

# SPOKANEWORD

December,  
Twelfth Month,  
2011



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## Sunday Schedule:

Unprogrammed Worship 8:45  
Education Hour 9:30  
Meeting for Worship 10:45

## Third Sunday of the Month:

Combined Worship 10:00  
Meeting for Business 11:00  
Potluck 12:00

**This is also Food Bank  
Sunday**



I mentioned in a message recently that one of the early saints of the church suggested that nostalgia should be included on the list of “mortal” sins. I have to confess, as the Christmas season has descended upon us this year, I’ve become guilty of the sin of nostalgia. I guess I could rationalize my feelings as merely my reluctance to deal adequately with a paradigm shift in the way gifting is done. Today, when you ask “What would you like for Christmas?” the question solicits a more contractual response like: “You can get me (fill in the blank) for Christmas”. This new way seems quite practical. It certainly makes shopping easier for the giver even if that is done just after midnight, before the Thanksgiving turkey has had time to digest. It allows the intended recipient to scratch another item off on their wish list. It should pretty well do away with duplicates and should also reduce dramatically the amount of ‘returns’ that have to be cared for in the last week of the year.

Years ago a child would mail Santa a letter – like the bags of which were dumped in the court room to provide the climax for the movie Miracle on Thirty-Fourth Street. These letters would list a variety of things that the child might hope to receive, but sending the letter to an elusive, bigger than life, character—it most certainly wasn’t a done deal. Or they would visit a department store Santa and reveal their list of hopes to a jolly old elf— again reminiscent of Miracle on Thirty-Fourth Street. (See what I meant about nostalgia.)

In the movie A Christmas Story the unlikely gift longed for by a little boy was a Red Rider B.B. Gun. It was made clear, repeatedly, that because it was too dangerous his mother was opposed to it. Ralphie never held any expectation of actually getting the B.B. gun but he exhibited a great deal of hope. I think it is the suspense, the anticipation, that of course can result in disappointment, that I miss. I want the surprise.

Another piece of this new model suggests that we get what we want. That message, I believe, is just plain wrong. It sets up horrible expectations, especially in families who are severely impacted by current economic realities. God tends to work by way of surprise. Jesus’ untimely entrance caused great consternation. According to Matthew, Joseph had on his wish list a quiet end to their marriage contract. Maybe it’s sometimes good that we don’t get what we think we want?

I was delighted recently when I was told that for Christmas I could choose either a knitted cap or a pair of mittens and could choose the pattern and the color. It was the more contemporary way of asking that revered question. I guess what is good in this situation is that the gift isn’t so much the wonderfully textured and beautiful yarn but the loving heart that makes of it a gift. However it did remind me that there was another gift worth mentioning in A Christmas Story – the Rabbit Eared hooded pajamas, lovingly crafted by an out of touch relative. Can you imagine Ralphie answering the classic question with “Oh, for Christmas, I’d love to get a pair of pink Rabbit Eared hooded pajamas, Aunt Susie!”

While I adjust to the new practicality of Christmas giving I have to admit that I prefer a Christmas that is marked by suspense, surprise and hopeful expectation. And I think there is great value in having to dig down to find gratitude for the gift that wasn’t on my list at all? May God surprise you this Christmas.

Merry Christmas, “ol’ Nick”





### Books and Gospel Gear!

Our Thanksgiving/Christmas Offering is all about Books and Gospel Gear. How does that fit together? Evangelical Friends Mission, which we as a Friends Meeting are a part, have put forth a Christmas wish list for the Friends church leaders, teachers and students in other countries.



The Books portion is for a new Bible School in the Philippines where they are in need of a library filled with 5,000 books. What would a school be without a library? The government does not even recognize the school if it has no library. In Mexico, a Friends Church known as La Familia is an extension center of a local seminary. Books will give them resources for the students. Your gift of \$10.00 will buy one book for either the school or seminary.

Gospel Gear involves providing flashlights, umbrellas and raincoats for the lay leaders in the countries where Friends churches are present. Flashlights are to light the way in the evenings for those lay leaders who are having meetings in villages. Raincoats are for the monsoon season. Umbrellas serve for both the rain and the hot sun.

With your gift of \$4.50 you can purchase one flashlight, \$4.50 will also buy one umbrella, and the raincoat is \$21.00.

Your gift can be given anytime during the month of November and December. Envelopes will be provided for your convenience.

Give what you are able and together we can show our support to our Friends in Mexico, Philippines, Kenya, India, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Nepal just to name a few of the countries where there are Friends meetings.



