



Montreal Monthly Meeting Newsletter

Infolettre de l'Assemblée Quaker de Montréal

Contributors / contributeurs Co-auteurs / Comités de rédaction:
Jean-Louis Demers
Geoffreyen Edwards
Wendy Sturton
Eira Garrett

Traducteurs / traductrices: Contact:
Jean-Louis Demers Newsletter Team / Équipe de l'infolettre
Geoffreyen Edwards newsletter@montrealquaker.ca
Wendy Sturton Website / Site internet
Christine Lesage MontrealQuakerMeeting

Life of the Meeting /

Five Years of Quakerism in Quebec City

Reflections on the Francophone Quaker Group of Quebec

By Jean-Louis Demers

You had to be a little crazy in 2018 to think about starting a spiritual community in a social context that was doubtlessly crazy, because Quakers, the spiritual community in question, is fundamentally English in origin, with no roots or familiarity among francophones in Quebec. Moreover, such an introduction was likely to inspire great reservations in a society fighting for its survival against the powerful dominance of the English language. And yet, this small spiritual community celebrated its fifth anniversary on February 3, 2019.

In the beginning, this assembly was more than modest since we were often only two participants, sometimes only one. I remember that first worship service in the chapel when members of the Montreal Meeting came to support us. There was breton cake, joy and a prayer read at the opening. What was going to happen to this project? Thankfully, perseverance and the delivery of an online course in French on Quakerism allowed us to grow our numbers a little and strengthen our relationships. Thank you David!

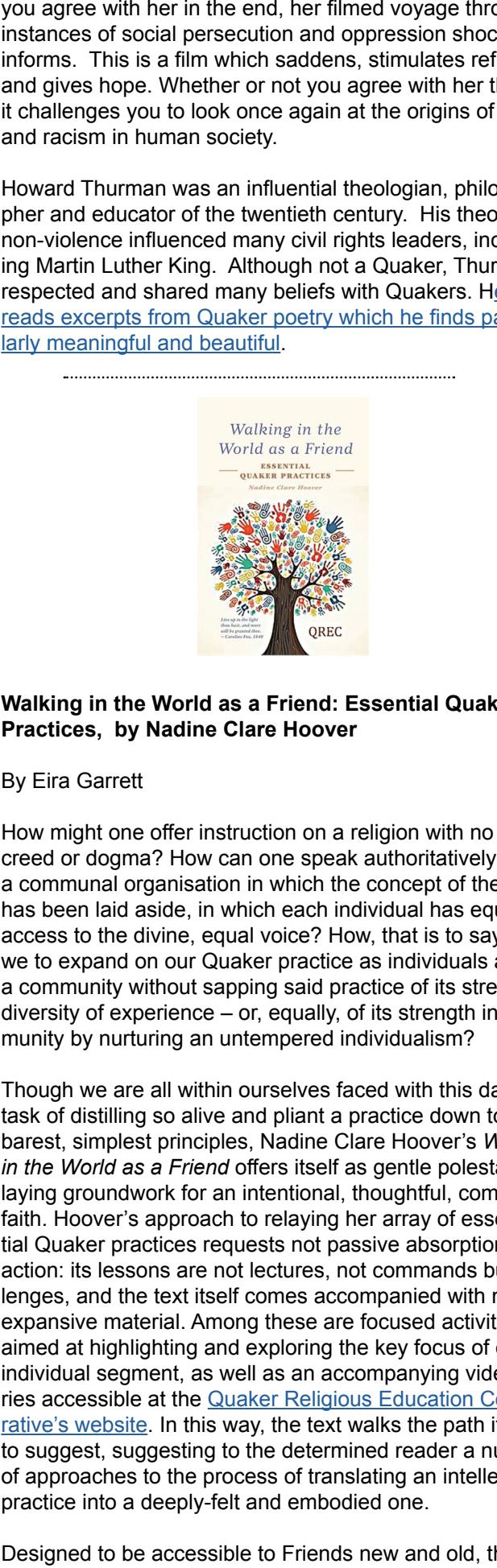
Today we are officially three Quaker members in the Quebec City area and our meetings welcome about 6 to 10 attendees. Occasionally we receive some passing visitors from France or the United States, but it's mostly our faithful and precious friends in town who "regale" a lot. Their purchase has been unwavering. A core of "regulars" have been formed and communal projects are gradually emerging. We are few in number but dynamic. On Zoom, we welcome participants from Montreal, the Eastern Townships, Saguenay, Philadelphia and sometimes even the West Indies. It depends.

As we evolved, our little congregation has developed its habits. We had to improvise a bit because documentation in French is very difficult and incomplete. In addition, we are isolated from Canada by language, and from France by distance. We then had to customize our ways of doing things and be creative, since we are not tied to any local tradition. Francophone Quakerism in Canada, or even in North America, has never existed before.

