness.

Advices and Queries #25

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Remember potluck gatherings in the Before Times? Great steaming pots of soup, home-baked goodies made with love, assortments of fruit, veggies, creative salads? Great conversations around the festive tables the day after Thanksgiving. Afterwards, standing shoulder-to-shoulder in the kitchen sharing the washing-up tasks, hmmm.....

Many of us long for the return of those lively gatherings of Friends at the Meeting House. Some fear they may never return. In the meantime, we will try to keep the Tradition alive by inviting Friends to gather in the backyard of the Meeting House for an outdoor luncheon on Thanksgiving Monday, October 10 at 1:00 p.m.

Bring Your Own Turkey or Tofu or whatever suits you. Due to ongoing Covid-19 concerns, food will not be shared. Chairs and some tables will be provided, along with paper plates if needed. Hot beverages (tea, coffee, apple cider) will be provided; please bring your own mug if possible. Kids and pets are welcome!

PS: In case of inclement weather, this event will be postponed. Not cancelled, just....we'll find another excuse to gather!

Peace Brigades International will be holding a webinar on Tuesday, October 11 at 2 p.m. ET to hear members of the community of San Luis Palenque, Colombia, talk about their experiences with Toronto-based Frontera Energy. After protesting against the company over social, environmental and infrastructure concerns, eight community members were arrested in a pre-dawn military raid that involved a Black Hawk helicopter landing on their farmyards. Notably, that happened after the company signed \$1-million-plus protection agreements with the military. That led UN Special Rapporteur Michel Forst to express his concern about “the apparent connection between Frontera Energy, the army’s 16th brigade and the Attorney General’s Support Office in this criminalization.” While this happened in November 2018, the social leaders face ongoing criminalization and will be in court this coming October 3-6 on charges related to that time. The webinar takes place just days after this and will give you an

opportunity to hear first-hand what happened to them in 2018 and what just happened in court the week before. The webinar will feature two of the social leaders: Ferney Salcedo and Yulivel Leal. It will also include the community's lawyer Reymundo Vásquez, who is with the PBI-Colombia-accompanied Committee in Solidarity with Political Prisoners (CSPP), and Ninfa Cruz, a human rights defender with the PBI-Colombia-accompanied Social Corporation for Community Advice and Training (COSPACC). Translation from the Spanish will be provided. Register at:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/registerWN_Z7VVA1CMTxCBoogDyqhk5Q

The next meeting of the Reading group will be on Sunday, October 23 from 3 to 4 p.m. in our Zoom space. We will be discussing the first three chapters of the last section of Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* (pp. 301-347). Please contact Shirla (shirla766@gmail.com) to be added to the participant list.

The Peace and Social Action Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, October 26 at 7 p.m. Please contact Paul Dekar (pdekar@cogeco.ca) if you would like to be added to this email list.

The next Meeting for Worship for Business will be held on our regular Zoom link on Sunday, November 6 at 1:00 p.m.

For those of you who picked up Vote for the Environment signs to display before the recent provincial election, you are encouraged to display them during the fall municipal election as well!

Paul Dekar is delighted to inform Friends that copies of his two most recent books, *Journeying with Hope into a New Year: Reflections for Advent and Christmas* and *Thomas Merton: God's Messenger on the Road towards a New World* are now available in the Meeting House Library. Copies can also be ordered from the publisher, Wipf and Stock.

A posthumous collection of poetry by Canadian Quaker poet Caroline Parry, entitled *Turbulent Times*, has been curated and made available in book form by a small group of her friends, including our own Beverly Shepard. This book is

generously supported by Ottawa Quakers, and proceeds will go to a project selected by them to honour Caroline's divine spirit. Donations are welcome. To purchase this volume, fill out the form at <https://bit.ly/3BABf5n> and then either e-transfer \$20 CAD to turbulent.times.poetry@gmail.com or send a cheque. Cheques should be made out to Turbulent Times / Judith M. Brown and mailed to Ottawa Quakers, 91A Fourth Avenue, Ottawa, ON, CANADA, K1S 2L1 attn: Turbulent Times book sales.

From Betty Preston: We recently donated our couches to the Afghan community through Akbar, an Afghan man who, with his wife, has been in Canada for a long time and who has taken on searching for goods for the 50 Afghan families in Hamilton. Their community is in great need of basic household items, toys and clothing for children. I have met three extended families, and they all seem really friendly, well-educated, and determined to learn English. They are presently in an ESL program at Mohawk, and have been here for about five months. Akbar told me that the Afghan newcomer families came with virtually nothing, and they have very little. With the advent of the war in the Ukraine, the spotlight has shifted away from the Afghans, but there continue to be new families arriving. There is a particular need for pressure cookers, sewing machines in good working order, dishes, cutlery and drinking glasses, and furniture. Practically anything. If you know of anyone with a van or truck who could drive, they will provide the lifting and moving. They said they would love to practice English with anyone. If you know of anyone who is moving house or if you have anything to donate, please contact Betty Preston: 905-648-1598 or bettypreston@cogeco.ca.