## IT'S MOVIE TIME !!

The Christmas story has at its center the birth of a child who will change the world. The same theme permeates the Theater and Theology offering this month. Set in 2027, Children of Men, pictures a world that has fallen into chaos. No child has been born for 18 years and scientists are at a loss to explain why women can no longer become pregnant. Most of the world's societies have collapsed and in Britain, all foreigners have been declared illegal immigrants and are rounded up by British military forces to be deported. Theo Faren (Clive Owen), a beaten and downtrodden peace activist turned bureaucrat, unwittingly becomes involved in a precious secret, a lone pregnant woman, the miracle that can save humankind. With the help of aging hippie Jasper Palmer (Michael Caine), he must deliver her to safety via a perilous journey across England if humankind is to have a new future. This movie is rated R for violence and has been called “a thinking person's action movie.”



Join us this Friday Dec. 9, same time (7 pm), same place (Vintage Retirement Community) same refreshments (popcorn and lemonade).

## Quaker Spice!

The Peace Education Subcommittee of Northwest Yearly Meeting's Board of Christian Education has announced the theme of “**SPICE: the Friends Testimonies**” for Peace Month, January 2012. Our Peace with Justice Committee is helping us participate. Each Sunday during the month one of five members of our Peace with Justice Committee will share briefly on the topic for that week as we enter our time of un-programmed worship.

- Week One the topic is **Simplicity**
- Week Two the topic is **Peace**
- Week Three the topic is **Integrity**
- Week Four the topic is **Community**
- Week Five the topic is **Equality**.



Some of us appreciated using the Daily Reader in prior years. It will again be reproduced and made available for this year. The goal is that Friends will learn more about our history and traditions in order to discover ways to practice a Quaker understanding of Gospel in our twenty first century context.

A REPORT FROM THE MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS  
November 20, 2011

Clerk Bob Wiese opened the meeting for business with silence and prayer. Twenty-eight people were present.

**MINUTES:** The October Minutes were read and approved as corrected.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Norm Pasche presented the report.

Account named "Parsonage Sale" has been renamed "Building and Maintenance Reserve", which had combined into it a small account named "Building Fund".

Stewards recommend rolling Children's Meeting funds, Fundraiser/Rebate, and Kid's Club monies into General Fund Unrestricted, as Education Committee has budgeted amounts already. Discussion followed. Referred back to Education Committee to discuss future use of these monies. (Funds seem to have been originally designated for kids.)

We are currently operating in a monthly deficit.

2012 Proposed Budget distributed for first reading.

**ELDERS:** Charlene Cox presented the report (attached).

**MISSIONS:** Becky Williams reported (no written report).

The last three months, funds have been donated to Family Promise (f/k/a Interfaith Hospitality), Gideons and the Yearly Meeting teaching abroad program.

It is noted that several people from the Gideons have complimented us on the wonderful meals we provide and they are very appreciative.

The committee is working to get Nancy and Hal Thomas to visit.

**EDUCATION:** Amber Joplin presented the report (no written report.)

Training sessions will be held for youth workers and any individuals interested in working with the young people; there will also need to be a criminal background check (these checks are required to be done every 3 years).

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** by Nick Block.

A note from Kim Roach (former secretary) was read, apologizing for her somewhat abrupt departure and thanking us for being a safe and good place for her to work.

Work Source now has the information to post for a new secretary (16 hours/week).

A wedding was conducted for Nate Ziegler and Erin Schmidt.

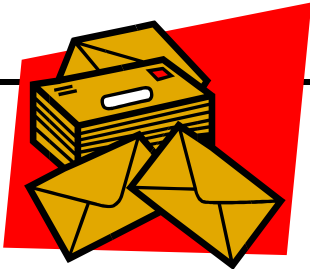
In place of the Advent observances, we will be focusing on the idea of gifts.

A chaplaincy corps is being created to assist with the Occupy Spokane movement and in dealing with safety issues that may arise, such as mental health, and unemployed who may be in more difficult straits.

There being no further business, Bob Wiese closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Keehnen  
Recording Clerk





The Education Committee is planning to send "Care Packages" to those within our circle of concern who are away from home (serving in the military, away at school, etc.) to remind them that there are people who love them and are holding them in the Light. If you would like to help with this project, please bring snacks, toiletry items, or other gifts that are small and "mailable" to put into the boxes (available in the front of the meeting house) for them during the next three weeks.



Dear Friends,

Greetings to you! We are now getting ready for the upcoming legislative session, and here are two save-the-dates in anticipation of another challenging year of public policy debate in our state.