For example, we attach great importance to hospitality. In contrast to traditional practices, our assemblies always begin with a word of welcome and some explanation for newcomers. We also emphasize silence. Silence is more important than silence. Our periods of silence rarely exceed 40 minutes, and then give way to the sharing of joys and sorrows and announcements. The period following the silent worship is certainly one of the most important portions of our encounter, both in duration and spiritual value. Our exchanges, the development of our friendships and self-knowledge are at the heart of these sacred moments. Once in a while, we are joined by people curious about this form of worship. Sometimes they come back, sometimes they don't. Spirituality is a personal matter.

Silence gathers us together. I am often moved by the depth of these moments. During them, something happens—either in silence or above the noise. Then this communion is real. We meet in a café with a social mission. Its clientele are people who have not had an easy life. It is not always the most silent environment. Occasionally the comfort of our silent circle has been disturbed by the arrival of a person whose social codes are different from ours, whose emotional state is intensified. This can be disruptive, but it is also an experience which permits us to act on our values, a call to order and to the basic reasons which inspired us to become Quakers: the idea that in each, there is something of God. Call it what you will. From this model essential premise spring all the Quaker values which we strive to adopt.

Things are evolving; we are becoming more open-minded. We have begun to explore concrete projects which nourish our hopes. Our interconnections become stronger and more refined: we are building community and avoiding a tendency to turn inward. I dare to believe that visitors feel welcome among us. And so it is altogether that we grow into this simple and touching spirituality of Quakers. Its values and openness call to us. In spite of its 400 year existence, the movement seems modern to us, because it allows the expression of diversity and freedom. Even though the Quaker path is too little known and thinly documented here, we are convinced that it can respond the need for spirituality and sense of belonging of many. Like a young child, our little community is still very fragile. If only a few of us departed, we might sink into silence. But just as in the case of committed parents, for us sympathizers, abandonment is not an option.


New Leadership Serving our Meeting
A new breath of energy is moving through our meeting with the nomination and acceptance of a number of new leaders and committee members. We have already welcomed Geoff Garver as our new co-clerk at the Greene Centre. At the first Meeting for Worship for Business clerked by Geoff, Brooke Nairn and Sébastien Garant were elected to the same committee, along with the Café La Mosaïque in Lévis. The committee named "M & C" - Ministry and Council - added Sophie Donelson and Geoffreyen Edwards to its membership. We are thankful for the energy and insight brought to our meeting by Geoff, Brooke, Sébastien, Sophie and Geoffreyen.

First Day School Begins

By Leigh Smit and Geoffreyen Edwards

Kairos offers regional networks and support on many issues that we as Friends care about: international partnerships with women of peace in Congo, Palestine, Colombia, and Sudan; justice for migrant workers and refugees in Canada; youth teams on climate and earthcare; the Kairos Blanket Exercise (KBE) that opens hearts to reconciliation issues — which Kairos is doing best to place wholly in local aboriginal hands. The indigenous advisors' circle (KIRC), and its programs for survivors of the Sixties Scoop of native children, MMWIG and decolonisation/antiracism/two spirit/sensitivity training. I invite you to ask me about your particular concern, and look up resources for in News, Areas of Work, and Multi-Media (podcasts and videos).

Personal contacts drew me to Kairos 20 years ago: the brilliant analysis of economic patterns by interchurch researcher John Dillon, and people in the ecology committee who shared Quaker Earthcare concerns. When CYM named me to that committee, I became part of a network sharing "prophetic witness" back to Friends, and out to other churches. At the work brought me to regional blanket exercises, travel and friendship activities, and eventually to the Quaker action group. Since then, for those who wish to inform themselves on Quaker activism related to Israel and Palestine both directly and through Kairos, following is a list of links to statements that embody Quaker positions on the Hamas-Israel conflict. Many are made in concert with other organizations.

If this sounds dry to you, don't be fooled. Whether or not you agree with her in the end, her lifelong voyage through instances of social persecution and oppression shocks reflection and informs. Whether or not you agree with her thesis, it is a major contribution to our understanding of what is happening in the world.

Again, a free workshop (pay as led) from Woodbrooke on February 26 at 2 pm on "Resilient Communities: why we need radical imagination."

Finally, we invite you to explore the rich online choices offered by Woodbrooke in coming months. The two suggestions given above are only the beginning.

Winnipeg Monthly Meeting has organized an interesting series of talks open to all. To register for a one, a few or all of these sessions, all you have to do is contact Glenn Morrison and ask. No charge. For the full program and to contact Glenn, click [here](#).

Below is a partial schedule:

All Meetings at 1 PM EST by Zoom Invite, unless there is need to change.

• February 28th - History of Quakers in Ireland through Genealogy (Tom Laporte)

• March 27th - Introduction to Quaker Speak: Watch a few and share (Norma Kerr WMM)

• April 24th - George Fox Birthday Party (Keith Barber WMM)

Potluck Lunch, Again!

