

PHOENIX QUAKER MEETING NEWSLETTER

(Noticias de la reunión de los Amigos de Phoenix)

APRIL 2026

APRIL 2026		
Saturday, April 4	2:00pm	Memorial Service for Mike Gray
Sunday, April 5 Easter Sunday! 	8:30 – 10:00am	Easter Breakfast Potluck
	10:00 – 11:00am	Meeting for Worship
	10:00 – 11:00am	Childcare Ages 0-5
	11:00am	Children's Easter Egg Hunt
Sunday, April 12	9:00 – 10:00am	Peace & Social Concerns Meeting
	10:00 – 11:00am	Meeting for Worship
	10:00 – 11:00am	Childcare Ages 0-5
	11:30am	Potluck Lunch/Fellowship
Sunday, April 19	9:00 – 10:00am	Experiment with Light
	10:00 – 11:00am	Meeting for Worship
	10:00 – 11:00am	First Day School (Sunday School)
	10:00 – 11:00am	Childcare Ages 0-5
	11:30am	Business Meeting (MFWFB)
Sunday, April 26	9:00 – 10:00am	Book Club: "Calling In" by Loretta J Ross
	10:00 – 11:00am	Meeting for Worship
	10:00 – 11:00am	Childcare Ages 0-5

FIND US ONLINE



PhoenixQuakers.org

Follow us on Facebook: @PhoenixQuakerMeeting

(602) 767-3060 | info@phoenixquakers.org



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Easter Sunday potluck breakfast at 8:30am –
with an Easter Egg Hunt after First Day School and Silent Worship
- *You are Invited!* Nancy Marshall will speak about her book: *Six Who Stopped the Steal*
- Phoenix Friends Bookclub
- Jesselyn Gaona's Memorial Minute
- *Meet a Phoenix Quaker Friend: Tom Haines*
- Seeds For Reflection
- It Takes a Village: Phoenix Quaker Meeting Clean-Up Day
- Friends Spending Time with Friends
- FDS and Childcare: Easter Egg Hunt
- Quaker Earthcare Witness Spring Gathering
- Call to Action!

EASTER BREAKFAST: *Sunday, April 5th at 8:30am*



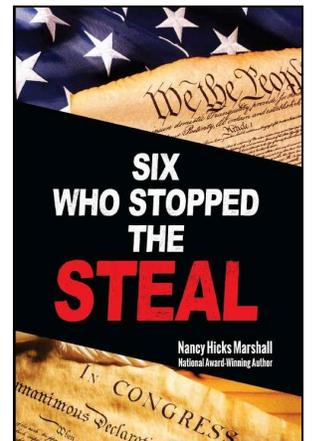
Breakfast Potluck at the Meetinghouse on Easter Sunday. Everyone is welcome.

There will also be an Easter Egg Hunt for the children after the service.

YOU ARE INVITED: *Book Talk with Author Nancy Marshall*

Nancy Marshall will speak about her most recent book, *SIX WHO STOPPED THE STEAL*, about the 2020 elections here in Maricopa County and what to look out for in the upcoming midterms. Refreshments will be provided.

When: Sunday, May 3, from 2:00 – 4:00 pm.



PHOENIX FRIENDS BOOKCLUB

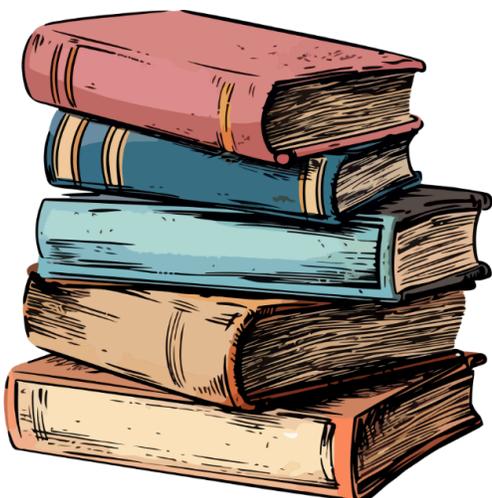
Did you know Phoenix Meeting has their very own bookclub?

We meet on the last Sunday of the month, in the library at 9:00am.