#### FCWPP STEERING COMMITTEE

Every year we hold a special FCWPP Steering Committee meeting to plan for the upcoming legislative session as we attempt to identify our legislative priorities and get organized. This year we will be meeting on Saturday, January 7 from 9 am-1 pm at the Friends Meeting House in Tacoma. We especially urge each meeting to send a representative. Whether or not you are an official representative, however, please consider joining us this year in Tacoma to share your concerns, ideas and suggestions as to how we can be most effective in this coming legislative session. An agenda for the meeting and directions will be posted a week or so before the meeting.

#### QUAKER LOBBY DAY

We also want you to hold the date for our now fourth annual QUAKER LOBBY DAY in Olympia on Monday, February 20 (Presidents' Day) from 9 am through your lobby visits in the afternoon. The day consists of a gathering at the Olympia Meeting House in the morning where we will have an opportunity to worship together, hear a speaker or two, organize around a particular area of legislation for the day, receive some basic lobby training, and then go on to the Capitol grounds to engage in visits with our various representatives in the late morning, early afternoon.

We especially welcome those who have never been on a lobby visit before. You will find the opportunity to meet with your legislators and their staff as empowering as it is informative, and we will see that you are well prepared. Friends tend to be excellent lobbyists because we bring a discipline of listening, social consciousness about peace and justice, and long and well-respected history of Quaker engagement in public policy debate.

For those who have made lobby visits previously, this is an opportunity to reacquaint yourself with your legislator and their staff and further establish a working relationship with them. We know from studies and experience that building personal relationships with our elected officials makes it more likely that we will be much more effective in our advocacy when in the future we need to contact our legislators on a specific issue. Building a working relationship with your elected official is the difference between simply being an "activist" who advocates for a specific cause on a particular date, and being a "lobbyist" who establishes an ongoing relationship that builds trust and openness so that both parties can better listen and exchange information on a breadth of topics over an extended period of time.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (360) 341-1457.

In peace, Tom Ewell

### **New Year's Day 2012 You Are Invited**

*Bill is soon retiring (December 16th is his last work day) and you are invited to stop by for some refreshments at our home, 1334 W Dalke, between 2 pm and 5 pm to help us celebrate. We thought it appropriate to have this 'party' on New Year's day as we start a new chapter in our lives.*

*Bill and Pam Emery*

No gifts please.





I am thinking now about the future and how we will proceed  
And as I see my thoughts and yours I'm struck by our deep need

It's like we all can hear a Bell that reminds us of our Mission  
But if we follow that Bell-tone to its source there will be a great transition

Something will happen within our souls - A change that can't be reversed  
Placing power where it belongs in us - Healing everyone we've cursed

That healing tone that rings in me - I know it rings in you  
But there is a question we must answer - Can it ring in the stranger too?

That other that looks so unlike me - so full of arrogance and deceit  
Can it be the tone that calls me to be whole also calls the stranger to be complete?

When I feel the Bell inside me ring do I let it sound right through my being  
and out through everything I am - out to everyone I'm seeing?

Perhaps what would make those strangers whole is my un-muffled gift of ringing  
To awaken what still sleeps in them - the song of justice singing

Not Vengeance, I said Justice - no suffering brings healing  
The Universal Bell has no crack - its tone is perfectly appealing

Can I let this bell ring loud enough to wash away my indignation?  
To be replaced entirely by its compelling intonation?

One voice inside the mind seems to always answer "no"  
Obsessed to make the present like the past - it must predict how things will go

But if we seek to have something new - like a baby in a manger  
We will have to learn to ignore that voice and ring out to the stranger

By Jeremy Street



Open letter to our Legislators & our Community:

We're standing for the poor. Our missions and values demand that we do. We believe that legislative decisions involving budget cuts cannot continue to be made at the expense of the poor.

We believe there is a moral imperative to preserve services for our most vulnerable people – and a fiscal imperative, too. If services are delayed or eliminated, the ultimate costs to our communities will multiply.

Our people are already hurting – many are just barely hanging on - more cuts will be devastating. Please consider:

November 1st our adults with mental and physical disabilities (General Assistance – Unemployable) lost their GAU/Disability Lifeline benefits of \$176 per month. Now, if they are lucky, only 51% will receive help, but only for six months of rental assistance. Their disabilities will not disappear in six months.

Requests for Domestic Violence services have increased 21% in Spokane over the last three years - yet DSHS (Washington Department of Social and Health Services) is currently recommending a decrease in funding to Domestic Violence programs.