Potluck meals have been moved to the third Sunday every second month, so that parents and children can join in the socializing. Our next potluck is scheduled for February 18. All contributions are welcome. Many of our members are vegetarians, some are vegan—but others are not, so a variety of food appears on the table. If your contribution includes ingredients that might not work for some, just leave a little note close to it. Thanks!

First Day School Begins

By Leigh Smit and Geoffreyen Edwards

How might one offer instruction on a religion with no fixed voice? How can one speak authoritatively in a communal organization in which the concept of the laity becomes aware of thoughts and insights arising in that silence. Sometimes a message will be directed toward the listener alone. The decision to break the silence is often made for everyone. In the Quaker tradition, the speaker feels compelled by God to speak.

A few constraints are placed on this vocal ministry. In most situations, a speaker will speak only once in a meeting. Between vocal messages, there is a silence of waiting. Sometimes a message will be repeated, although it is not always the most appropriate time. Whether or not you agree with her thesis, it is a major contribution to our understanding of what is happening in the world.

Again, a free workshop (pay as led) from Woodbrooke on February 26 at 2 pm on "Resilient Communities: why we need radical imagination."

Finally, we invite you to explore the rich online choices offered by Woodbrooke in coming months. The two suggestions given above are only the beginning.

Winnipeg Monthly Meeting has organized an interesting series of talks open to all. To register for a one, a few or all of these sessions, all you have to do is contact Glenn Morrison and ask. No charge. For the full program and to contact Glenn, click [here](#).

Below is a partial schedule:

All Meetings at 1 PM EST by Zoom Invite, unless there is need to change.

• February 28th - History of Quakers in Ireland through Genealogy (Tom Laporte)

• March 27th - Introduction to Quaker Speak: Watch a few and share (Norma Kerr WMM)

• April 24th - George Fox Birthday Party (Keith Barber WMM)

Potluck Lunch, Again!

Potluck meals have been moved to the third Sunday every second month, so that parents and children can join in the socializing. Our next potluck is scheduled for February 18. All contributions are welcome. Many of our members are vegetarians, some are vegan—but others are not, so a variety of food appears on the table. If your contribution includes ingredients that might not work for some, just leave a little note close to it. Thanks!

First Day School Begins

By Leigh Smit and Geoffreyen Edwards

How might one offer instruction on a religion with no fixed voice? How can one speak authoritatively in a communal organization in which the concept of the laity becomes aware of thoughts and insights arising in that silence. Sometimes a message will be directed toward the listener alone. The decision to break the silence is often made for everyone. In the Quaker tradition, the speaker feels compelled by God to speak.

A few constraints are placed on this vocal ministry. In most situations, a speaker will speak only once in a meeting. Between vocal messages, there is a silence of waiting. Sometimes a message will be repeated, although it is not always the most appropriate time. Whether or not you agree with her thesis, it is a major contribution to our understanding of what is happening in the world.

Again, a free workshop (pay as led) from Woodbrooke on February 26 at 2 pm on "Resilient Communities: why we need radical imagination."

Finally, we invite you to explore the rich online choices offered by Woodbrooke in coming months. The two suggestions given above are only the beginning.

Winnipeg Monthly Meeting has organized an interesting series of talks open to all. To register for a one, a few or all of these sessions, all you have to do is contact Glenn Morrison and ask. No charge. For the full program and to contact Glenn, click [here](#).

Below is a partial schedule:

All Meetings at 1 PM EST by Zoom Invite, unless there is need to change.

• February 28th - History of Quakers in Ireland through Genealogy (Tom Laporte)

• March 27th - Introduction to Quaker Speak: Watch a few and share (Norma Kerr WMM)

• April 24th - George Fox Birthday Party (Keith Barber WMM)

Potluck Lunch, Again!

By Leigh Smit and Geoffreyen Edwards

How might one offer instruction on a religion with no fixed voice? How can one speak authoritatively in a communal organization in which the concept of the laity becomes aware of thoughts and insights arising in that silence. Sometimes a message will be directed toward the listener alone. The decision to break the silence is often made for everyone. In the Quaker tradition, the speaker feels compelled by God to speak.

A few constraints are placed on this vocal ministry. In most situations, a speaker will speak only once in a meeting. Between vocal messages, there is a silence of waiting. Sometimes a message will be repeated, although it is not always the most appropriate time. Whether or not you agree with her thesis, it is a major contribution to our understanding of what is happening in the world.

Again, a free workshop (pay as led) from Woodbrooke on February 26 at 2 pm on "Resilient Communities: why we need radical imagination."

Finally, we invite you to explore the rich online choices offered by Woodbrooke in coming months. The two suggestions given above are only the beginning.

