



# MT Gathering of Friends

## Winter 2021 Virtual Gathering

**Register by clicking on this link:**

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**<https://bit.ly/MGOFWinter2020>**

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**Welcome friends, near and far, new and old, familiar with Quakers or brand new to us!**

Our midwinter virtual gathering will be held February 19-21, 2021. Our theme is Bridging our inner and outer worlds. We have the extraordinary blessing of having perhaps the most prominent bridge builder in the Quaker world, Diane Randall, the General Secretary of FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation) to be our Friend in Residence. She will share her own deep inward process, how she came to this work of using relationship to advocate for peace and justice and how she finds strength each day to face seemingly insurmountable obstacles with courage, creativity and determination (“fierce love” she calls it).

Diane will help us to search inwardly, to inspire us to use our unique gifts, to move from that inner place of stillness toward a wondrous blossoming of creative energy for our world. We’ll have worship sharing with queries to explore our own sources of spiritual strength, especially in the dark of winter while we still struggle with the pandemic. Each of us has gifts that uniquely express our individuality. The artist might capture the perfect vision of a just future. The contemplative might deepen her process of prayer which helps to keep the



Come, join us for a weekend of spiritual searching, friendship, fun and laughter.

sun returning each day (as do Hopi elders). The faithful servant will keep us organized, providing continuity to our community and may find his inner strength to carry on that important work. The child or teenager among us may feel deep inner leading to confront our adult complacency and make us all uncomfortable and then transformed. The activist may be inspired to take the action that hits the tipping point for change in systemic racism. How do we bridge our inner and outer worlds? How do we bridge the divides in our country, even within our own families? How do we, each in our own way, make the world better for our having been in it? How do we express in our outer worlds, our inner truth?

Come, join us for a weekend of spiritual searching, friendship, fun and laughter. We'll have community night, worship sharing and early morning worship. All of this comes straight to your living room! Hooray! We can't wait to see you all and join together in seeking to bridge our inner and outer worlds!

## Plenary Speaker and Friend in Residence

### Diane Randall

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#### General Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation

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Diane Randall came to the Friends Committee on National Legislation in March 2011 as the fourth Executive Secretary. She leads FCNL's staff to effectively educate and lobby for the policies and legislative priorities established by FCNL's General Committee. Before coming to FCNL, Diane was Executive Director of Partnership for Strong Communities, a Connecticut-based non-profit organization providing leadership, advocacy, and policy development on solutions to homelessness, affordable housing and community development.

Diane is a convinced Friend, and a member of Hartford Monthly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting. Diane currently worships with Langley Hill Friends in Baltimore Yearly Meeting, and relishes worshipping with Friends across the country while traveling for FCNL. She believes that the effort to pursue truth and see 'that of God in every person we meet' are disciplines that shape FCNL's patient and persistent approach to lobbying for legislation that can help create a more peaceful and just world.





## STEERING COMMITTEE 8/14/20

Clerk, Noor Parwana, began the meeting with a period of silent worship.

Attending were Nick Salmon, registrar, Julian Childs, Ministry and Counsel (M&C), Claire Leonard, Recording Clerk, Larry Leonard, Gathering Coordinator, Jasmine Krotkov, Newsletter Edition, Judy Visscher, Clerk of M&C, Tina Visscher, Nominating Committee, Kate Weiss, former clerk, Sandy Boemler, Jim Humphrey, Finance Committee, Jo Ann Kidder, Lucretia Humphrey, M&C, Susan Wadsworth, M&C, Nancy Cochran, upcoming Gathering Coordinator, and Nor Parwana, presiding Clerk.

Friends shared personal joys and sorrows.

Consent Agenda: At the February Business Meeting, the Gathering Coordinator report and the Communications report were not included in the newsletter. Tina Visscher has been nominated as the new Presiding Clerk if she is approved. Tina and Noor will co-clerk the fall and winter gatherings following which, Tina will take over.

Noor reported that the ad hoc committee is continuing work on the new MGOF Handbook. The final draft will be distributed to members of the steering committee before the fall gathering with hopes to present it to the full meeting at the winter gathering.



The report from those responsible for this gathering presented the arrangements. Nick Salmon, registrar, will do most of the technology part. Larry has done most of the planning and Nancy will do community night. Nick will be responsible for Winter MGOF. Nancy will take over as summer gathering coordinator. Larry made reservations for Luccock Park for next summer during the second weekend of August.

A concern was raised about reimbursements to our Friends in Residence. The amount has been variable, sometimes leading to hurt feelings. The MGOF Handbook states that we will reimburse travel, room and meals or pay an honorarium of \$250. These guidelines have not been consistently adhered to. Ministry and Counsel recommends MGOF stops paying honoraria and only reimburse expenses. We may offer some non-monetary

benefit such as a stay at a mountain cabin or a guided fishing trip. The finance committee would like a cap on the amount of the reimbursement for the purpose of budgeting. A \$500 cap was suggested.

There was a report from Communications coordinator. Friends were reminded that Geoff is responsible for the website and Kate Weiss is distributing emails. Jo Ann indicated she would like to have an updated complete directory. There has been some resistance to this in the past due to privacy concerns.

Treasurers Report: Cathey Weber submitted a report that was previously reviewed by the Finance Committee. Friends again raised the question about being unable to determine what monies belong to MGOF Monthly Meeting and which to MGOF Quarterly Meeting. Although there is only one account, income and expenses for those accounts are tracked separately. The only expenses of the monthly meeting is the annual assessment for North Pacific Yearly Meeting. The assessment is billed individually to Friends who are members. When there is a

shortfall, this may be taken from quarterly meeting funds or is provided by a donation. Using the abundant giving plan for funding the quarterly meeting gatherings, there has been a surplus each time. This surplus belongs to the quarterly meeting. Newsletter expenses this year exceeded the budgeted amount because we elected to send paper copies of the last two newsletters as an experiment and we did not make an accommodation for that in our budget.

Minute: The cost of the newsletter for the year will be paid as a reimbursement to the editor.

There was discussion about whether F/friends want to continue with paper copies. An effort was made with the last issue to use less expensive paper that could be recycled. A number of Friends who believe they has opted out of receiving a paper copy said they had, nonetheless, received one. Some Friends indicated that having the hard copy version had increased interest in the meeting from new attenders and inquirers. A decision on this will be put off until Fall.

There needs to be one new individual to serve on the Nominating Committee now that Tina has accepted the post of Presiding Clerk.

Ministry and Counsel Report: Kate Weiss will be leaving the committee. Susan Wadsworth from Red Lodge and Linnea Wang from Bozeman have joined the committee. Judy Visscher wishes to step down as clerk but will continue on the committee and Noor Parwana will join when she finishes her term as clerk. Friends are reminded that members are selected by their worship group rather than by the quarterly meeting.

M&C also suggests we host a virtual worship sharing program for the four or six weeks prior to our fall gathering. We are also discussing how we can encourage a wider group of F/friends to step up for positions of responsibility and whether we should have term limits for officers.

Calendar for the upcoming year:

- 8/13-15/2021 Summer Gathering
- 10/24 Fall Gathering (Steering Committee and Ministry & Counsel only)

August 2021						
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	2	3	4

October 2021						
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	2	3	4	5	6



## MEETING FOR BUSINESS—8/15/20

The meeting was opened by the Presiding Clerk, Noor Parwana with a period of expectant worship at 4:05 pm. There were 21 Friends in attendance.

The Clerk thanked the Coordinator and helpers for the arrangements for the first virtual MGOF gathering. Clerk began by reading the “Minute on Diversity in Faith and Practice” written by Friends at Winter MGOF 2020.

1. The consent agenda was approved (Steering Committee minutes 4/1/2020) .
2. The Minutes of the Winter MGOF Meeting were approved.
3. Acceptance of Tina Visscher as the new Presiding Clerk—Tina and Noor will work together as co-clerks for the Fall and Winter Gatherings.

There was no discussion. Tina is approved. Thank you to Noor who has been an amazing clerk. It is suggested that all Friends remember the importance of supporting the Clerk by “clerking from the floor.”

### Minute 1. Tina Visscher is approved as the upcoming Presiding Clerk of MGOF.

4. Newsletter—We need to discuss whether we want to have a printed newsletter or only an online one. Jasmine has acquired recyclable paper for the printed version. At Summer MGOF 2019, we agreed to try having both a printed and an online version for two editions in order to determine if there is an advantage to print copies and mail them to F/friends. The newsletter is very attractive and a good way to introduce MGOF to inquirers. It was planned to allow F/friends to opt out of receiving a printed copy, but numerous f/Friends who choose to opt out still received a mailed version. We need to insure better communication. This will come up for a decision at the Fall meeting. Clerk, Noor Parwana will send a letter to all worship groups asking the question about a paper version.

5. Report of the Committee on Ministry and Counsel—The committee met three times since Winter. We believe that the committee now has an adequate number of members. Kate Weiss will step down. Susan Wadsworth and Linnea Wang have joined the committee. When Tina takes over as Clerk, she will also join the committee. The committee discussed several issues. The first was the honorarium for the Friend in Residence. It was recommended that we reimburse travel, room, and board but not pay an honorarium. The purpose of this



recommendation is to prevent variable payments to the Friend in Residence as has happened in the past. We may also offer non-cash incentives such as a Montana cabin for a vacation or a fishing trip.

M&C is recommending a series of worship sharing sessions for 4-6 weeks prior to the Fall Gathering. These will, of course, be virtual. The queries will be those of the NPYM Faith and Practice. This was approved. Noor will send out a notice about this program. Nick will ask who is interested on the evaluation form.

6. Larry Leonard presented his report. We have a reservation at Luccock for 2021 for the second weekend in August. Nancy Cochrane will be the coordinator for summer gathering in 2021. We hope that we will be able to meet in person.

7. Reports from FCNL and AFSC—

FCNL—Amelia Kagan gave a very powerful talk at NPYM. FCNL also is working on recruiting more young people in advocacy and on violence against Native Women. Montana has advocacy groups in Helena, Missoula, and Great Falls.

AFSC—There has been an e-course with discussion. AFSC has documents on immigration policy and on defunding the police. Noor will obtain these to share with F/friends.

8. Nominating Committee reports that Tina Visscher is recommended as Presiding Clerk and Claire Leonard as Recording Clerk. This leaves only Lucretia on the Nominating Committee. Another member is needed.

Discussion of the honorarium for Friend in Residence:

This is a way to avoid inequities in the amount paid. A number of Friends have found this hurtful. Another Friend noted that in this time of Covid, people might need income. Friends whom we ask to join us should give their gifts to us. NPYM does not pay an honorarium to its Friends in Residence. It was suggested that this was too much to consider for fall. Maybe we need to have a called business meeting. Being our Friend in Residence furthers the individual ministry. It enables ministry.

The Fall meeting will be October 24. It will consist only of meetings of the Steering Committee and the committee of Ministry and Counsel. It was asked if it was required that both must meet on the same day since a virtual meeting does not require our all being in the same place. It was decided that we would have an open Meeting for Worship and Business Meeting. Registration would be needed.

9. Finance Committee Report –The profit and loss statement for the year to date was distributed. The “pay as you are led” arrangement has resulted in overpayments that have been deposited in the Contingency Fund. This creates a cushion for paying deposits, and unexpected expenses, etc. Our policy is that standing committees may exceed the amount in the budget up to \$250 without any permission. Above that amount, a request must be made to the Finance Committee.

Respectfully submitted, Claire O. Leonard, Recording Clerk





## EXTRA, EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT WESTERN FRIEND

Yes, it is a fantastic place to go whether with the Western Friend magazine, to the website, or to find material about Quaker issues. Also, what a great place to share your writing talents, poetry, or art. Children? Yes, step right up and see all that is offered in every editions of WF.

And indeed, Western Friend has become more than a magazine. It has expanded into a web of connections across the Western United States. Need a Quaker Meeting for Worship? It is easy to find and join one from WF website. The offerings are numerous with so little effort to connect.



Of course, this can only happen when we use WF and buy a subscription to WF. As your board member of WF from MGO, we recently offered a one-year subscription to those that had not been able to subscribe! This was made possible through an anonymous donation. Please let me know if you need this offer.

Our board at WF is working to meet the needs of our times. Please join us by not only subscribing, but if possible going beyond and supporting the mission of this broad Quaker outreach.