Upcoming Books:

April - *CALLING IN* by Loretta J Ross

May - *LETTERS TO A FELLOW SEEKER* by Steve Chase



JESSELYN GAONA MEMORIAL MINUTE

Jesselyn's friends and family gathered on Sunday, March 22nd at the Tempe Quaker Meeting for her Memorial.

Here is her Memorial Minute:

Jesselyn Rose Gaona (Melcher-Post)

March 10, 1985 - December 17, 2025



Dr. Jesselyn Rose Gaona (born Melcher-Post) left this world on December 17, 2025 – far too early – after a valiant five-year battle with colorectal cancer. She was just 40 years old, and had so much left to offer this world. With her passing from time into eternity, the Light that Jesselyn brought into the world to shine so brightly has dimmed. Because of her transit through our life, her indwelling spirit still shines.

Jesselyn, daughter of Mary Melcher and Thomas Post, was a Phoenix native who grew up in Ahwatukee. She was a precocious and curious child who kept her parents on their toes, and famously told them that she'd like both a brother and a sister just before her mother found out she was carrying twins. She was four when her brother (Jeremy) and sister (Katie) were born, and as they all grew, she earned the nickname "Ms. Boss." She also was called the "Energizer Bunny" because she was always active.

Jesselyn and her family enjoyed family trips to Montana, Maryland, California, and camping all around Arizona. An excellent swimmer from an early age, she swam on teams throughout childhood. When she played house with friends, she would always be the mother, a role that suited her well. And from a very early age, she loved the outdoors, whether it was hiking, river rafting in Montana, chasing fireflies in Maryland with her siblings, or spending time in and around the ocean.

As Jesselyn grew up, she attended Tempe Friends Meeting with her family. She had a difficult time not giggling during silent meetings. During one Christmas play, she played God, and those watching later commented that they enjoyed the giggling God. Friends remember her time as a young Friend in the Tempe Meeting and her expression of joy. They speak of how she showed promise.

During high school at Desert Vista in Ahwatukee, Jesselyn studied hard (taking every honors and AP class possible), and played freshman basketball before becoming a varsity tennis star. She met people who became lifelong friends (and some even professional colleagues). And she discovered that alongside her dream of one day becoming a doctor, she had an affinity for the Spanish language that would end up shaping so much of her professional and personal life going forward. She also spent her summers as a lifeguard with the City of Tempe.

College at the University of Arizona followed, and Jesselyn was a biology and Spanish literature double major with medical school firmly in her sights. In between her regular coursework (at which she, of course, excelled), she found time to volunteer at University Medical Center's cancer center, work in a research lab, and volunteer with Camp Wildcat to provide underprivileged kids a chance to have fun experiences. But it was in an honors Spanish literature class in the spring of 2005 that she first laid eyes on a young man named Andy with, as one friend put it, "spiky hair and cool eyes."

Jesselyn and Andy started talking and quickly hit it off. Though there were some bumps in the road, it was clear they were meant to be together. After graduating from college, they lucked out: Jesselyn was admitted to the first graduating class of the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix, with Andy admitted to the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University. They supported each other through medical school and law school, and lucked out again when Jesselyn matched into the family residency program at Banner University Medical Center - Phoenix.

During Jesselyn's residency, she discovered her true professional passion while rotating through the Wesley Community Health Center, a federally qualified health center serving the uninsured and underinsured in south central Phoenix. Though she had many other job opportunities on the table when she graduated – she was, after all, co-chief resident for her class and supremely qualified to do whatever she wanted – there was no question that Wesley is where she'd start her career. And Wesley became a huge part of who she was as she quickly rose through the ranks, became chief medical officer at a very young age, and led Wesley through the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, all the while seeing and advocating for the patients she so loved.

Jesselyn also mentored countless medical students and residents. Medical students selected her to join the prestigious Gold Humanism Honor Society, which recognizes physicians who provide compassionate care. After her death, she was remembered by medical school leaders as someone who dedicated her career to caring for those most in need and with the fewest resources. Her empathy and commitment to human dignity made her a role model to the many students and residents she helped train.

