



THE FRIENDLY LIGHT

January 2025

Birthdays

01/01

Barbara Nixon

01/08

Claudia Blair

01/10

Philip McDonald

Pat Sams

01/16

Wanda Simmons

01/17

Wade Clodfelter

01/23

Angeline White

01/26

Debbie Albert

Brad Bulla

01/27

Theron Farlow

Clarity Over Certainty

In the early days of the pandemic, I was listening to a podcast on personal growth and leadership. Those early pandemic days were days of uncertainty. Considering that, the speaker, Patrick Lencioni, offered this advice – *what you can't give, right now, to the folks you lead and to your organization is certainty. Nothing is for sure at this point. What you can offer the folks and organizations that you lead is clarity.* In other words, even the best of leaders can't promise certain things will happen in an uncertain world, but what we can do is be as clear as possible within ourselves as to who we want to be and the values we want to live by in a world that sometimes feels chaotic and uncertain.

I'm reminded of the wonderful short book by Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, when he writes about the different seasons of life. In describing the season of Winter, he writes, *"...for me, winter has an even greater gift to give. It comes when the sky is clear, the sun is brilliant, the trees are bare, and the first snow is yet to come. It is the gift of utter clarity. In winter, one can walk into woods that had been opaque with summer growth only a few months earlier and see the trees clearly, singly and together, and see the ground they are rooted in."* As I reflect on Parker Palmer's words, a few queries come to mind: **What do you need to get clarity around regarding your own life's journey? What feels unclear to you? How can you let go of "certainty" and live more into "clarity"? How has the need for "certainty" become a barrier to you getting "clarity" for your life?**



As I think about and reflect on the year ahead for us as a Quaker faith community, I wonder about the areas we might need to get clarity around as High Point Friends Meeting - **What are the areas we need to stretch ourselves and take risks? What does it look like for us to deepen our relationships and our practice of being in community together? What acts of service are we being called to offer our neighbors? What does it look like to pay attention to our own formation?**

Someone once penned these words: *“The goal of clarity is not to generate new information. The goal is transformation.”* As we seek clarity in our own life and for our meeting, it’s less about cranking out and researching more information. Rather, it’s more about the transformation of our own lives and High Point Friends towards living life faithfully and fruitfully. Getting clarity that leads us to transformation isn’t just guess work. It involves listening – listening to God’s Divine guidance, listening to one another, and listening to our own lives. It involves a willingness to experiment and take risks and realizing that failure can often be our best teacher. In those moments, we get clarity around what works and what doesn’t and what next steps we need to take. Through this process, transformation takes place at a soul level, and clarity begins to form in our hearts.

In her much beloved poem, *“The Summer Day”*, the late poet Mary Oliver admits that she really doesn’t know how to pray (admitting her uncertainty) but that she is clear about one thing – that everything dies and often way too soon. At the close of her poem, she offers this most penetrating line in the form of a question: *“Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”* That is a question that invites clarity – *what is it each one of us plans to do with our one wild and precious life? What is it we plan to do with the one wild and precious life we hold together as High Point Friends Meeting?* Reflecting on this question yields that kind of clarity that is transforming and keeps us from getting stuck in the idolatry of certainty.

With Hope and Clarity, *Scott*

Quaker Corner

As part of our partnership and membership with Friends United Meeting (FUM), we (High Point Friends Meeting) gave \$2500 at the end of the year towards the ministry they offer in various parts of the world. From that \$2500, we asked that \$1500 be given towards Quakers in Cuba and \$1000 be given to Belize Friends School and Ministries in Belize City.



Cuba Yearly Meeting - Cuba Yearly Meeting is a small but alive Quaker presence in the country of Cuba. At least once a year, FUM travels to Cuba to offer encouragement as well as necessary and much needed supplies. This often is in the form of over-the-counter medicines, hygiene supplies, paper, notebooks, writing utensils, coffee/tea, socks, and other essential items unavailable in Cuban stores. When the opportunity arises, FUM also tries to provide power generators for the often experienced power outages.