From Judith Murray: For many years I have been producing videos for caregivers of Alzheimer patients, connected with Cognitive Dynamics foundation. Neurologist Daniel C. Potts is the creative force behind these documentaries, inspired by his father Lester's journey with Alzheimer's. This latest video offers observations, thoughts, and good tips on caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease. Canadian author, Cathie Borrie, cared for her mother Joan for seven years. Here is the story of Cathie and Joan Borrie. The video is 12 minutes long, it is offered to all who wish to screen it. Shot on a windy

spring day in Vancouver, Cathie Borrie and Daniel Potts exchange and offer helpful insights and ideas for caregivers of loved ones suffering memory loss. Feel free to share it with whomever you wish. <https://youtu.be/Ud6E3zdrS8>



Ukraine's Hope

(In Memoriam -- Lysya Ukrainka (1871-1913))

by Sheldon Clark

Television flickering static images
Pronounce sudden clarity
As a reporter's camera scans
Scarecrow buildings, wasteland, the dead.

Absent people, body-bagged corpses
 Readied for pick up by determined
Volunteer drivers in converted autos
 Ambulance their patient cargo away.

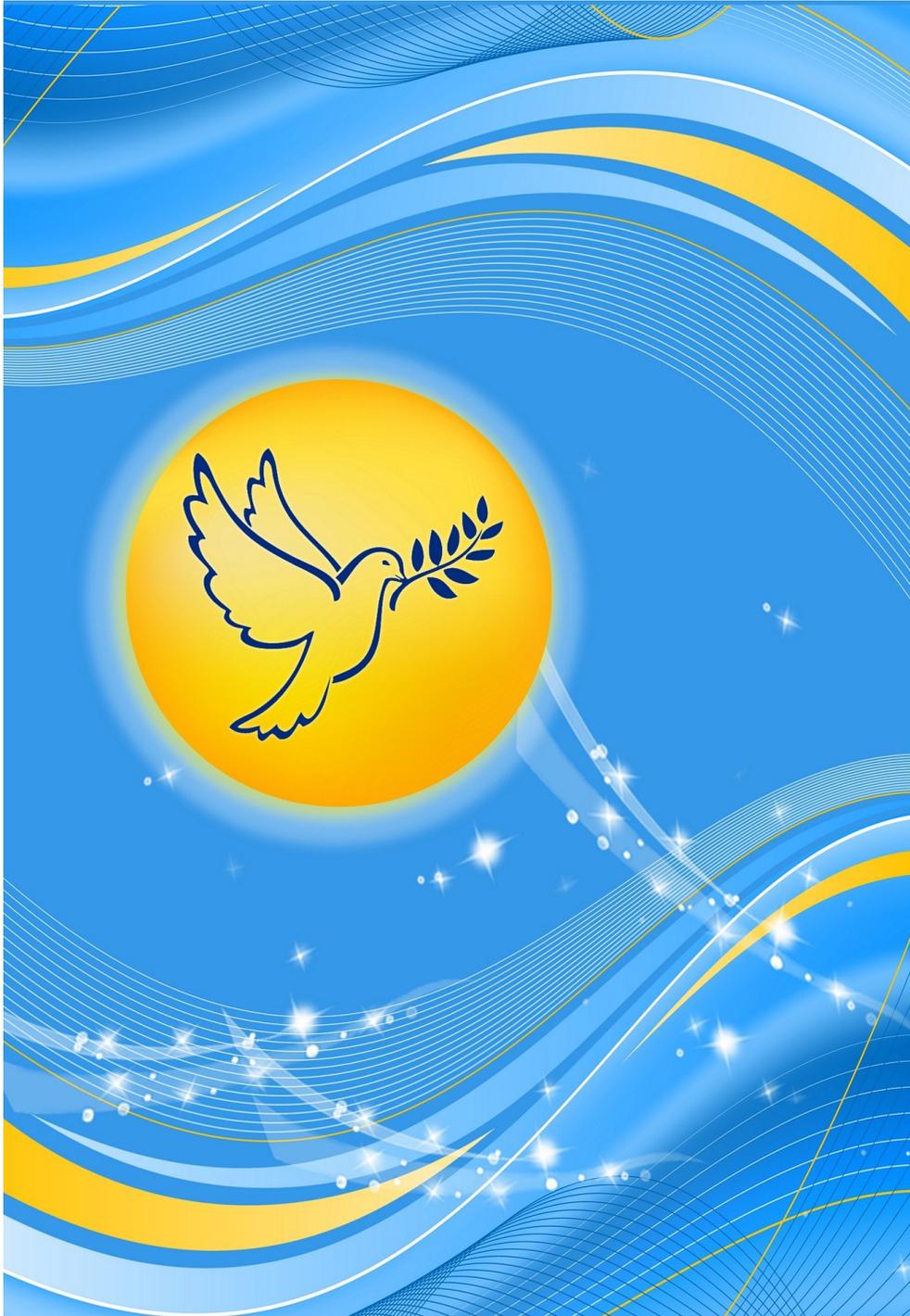
Since 1854, when Roger Fenton was assigned to Crimea,
The dismembered disfigured vacant stares of photographs
Piqued the consciences of unbelievers who looked skeptically
As flame and smoke-filled air unveiled blue skies beyond the grief.