When hearing about her compassion and commitment to human dignity that was noted at her passing by one of her teachers, Tempe Friends are reminded about how Friends teaching children try, as best as they can, to teach them from the beginning about that of God in every person. Jesselyn loved her work, but the most important parts of her life showed up in 2015 and 2018—her daughters Marilena and Maia. It turns out that even when you're a doctor tasked with healing people, your most important job is really being a parent. And it's a job at which she excelled. Jesselyn loved being their mom and couldn't get enough of watching them experience the world as they learned and grew. Traveling with the girls and Andy was her favorite thing to do, and she was always planning the next trip.

Jesselyn should have been able to be a mother, a wife, and a physician for decades more. But in December 2020, doctor became patient as she was diagnosed with colorectal cancer. A year later, she learned the cancer had spread and the prognosis was not great. And when others might have given up, she persisted. She pored over studies, interacted with online communities of others with CRC, sought out the best surgeons on both sides of the country, and did everything she could to spend as much time as possible with her girls. Every extra month, week, and day was important to her. That's why just one month before she started hospice care, she was walking through Disneyland with her family (and probably hiding a considerable amount of pain).

In 2022, Jesselyn began attending Phoenix Friends meeting, after not attending a Quaker meeting regularly for about 20 years. As she fought cancer, she struggled to find a sense of peace, by attending meeting with her daughters, whom she hoped would become part of the Quaker community. She taught First Day School and clerked the First Day School Committee for nine months until cancer stole her energy in the summer of 2025. When Jesselyn decided to come to Phoenix Meeting, she took a courageous step to change from her childhood Meeting to the Meeting closest to her Phoenix home. She said once that she hoped she would feel as much at home in Phoenix as she had in Tempe, and that she did indeed find comfort and inspiration there that nourished her and her family. Though Phoenix Friends only knew Jess after her diagnosis, Friends there all admired both her positive spirit and her willingness to shoulder some of the responsibility of helping the First Day School program.

Jesselyn's big smile brightened every room she walked into. Up to the end of her life, she kept that smile and was always kind to the nurses, doctors and medical assistants who provided her care, even when she was in great pain. Her legacy will be reflected in the love she showed to her family, friends, patients, and community, who will carry her memory and love forward.

In lieu of flowers, her family requests that donations be made in her honor to the Wesley Community Health Centers and the Jesselyn R. Gaona, MD Fund for Family Medicine.

MEET A PHOENIX QUAKER MEETING FRIEND

We are highlighting one person a month, who attends the Phoenix Quaker Meeting, as a way to learn more about each other.

MEET TOM HAINES!

How long have you attended the Phoenix Quaker Meeting?

I've been attending the Phoenix Meeting since the mid '90's if memory serves.

What drew you to the meeting, and what resonates with you the most about Quaker Beliefs/theology?

I decided to join the community because of my research into the history of Quakers and their commitment to human rights and social justice. I was also drawn by their understanding of the universality of human spirituality. Finally, I was impressed with members of the Phoenix Meeting with whom I found many common ideas and values.

Do you have a partner, spouse and/or children?

I have a step granddaughter who is 11 years old.

What do you do for work/career?

My career as a social worker was mostly committed to two agencies in Maricopa County, victim service with the county attorney's office and the jail psychiatric unit. I was involved in that public service for 27 years.

What do you do for fun?

I have been a student of the Japanese martial art of aikido for over 50 years. I also enjoy hiking, composting and desert gardening.



SEEDS FOR REFLECTION

An Excerpt from the April Pendle Hill Newsletter

As we seek to walk humbly with the Divine, I want to offer you some thoughts for your consideration. Rather than offering a prescriptive checklist, I hope this serves as an urgent call for personal reflection and intentional communal action. Please pause and listen to your heart as you read this advice. I encourage you to put it into practice and to further explore its meaning.

Be aware of war fetishism or the tendency to assign intrinsic value to war and conflict. Our culture can carry practices that promote violence and celebrate war as the only viable process to advance humanity. Our social environment and media these days is full of narratives that aim to justify war or war tactics in domestic and international contexts, sometimes to the extreme of portraying war as a response to God. Being aware of war fetishism requires us to pay attention to our own words and actions as we learn and embody that war is not the natural state. We must instead strive to dismantle the culture of war within our communities.

Embrace justice in small things. Each day, we have plenty of opportunities to practice justice as a spiritual discipline that aims to help us become better people. This requires sustained attention to the way that we interact with others, invest our energy in noticing patterns of structural injustice, and confront our own convenience. Embracing justice in the small things invites us to exercise attention as a moral act, allowing us to see others as they truly are while welcoming, supporting, and working together toward our mutual transformation.

Each day, do a small act of compassion; an act that reflects your sincere recognition of others as equal and that translates the movement of your heart into seeking a better world for all. A small act of compassion carries within it the transformative power of love as we exercise empathy, solidarity, and generosity, especially toward the marginalized, destitute, and impoverished.

Cultivate and celebrate joy. No matter how small or big the reason, being able to celebrate joy helps us to move forward despite the many hard circumstances we encounter. Cultivating joy is an essential element to build community as we get to know and support each other, and as we open ourselves to the wonder and beauty of nature.

Finally, I invite you to nurture hope. A hope rooted in our shared human journey; a hope that empowers us to create the conditions necessary for liberation, peace, justice, and prosperity that flourishes through cooperation, dialogue, and mutual respect.

Let's continue practicing peace and finding creative ways for joyful and courageous loving resistance to violence and injustice.

Pax et bonum, Francisco.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE: PHOENIX QUAKER MEETING CLEAN-UP DAY

On Feb 28, 2026, at the meetinghouse, fifteen friends came to help in a variety of ways. We did a lot of trimming, weeding, painting and some fellowship along the way. Thank you for your contribution to making our space beautiful!

Photos Submitted by Candace Wilkinson.



"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much." ~Helen Keller

FRIENDS SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS

Current Western Friend Board member Jay Thatcher of Corvallis OR, joins Phoenix Meeting liaison (for Western Friend) Vance Marshall and former WF board member Nancy Marshall for a spring training game in Mesa.

~Submitted by Nancy Marshall



FIRST DAY SCHOOL & CHILDCARE

Join Us for Easter Sunday Egg Hunt after First Day School and childcare. You can bring your own basket, and take eggs home!

Our childcare for children ages 0-5 is growing!

We are in need of volunteers to assist Jackson, for April 12th & 19th. If you have not taken a turn sitting in with the children, it is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with these beautiful spirits who offer joy and playfulness! Please consider volunteering at least one Sunday before the end of the school year.



Please contact Kari at acumoxamama@gmail.com or 585-315-5155 (text or call) and let her know which Sunday you would like to volunteer.

We are looking for a new Childcare Leader for the 2026-2027 School Year. Please reach out to Candace or Kari, if you would like more information. We appreciate your serious consideration of this volunteer position!

Childcare Adult Volunteer Schedule for April, 2026:

April 5 - Candace W.

April 12 - OPEN, VOLUNTEER NEEDED

April 19 - OPEN, VOLUNTEER NEEDED

April 22 - Jay M.

We are currently seeking volunteers for April 12th and April 19th.

Please let Kari know if you can volunteer either day.

QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS SPRING GATHERING EVENT



“Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) is a network of Friends (Quakers) in North America working on Earthcare concerns. We work to inspire Spirit-led action toward ecological sustainability and environmental justice.”

QEW has grown out of a strong leading among Friends that our future depends on a spiritual transformation in our relationships with each other and the natural world. For over 30 years, we have helped Friends integrate Earthcare into their daily lives.

As our communities are being impacted more and more by the climate crisis, we feel an urgent leading to share our witness.”

Please check out this upcoming event: QEW Spring Gathering 2026, April 10 - April 12

We invite you to join QEW April 10 – 12 for our annual Spring Gathering. This year’s Spring Gathering is centered on the theme “Spirit-Filled Activism.” This Spring Gathering, we ask how we

can become instruments of Truth and Light in trying times in the theme for our April Session: Spirit-Filled Activism. We invite you to join us to explore and contemplate this theme as Friends and faithful stewards of the Earth.

We are thrilled to announce that Jacob Johns is our keynote speaker for Spring Gathering 2026. Jacob Johns – (Akimel O’odham / Hopi) is an International environmental systems strategist and multidisciplinary artist working to address global environmental issues through policy, culture, and community-based solutions. For the past three years, Jacob has spearheaded A Wisdom Keepers Delegation—a coalition of Indigenous knowledge holders and ancestral wisdom practitioners working to transform international climate policy while cultivating ethical leadership among global stakeholders. His approach centers on dismantling systemic inequities by developing regenerative frameworks that replace exploitative systems with models prioritizing ecological balance, intergenerational justice, and collective well being. Grounded in cultural heritage, Jacob works to integrate traditional knowledge and ancient wisdom into global climate spaces, demonstrating how grassroots leadership can shape practical, long-term solutions globally. Jacob’s work exemplifies how traditional Indigenous epistemologies can inform contemporary climate solutions, merging policy innovation with artistic expression to shift societal values toward sustainable coexistence.

REGISTER HERE: <https://quakerearthcare.org/event/qew-spring-gathering-2026/>

CALL TO ACTION

Ukrainian Quaker Project

Anne Hainesworth, of Cape May Quaker Meeting, in New Jersey, visited Phoenix Meeting last year. She invited Friends here in Phoenix to send items for children in Ukraine to her, and she would get them to Ukraine. With the war in Ukraine now entering its fifth year, the needs of the children are increasingly urgent. Children have been displaced. They have lost loved ones. Their schooling has been disrupted. The First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, has called for every day to be a “Children’s Day”.



Our response is to provide these children with warm clothing: handmade (knitted, crocheted, sewn) or purchased. Gently used items are also welcome. Winters in Ukraine are very cold. Electricity and heat are sparse. Summers are short and mild.

Also, we want to provide them with emotional support with arts and crafts projects, games and toys. Small stuffed animals (handmade or purchased) are a very welcome source of comfort.

We collaborate with Cape May Shelters Lutsk to ship our items to Ukraine. You can ship any of these items to: Anne Hainsworth, 111 Simpson Lane, West Cape May, NJ 08204.

A list of suggested items is provided. Please feel free to use your imagination when thinking about the way you want to help!

Examples of items needed for infants to 18 years of age; they can be knitted, sewn, quilted, purchased new, donated or any combination!

CLOTHING: Onesies, Underwear, Thermal Underwear, T Shirts, Socks, Leggings, Shirts, Dresses, Pants, Shoes/sneakers (new only please)

OUTERWEAR: Sweaters, Hats, Gloves, Coats, Boots

BLANKETS (all sizes)

TOYS: Puzzles, Legos, Small stuffed animals (handmade or purchased), Checkers, Chess sets

ARTS and CRAFTS: Crayons, Coloring Paper, Coloring Books, Watercolors for painting, Beading Kits, Paint by number kits, Play dough

Alternatively, Vance Marshall has been working with a local Ukrainian group since 2024.

If you would like to donate money to the group, contact Vance.

(submitted by Nancy Marshall)

Food Donations Wanted

Phoenix Quaker Meeting is currently accepting non-perishable food donations, as well as pet food, for the Paradise Valley Food bank. You may bring them into the Meeting House and look for a bin in the main room to put the items in. They will be delivered directly to the food bank. If you are not able to bring donations to the Meeting House, please consider finding a food bank close to home to take your donations to. Thank you, every donation counts!

Submissions for This Newsletter!

Do you write poetry, or create artwork? Would you like to share it with the community? Did you come across an interesting article and wonder if others at the Quaker Meeting would enjoy it? If so, send it along to Kari at acumoxamama@gmail.com to be added to the next newsletter!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Here are the links to *QuakerSpeak* that were included in February's Saturday reminder emails:

- Resisting Fake News About Jesus
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A71InQWmams>
- Margaret Fell: The Mother of Quakerism's Powerful Ministry
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJyGjaqls4s>



CONTACT INFORMATION

Newsletter Editor: Kari Watkins Harvey (acumoxamama@gmail.com) 585-315-5155

Co-Clerks: Candace Wilkinson (candacewilkinson@mac.com) 602-697-5796

Margaret Wright (photo.marg.wright@gmail.com) 602-828-7861

Treasurer: Jane Malik (janemalik111@gmail.com) 602-625-0465

Recording Clerk/Administrative Assistants: Phoebe DeCook (phoebedecook@gmail.com) & Jay McAuliffe (jaymcauliffe01@gmail.com)