Belize Friends School - Belize Friends School provides a second-chance education for at-risk youth in Belize City. The school offers a supportive Christian environment, helping students succeed through encouragement, social tools, and educational instruction. Along with the school, Belize Friends Ministries and Belize Friends Church offers a vital Quaker presence of making God's love real in the heart of Belize City.

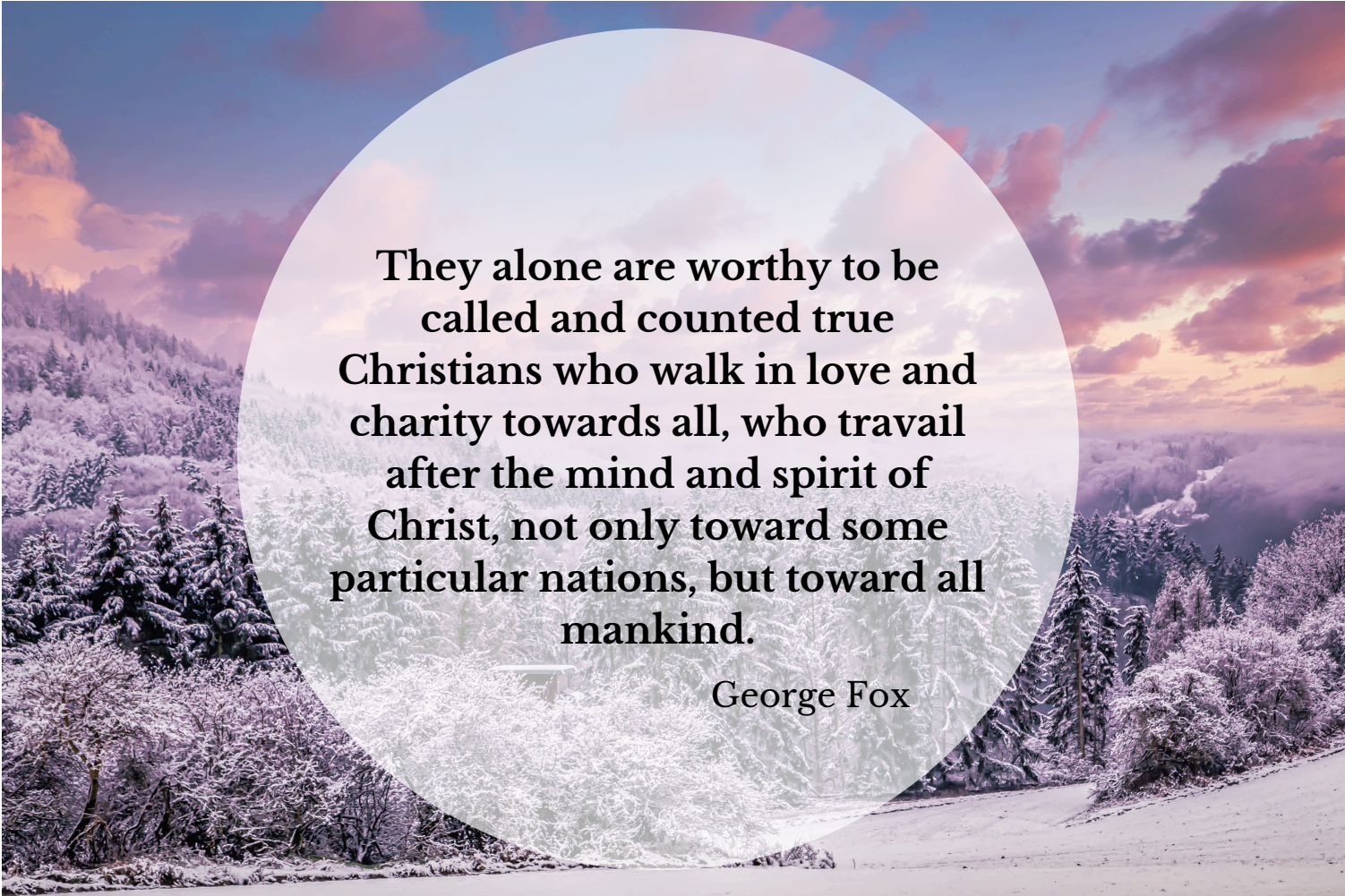


Your gifts and the generosity of High Point Friends and our partnership with Friends United Meeting helps to make this all happen!

Quaker Query/Advice of the Month

"Live adventurously. When choices arise, do you take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community? Let your life speak. When decisions have to be made, are you ready to join with others in seeking clearness, asking for God's guidance and offering counsel to one another?"

(Britain Yearly Meeting Faith & Practice)



They alone are worthy to be called and counted true Christians who walk in love and charity towards all, who travail after the mind and spirit of Christ, not only toward some particular nations, but toward all mankind.

George Fox



Interested in learning more about the exceptional learning opportunities at High Point Friends School? Please reach out to Rob Kelley, Head of School, to request a tour or simply to have a chat with him about this gem of school. Rob can be reached at rkelley@hpfs.org or 401-808-9354.

High Point Friends School offers a 25% scholarship to the parents and grandparents of members of High Point Friend Meeting and a 10% scholarship to families who are members of other Meetings.

High Point Friends School is committed to Peace and Equality, essential values for 2025 and beyond.



Center for Spiritual Deepening and Development High Point Friends Meeting

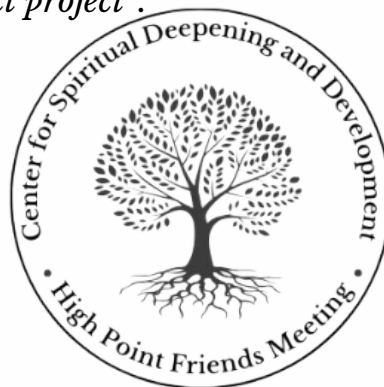