Propellent death hovers waiting for wind and rain
 To wipe away the perfume sting of obscene filth
 From electronic eyes that record for posterity
 Atrocity, brutality, barbarity, cruelty, violence.

Blown apart apartment skeletons
Premature winter-like denuded trees
Intentional targets of inhumane slog
Metaphorically suck clean the marrow from unsuspecting organisms.

Belligerents alike disfigured by the Martial Beast
Want this rite of mutually assured annihilation to blow away
 Into the atmosphere of discordant nightmares
 And dissipate into nothingness.

Ukraine's peace portrait is that in which flora and fauna alike,
After this unsought strife, return as Springtime pastel entities, to engage,
To bend in labour with creative force, to sow the forgiving ground with
winter wheat (***Triticum aestivum***) for nourishment and to express love.



On the Peace Testimony and Russia's War in the Ukraine

by Dick Preston

The traditional Quaker peace testimony comes from the 17th century, when George Fox was building an enthusiastic following. There was negative reaction, based on the belief that Quakers were a seditious sect. Quakers were imprisoned, and/or had their property confiscated. Friends' testimony went beyond sedition, to any fighting with outward forms. We Quakers have not been unanimous in observing this testimony, but the statement itself has become an icon to which we turn in the face of conflicts and the slaughter, chaos and suffering that wars always bring. It was aimed at protecting Friends from attack, not at preventing state violence toward other states (war).

My good friend and neighbour, Josef Smal, asked for Quakers' views that he could bring to a discussion with his Slovak friends, about Putin's war. Josef was a priest in Slovakia and has been deeply supportive of the Ukrainian resistance to Putin's invasion. Now he believes that the war has brought such a terrible loss of life that he feels his support of the resistance is also approval of this carnage. He wonders what Quakers can say. I provided our iconic testimony and some URL addresses for more Quaker statements, including Catherine Whitmire's book, *Practicing Peace*.

But this is not the 17th century and Quakers are no longer regarded as seditious. If we are regarded at all, it's more as a small church of "do-gooders". During the 20th century wars (and there have been many) Quakers have been active mainly in small group protests to domestic authorities during the conflicts and small-scale projects ameliorating the suffering that followed them. Some folks in Hamilton Monthly Meeting have done this, locally.

Now we have Putin's war, with his threat -- beginning back in February -- that, if Russia goes down, the West will go down with it. Recently he has reiterated this. Putin's fascism is a one-way street, kept strong only by sustaining

its focus on enemies (within as well as) beyond the national borders. He now says the West is Satan. What does that make him, in his eyes? God?

Canadians, lacking nuclear missiles, will have fewer targets to be destroyed -- likely our hydro grid, oil and gas pipelines, and sources of uncontaminated water -- and so we will be more likely to just freeze in the dark. What must be done to avoid this?

States must give way to the global welfare, and Kenneth Boulding's (1966) point that world-wide Armageddon will likely be caused by one nation-state is persuasive. This can be made more precise by claiming that it is likely to be the initiative not of one nation, but of one strongman national leader. Put simply, one person, most likely an old white man, can destroy the world. Putin has this power. And yes, power corrupts.

And where is our icon, with the refusal to fight with outward weapons? How are we to respond to the Ukrainians, and the Russians? And to Putin?

How shall we acknowledge this? What can'st thou say? And if our lives are to speak, what will they say? To whom? Beyond our own leaders? The UN is the first, best choice. But violence is perpetrated, over and over, and over and over the UN is hobbled by the Security Council veto option. We need to have an effective global authority. WHAT AND WHERE?

1. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations promoting adherence to and implementation of the U.N. nuclear weapon ban treaty. Canada has not signed on yet. The nations with nuclear arsenals have not signed on.
2. PAX is the largest peace organization in the Netherlands. We work to protect civilians against acts of war, to end armed violence, and to build inclusive peace.
3. Martyrdom? Boulding again, The Nayler Sonnets. There is a spirit which I feel that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself.

Works Referenced

Boulding, Kenneth. 1966. *There is a Spirit: The Nayler Sonnets*. Pendle Hill Pamphlets #337.

Whitmire, Catherine. 2007. *Practicing Peace: A Devotional Walk through Quaker Tradition*. Notre Dame, Indiana: Sorin Books.



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.