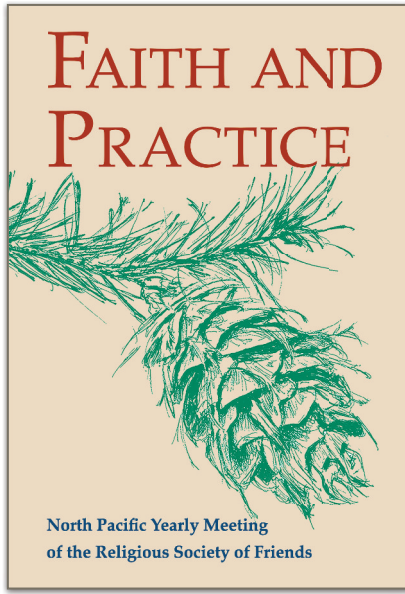
With love,  
Lucretia Humphrey  
Western Friend board member

## Sunday Evening Meetings on Racism and Indigenous People

Missoula Friends Meeting began an ongoing series of gatherings for worship to explore racism, bias, and what it means to be an ally in the current context of our world. The first gathering was convened November 29, our second on December 27, and our third gathering will be Sunday, January 24 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. I look forward to sharing the role of organizing and facilitating worship with other Friends who feel led by Spirit. Example queries include:

- (1) What are our own biases, both positive and negative
- (2) How have these biases shaped our world and our relationships with others; and
- (3) How can we identify and transform our negative biases?

All are welcome to join this ongoing working/worship group. Please share this information with other Friends you know and think may be interested in joining. To guide our continuing inquiry and self-reflection, we may find helpful the more than 100 videos, scholarly articles, and interactive exercises in the National Museum of African American History and Culture's [Talking About Race](#) free digital resource. The link to join these monthly gatherings are available through the Missoula Friends weekly email or by request to [qclerk59801@gmail.com](mailto:qclerk59801@gmail.com).



*Faith and Practice* is the name given to a reference book published independently by each Quaker yearly meeting, that contains the collective wisdom of that meeting community, including queries and guidelines intended to support individual and corporate faithful living.

North Pacific Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*, as accepted at Annual Session 2017, is now available in hardcopy via *Western Friend* magazine. For ordering information, go to <https://westernfriend.org/books>

The Faith & Practice Committee is grateful to the many Friends throughout NPYM who contributed to our revised *Faith and Practice*. The committee is charged with keeping the book up to date and welcomes suggestions for future improvements in it.

Comments or questions? Contact the Faith & Practice Committee at [Discipline\\_Committee\\_Clerk-at-npym.org](mailto:Discipline_Committee_Clerk-at-npym.org)

An online web page version is available [here](#).

## Advocate in the Montana Legislature

The Truth to Power Advocacy Team is forming in recognition that Montana Legislators need to hear from constituents who seek a world in which the beloved community can come to pass. As one Friend said:

*"What I found to be missing from most policy discussions is a moral compass. Even people of faith, when giving testimony in the legislature tend to rely on strategic arguments: we talk like lawyers. But it's the personal stories that change people's minds and hearts."*

This team is creating a mechanism to do two things:

- 1) Listen to legislators, and learn what policy areas, specific legislation, or committee work need to be discussed from a perspective of values, and
- 2) Speak to specific legislators who need to hear about how this policy choice affects us, about how it fits within our lives and hearts. And asking them to listen before making decisions.

Join us! We meet on Thursdays at 10 am, and have started a website to share calls to action:

[Truth2Poweradvoteam.wordpress.com](http://Truth2Poweradvoteam.wordpress.com)





# Minute on No First Use of Nuclear Weapons by the United States

**The Great Falls Worship Group**, part of MGOF Monthly Meeting (Quakers), draws its members and attenders from the Great Falls area and the surrounding region, home to MAFB, the command center for L50 Minuteman III intercontinental nuclear missiles located throughout northcentral Montana. Like many other people, we are painfully aware that nuclear weapons, in coming decades, will continue to pose an apocalyptic threat to the survival of humans and of the planetary biosphere. We are also mindful that Quakers have long found inspiration in the invitation of George Fox to live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars. In that spirit, we seek a world free of war and the threat of war. We believe that true security can only be based on continuous, ceaseless efforts to build a world-wide culture of peace, including democratic participation and unbiased justice, fair and sustainable economies, strengthening the bonds of human community, and nurturance of all life of the planet. As a first step, commitment by the United States to no first use of nuclear weapons would help move the world towards reduction and eventual abolishment of nuclear armament and would contribute importantly to building a world culture of peace. The Great Falls Worship Group calls on the United States government to adopt, through Congressional action, a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons. The Great Falls Worship Group will take steps to make this minute known publicly. It will also bring it to the attention of the Montana Gathering of Friends for that body's consideration. Great Falls Worship Group, joined by some Friends from Helena and Flathead - October 25, 2020



**The Billings Monthly Meeting** strongly supports the Great Falls Quaker Worship Group on their Minute that seeks adoption of a “No First Use of Nuclear Weapons by the United States” commitment.

The comments of the Great Falls Quaker Worship Group in support of the adoption of such a policy are strong and to the point. We support them. We must seek a world free of war and the threat of war. We must seek a world where people do not die because of war. This is indeed at the very center of Quaker beliefs and has been so since George Fox organized a small group of people into a religion known as Quakers in the early part of the 17th century in England. No person should lose their life because of a war that could have been prevented.

This No First Use of Nuclear Weapons position is very timely. The old treaties entered into by the major world powers in the 1990s are expiring and are not being renewed. There are current conflicts in Afghanistan, Yemen and Ethiopia. There are serious threats involving the countries of Iran, North Korea, and elsewhere. It is time to act. Support for a No First Use commitment by the United States would go a long way towards turning around this slippery slope into war that has already begun.

Adopted by the Billings Monthly Meeting at their Meeting for Business on December 13, 2020.

# Montana Gathering of Friends Worship Zoom Meetings Schedule and Details

Worship Group or Meeting	Day	Enter Meeting	Start Worship	End Meeting	Contact Name	Contact Info Phone and/or email	Comments
Billings	Sunday	9:55	10:00	10:45	Tom Towe	406-656-2163	We Meet by Zoom plus outside in summer and Zoom
Bozeman	Sunday	9:45	10:00	11:00	Tina Vlsscher	tinavisscher@gmail.com	
Dillon							
Great Falls	Sunday	9:30	10:00	11:00 am	Lucretia Humphrey	406/781-4004 <a href="mailto:lucretiamh@gmail.com">lucretiamh@gmail.com</a>	
Helena	Sunday	9:30	10:00	11:00 am	Lucretia Humphrey	406/781-4004	Helena worship group meets with Great Falls worship group.
Missoula	Sunday	10:50	11:00	Noon	Clerk Jack Rowan	qclerk59801@gmail.com	Occasional special events, 9:30-10:45; Worship for Business: 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday, 10:00-Noon
Missoula	Wednes day	6:50	7:00	8:00	Clerk	qclerk@gmail.com	
Eureka							Not meeting
Glacier Valley							Not meeting
Mission Valley							Not meeting
Red Lodge	Wednes day	3:45	4:00	5:00	Susan Wadsworth Julia Childs	406/223-9820 406/328-6883	Meet in silence from 4:00 to 5:00 followed by conversation after 5:00
Sheridan, WY							
Isolated Friends							





# Winter 2021 VIRTUAL GATHERING

December 11, 2020

## Friday February 19

2:30-4:00 Ministry & Counsel (ZOOM link to be provided by M&C)

4:00-5:30 Steering Committee (Please use ZOOM Link below for Steering Committee and all subsequent sessions)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87247399435>

Meeting ID: 872 4739 9435

BREAK

7:00-8:00 ZOOM to share names and locations, experience technology, breakout rooms, etc.

## Saturday February 20

8:30-9:40 ZOOM for Diane Randall, FCNL (Friend in Residence)

BREAK

10:00-11:30 ZOOM Pre-assigned Worship Sharing Groups (hosted by each Worship Group leader)

BREAK

12:00-3:00 ZOOM Interest Groups

12:00-12:50

1:00-1:50

2:00-2:50

BREAK

4:00-5:30 ZOOM for Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

LONG BREAK

7:00-9:00 ZOOM for Community Night

## Sunday February 21

8:30-10:00 ZOOM Pre-assigned Worship Sharing Groups

BREAK

10:30-11:00 ZOOM Meeting for singing

11:00-12:00 ZOOM Meeting for Worship followed by Joys & Concerns



Nobody Zooms Like Quakers Zoom