A couple of months ago, I referred to the *Center for Spiritual Deepening and Development* as a new ministry being offered by High Point Friends Meeting. Realizing this may take some explanation, here is what this is all about. Over the last few years, a practice that has become increasingly important for my own spiritual journey and emotional wholeness has been that of contemplative silence, mindfulness, and the deepening of my own spiritual journey. It's my understanding and belief that our own spiritual journey is one that can be developed and deepened and that this process nurtures a deeper wholeness within us that affects how we show up in life. In other words, I can show up *responsively* or I can show up *reactively*. When we show up reactively, we are often reacting out of our own anxiousness, inward dividedness, and unawareness of our emotional woundedness. When we show up responsively, we do so in a way that is less reactive, more present to others, deepened empathy and compassion, and with a deeper sense of awareness of who we are, what we believe, and how we choose to respond.

Many of the practices that nurture this deepened and developing spiritual life are *silence, solitude, prayer, spiritual reading, scripture reading, slowing down, and pausing throughout the day*. These "practices" are designed and intended to help build habits into our life that deepened our awareness and develop our emotional wholeness as well as our own spiritual formation. *To this end, the Center for Spiritual Deepening and Development will offer retreats, classes, workshops, and simple gatherings that invite participants to learn more about these types of practices as well as actually "practice the practices" towards deepening their own spiritual formation.* All of this will be done with a desire to also introduce folks to many of our own Quaker practices that serve to deepen and develop our spiritual lives.

This has been a dream of mine since coming to High Point Friends mainly because our facility offers the kind of space that can be welcoming for people in the community to experience this kind of ministry. Our Haworth Chapel and Meeting Library are wonderful spaces of quiet, stillness, and peace. Our physical grounds are also wonderful outdoor spaces where folks can come and "retreat" from life and engage in these practices.