Winnipeg Monthly Meeting has organized an interesting series of talks open to all. To register for a one, a few or all of these sessions, all you have to do is contact Glenn Morrison and ask. No charge. For the full program and to contact Glenn, click [here](#).

Below is a partial schedule:

All Meetings at 1 PM EST by Zoom Invite, unless there is need to change.

• February 28th - History of Quakers in Ireland through Genealogy (Tom Laporte)

• March 27th - Introduction to Quaker Speak: Watch a few and share (Norma Kerr WMM)

• April 24th - George Fox Birthday Party (Keith Barber WMM)

Potluck Lunch, Again!

By Leigh Smit and Geoffreyen Edwards

How might one offer instruction on a religion with no fixed voice? How can one speak authoritatively in a communal organization in which the concept of the laity becomes aware of thoughts and insights arising in that silence. Sometimes a message will be directed toward the listener alone. The decision to break the silence is often made for everyone. In the Quaker tradition, the speaker feels compelled by God to speak.

A few constraints are placed on this vocal ministry. In most situations, a speaker will speak only once in a meeting. Between vocal messages, there is a silence of waiting. Sometimes a message will be repeated, although it is not always the most appropriate time. Whether or not you agree with her thesis, it is a major contribution to our understanding of what is happening in the world.

Again, a free workshop (pay as led) from Woodbrooke on February 26 at 2 pm on "Resilient Communities: why we need radical imagination."

Finally, we invite you to explore the rich online choices offered by Woodbrooke in coming months. The two suggestions given above are only the beginning.

Winnipeg Monthly Meeting has organized an interesting series of talks open to all. To register for a one, a few or all of these sessions, all you have to do is contact Glenn Morrison and ask. No charge. For the full program and to contact Glenn, click [here](#).

Below is a partial schedule:

All Meetings at 1 PM EST by Zoom Invite, unless there is need to change.

• February 28th - History of Quakers in Ireland through Genealogy (Tom Laporte)

• March 27th - Introduction to Quaker Speak: Watch a few and share (Norma Kerr WMM)

• April 24th - George Fox Birthday Party (Keith Barber WMM)

Potluck Lunch, Again!

By Leigh Smit and Geoffreyen Edwards

How might one offer instruction on a religion with no fixed voice? How can one speak authoritatively in a communal organization in which the concept of the laity becomes aware of thoughts and insights arising in that silence. Sometimes a message will be directed toward the listener alone. The decision to break the silence is often made for everyone. In the Quaker tradition, the speaker feels compelled by God to speak.

A few constraints are placed on this vocal ministry. In most situations, a speaker will speak only once in a meeting. Between vocal messages, there is a silence of waiting. Sometimes a message will be repeated, although it is not always the most appropriate time. Whether or not you agree with her thesis, it is a major contribution to our understanding of what is happening in the world.

Again, a free workshop (pay as led) from Woodbrooke on February 26 at 2 pm on "Resilient Communities: why we need radical imagination."

Finally, we invite you to explore the rich online choices offered by Woodbrooke in coming months. The two suggestions given above are only the beginning.

Winnipeg Monthly Meeting has organized an interesting series of talks open to all. To register for a one, a few or all of these sessions, all you have to do is contact Glenn Morrison and ask. No charge. For the full program and to contact Glenn, click [here](#).

Below is a partial schedule:

All Meetings at 1 PM EST by Zoom Invite, unless there is need to change.

• February 28th - History of Quakers in Ireland through Genealogy (Tom Laporte)

• March 27th - Introduction to Quaker Speak: Watch a few and share (Norma Kerr WMM)

• April 24th - George Fox Birthday Party (Keith Barber WMM)

Potluck Lunch, Again!

By Leigh Smit and Geoffreyen Edwards

How might one offer instruction on a religion with no fixed voice? How can one speak authoritatively in a communal organization in which the concept of the laity becomes aware of thoughts and insights arising in that silence. Sometimes a message will be directed toward the listener alone. The decision to break the silence is often made for everyone. In the Quaker tradition, the speaker feels compelled by God to speak.

A few constraints are placed on this vocal ministry. In most situations, a speaker will speak only once in a meeting. Between vocal messages, there is a silence of waiting. Sometimes a message will be repeated, although it is not always the most appropriate time. Whether or not you agree with her thesis, it is a major contribution to our understanding of what is happening in the world.

Again, a free workshop (pay as led) from Woodbrooke on February 26 at 2 pm on "Resilient Communities: why we need radical imagination."

Finally, we invite you to explore the rich online choices offered by Woodbrooke in coming months. The two suggestions given above are only the beginning.

Winnipeg Monthly Meeting has organized an interesting series of talks open to all. To register for a one, a few or all of these sessions, all you have to do is contact Glenn Morrison and ask. No charge. For the full program and to contact Glenn, click [here](#).

Below is a partial schedule: