

**Clerk's Call to
2016 PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING ANNUAL SESSION
Walker Creek Ranch, Friday, June 17 to Wednesday, June 22 2016**

LIFTING OF THE VEIL

“Now if any, in the reading of this, feel a secret touch upon their hearts, startling them, and giving some testimony to the truth, though very small, and through a thick, dark covering, there is that to which I speak; there is the witness within the veil; and there is the testimony rising up, which leads to life, if given heed to. “

~ Isaac Penington, “The Way of Life and Death”

Please join us for Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends 70th annual session June 17 to June 22 at Walker Creek Ranch, Petaluma, California. We are opened, strengthened and comforted when we join one another in this centuries-old Friends practice.

Early Friends believed in the presence of a Living Spirit and knew that it was veiled, not typically seen or understood, in our habitual behaviors and thoughts. In my experience Quakerism is a visceral religion, we feel it in our bodies and this knowledge becomes the barometer to understand the spirit as it leads us.

When we try to rationalize and limit ourselves to only what fits our intellectual understanding, Spirit loses the capacity to guide and direct us through experience. Quakerism is a religion that is practiced. It requires us, first, to wake up to the allure of the dominant culture and the trappings of our habits which sometimes protect our inner wounds. The process of aligning oneself to the spirit requires the Lifting of the Veil. As early Friends practiced this life changing endeavor they were led to say Thee and Thou to landed gentry, to refuse to tip their hats and drink to the king's health, along with other outward actions that sometimes put them in harm's way.

And dwell in that which is pure of God in you, for fear that your thoughts get forth,
and then evil thoughts get up, and surmising one against another,
which arises out of the veiled mind, which darkens the pure discerning.

But as you dwell in that which is of God, it guides you up out of the elementary life,
and out of the mortal into the immortal, which is hidden from all the fleshly ones,
where is peace and joy eternal to all who can witness the new birth.

~ George Fox, 1624-1691

Come to the Annual Session with your minds open, with a yearning for wonder, and with an understanding that the mystery unfolds when we open our hearts to each other, when we sit

waiting to be guided by the presence that is always there but not always perceived, and when we gather with the intention to listen deeply. The spirit guides us when we seek it.

Our keynote plenary will have two of our own leading us into worship: Carl Magruder and Darcy Stanley. The spirit we seek is more concentrated and intense when we are in a large group, “when two or more are gathered in my name...” Please be prepared to practice waiting to minister verbally only when you no longer can hold it in but take care that it is not intellect, ego or creaturely will, but the Light at work in you, that lifts you from your seat.

“The sooner we stop thinking *we* are the energetic operators of religion and discover that God is at work, as the Aggressor, the Invader, the Initiator, so much the sooner do we discover that our task is to call us to *be still and know*, listen, hearken in quiet invitation to the subtle promptings of the Divine...I am persuaded that religious people do not with sufficient seriousness count on God as an active factor in the affairs of the world. ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock,’ but too many well-intentioned people are preoccupied with the clatter of effort to do something *for* God that they don’t hear her asking that she might do something *through* them.”

~Thomas Kelly, A Testament of Devotion

Be aware, Friends, that this annual session is scheduled differently. The first day of Annual Session will be on Friday and the last day will be on Wednesday. We know that many work and may not have a full week off, so we hope that you can come at least for the weekend if not the full five days. Sessions (e.g. Meeting for Memorials) are strategically scheduled during the weekend so that all can attend. When we open ourselves to Spirit together, we can expect the unexpected.

In the Light,

Diego Navarro, Presiding Clerk

For more information on the theme “Lifting of the Veil” please follow the links below:

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa0YeoWrPe8>

Document: <https://westernfriend.org/media/veil-shadow-and-abundant-life>