My hope is to slowly begin developing regular classes, retreats, and experiences to offer both to our own High Point Friends folks as well as other Quakers in the area. I also want to make this accessible to folks in the community that are seeking a deeper and more meaningful spiritual life and human journey. *If you would like to be part of this dream and help with making it a reality, please feel free to reach out to me and let me know. I want to make this a "High Point Friends Meeting" ministry and not just a "Scott project".*

With Hope and Joy!
Scott





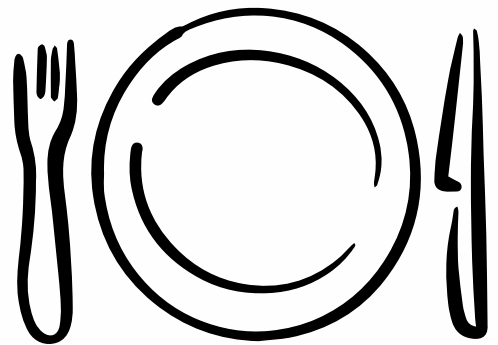
Announcements

Ministry & Oversight Meeting

The next meeting of Ministry & Oversight will be on Tuesday, January 14th, beginning at 5PM in the Meeting Library.

Quarterly Business Meeting

Our next quarterly Meeting for Business will be on Sunday, January 19th, following our 10AM Meeting for Worship. We've been combining this with a meal and inviting Friends to stay for a shared meal and then for the Meeting for Business. So please mark your calendars for Sunday, January 19th as we gather for a carry-in Fellowship Meal at 11:15AM and then our Meeting for Business to follow.



Candace Heer continues to reside at Piney Grove Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. If you would like to send her a card, their address is 728 Piney Grove Road, Kernersville, NC 27284. She would welcome and appreciate your cards!



Charles Reihs has been at home at dealing with some recent health issues and he also continues to be on the wait list for a kidney transplant. Cards can be sent to 4982 Brown Street, Trinity, NC 27370.

Colon Farlow has not been able to come to meeting for worship recently due to health issues. He is at home and has family assisting him. He welcomes cards and phone calls. His address is 3764 Edgar Road, P.O. Box 127, Sophia, NC 27350.

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday Bible Study at 10AM in Ragan Hall.

Weekly Bible Study will resume Tuesday morning, January 7th, at 10AM. We will continue our exploration around the theme of *Christ in Creation*. This study will focus on creation and how it reflects the goodness, love, and wisdom of God. This study is open to anyone and study guides are provided. We use the *Illuminate* study guide published by Barclay Press (Quaker publisher)

Join us at 10AM on Tuesdays
Everyone is Welcome
& Coffee is always on!

Intentional Prayer Wednesdays

We are Opening The Meeting Library from 10AM-5PM
for anyone that would like to avail themselves
of the space to simply be present and pray

Please keep these friends in prayer

Nancy Murr and Family- Continued prayers for Nancy and the Murr family as they grieve the passing of Nancy's husband, Gene.

Keith Lambeth - Recovering from fractured ribs

Phillip Peace - Who has been recovering from a significant respiratory condition since Christmas

Charlies Riehs- For a new kidney and a suitable donor will be found for him as well as other health issues Charles has struggled with in the past few weeks.

Candace Heer - As she continues to settle in at Piney Grove as well as recover from her stroke back in April and attend to personal matters in the future.

Theron and Eloise Farlow - For their continued health and wellbeing and for **Carmen Farlow** as he attends to them as their main caregiver.



HIGH
POINT

Friends

MEETING

800 Quaker Lane
High Point NC 27262
Phone: 336-884-1359
www.highpointfriends.org

Meeting Clerk-- Hanna Moore

Pastoral Ministers-- Scott Wagoner

Organist-- Carmen Farlow

Piano & Choir Director-- Wanda Simmons

Office Administrator-- Nichole Looney

Established in 1892
132 Years of Service in the High Point Community