Untreated and under-treated mental illness is the single largest factor driving individuals into poverty. Of the 70,000 people served each year by Catholic Charities, at least 70% identify a mental health issue as a reason they sought help. So far this year Spokane Mental Health has seen a 20% increase in the number of assessments for involuntary psychiatric hospitalization. The State continues to cut funds to help the poor access mental health care.

One third of the homeless in Spokane are children and the number of homeless families with children has increased 38% in the past five years.

A single mother and baby receive \$385 per month from TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) but when mothers take low wage jobs they may lose their subsidized child care (the number of children receiving Working Connections subsidized child care has dropped 26% in the last three months). No wonder the incidents of shaken baby syndrome have nearly doubled. Funds for childcare centers serving poor families and for programs confronting and preventing child abuse/neglect have been cut drastically in the past 18 months. Sally's House (emergency foster care) and Transitions' Edu Care (child care for homeless families) will close if cuts are not restored or sufficient local funds secured.

In August nearly 700 households asked SNAP (Spokane Neighborhood Assistance Program) for housing or rental assistance. The House of Charity, Hope House and St. Margaret's homeless shelters are filled every night. (Over 900 people were turned away last year due to capacity issues just at those three shelters). The State continues to cut the dollars available to cities and counties for homeless services and shelters and several of our largest homeless service providers in Spokane are considering program closures/scale backs.

2nd Harvest has seen a 30% increase in requests for food assistance in the past two years. More cuts to Human Services and Emergency Food and Shelter Grants are scheduled in the coming months. Elimination to State Food Assistance Programs will affect 13,000 people in Washington. Where will people in need go for food and shelter? These are the most basic components to a life with dignity.

Providence Services, which include Sacred Heart and Holy Family Hospital project a \$34 million budget shortfall in 2011 and a \$61 million shortfall in 2012, with significant amounts of those losses coming from public funding cuts in reimbursements for health care. Meanwhile, Providence also already spends nearly \$100 million per year in Charity Care & Community Benefit donations.

We are equally concerned about the angry rhetoric against the poor. These are our people – our children, brothers, sisters, parents, aunts, uncles & cousins. We are troubled by those who would describe the poor and the fragile as being lazy or being the architects of their own suffering. As a society we are judged by how we take care of our most vulnerable neighbors.

We are a group of local non-profit and social service organizations – who serve over 150,000 different men, women and children each year. We also represent the source of thousands of paying jobs in our Spokane community. More importantly, we represent the last source of hope for people who have nowhere else to turn.

We ask that our legislators make decisions for the common good – taking into account the needs of people who cannot fight back.

People of compassion and faith, please join us. Tell your families, your friends, your neighbors and your legislators that you too, stand for the poor. Call your legislators – 1-800-562-6000 or email them using the following link: <https://dlr.leg.wa.gov/MemberEmail/Default.aspx>

We cannot continue to allow our elected officials and legislative bodies to make budgetary policy decisions on the backs of the poor. Signed by the following Non-Profit Agencies and Providers:

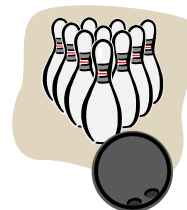
## Clean Water For The Children Of Gaza

Come bowl with local peace activists to raise money for a water filtration system for kindergarten children in Gaza.

Price includes bowling shoes and a drink.  
20 dollars for an individual sign up and 80 dollars for a team sign up.

December 14th 7 - 9 pm North Bowl Spokane

Sign up by calling 838 7870 or register online at: [www.pjals.org/bowling-for-water](http://www.pjals.org/bowling-for-water)



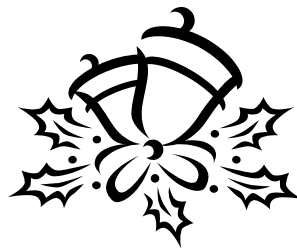


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# 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Birthdays & Anniversaries				1 TOPS 5pm P/J 6:30 pm	2	3 Kitty Bendixen-park
4 Bluegrass Christmas Party	5 Puckett 5pm Neighborhood party Education 7pm Jerry Park	6 Gideon Meal 5:30pm	7 Youth Activities 6pm Music team 6:30pm	8 TOPS 5pm Stew/trustees 7pm	9 Foresters 6pm	10 Sue's Walking Club 3-10pm
11	12 Elders 6:30pm	13	14 Youth Act. 6pm Music team 6:30pm Norm Pasche	15 TOPS 5pm	16 Trinity Stockler	17
	F A M	I L Y		P R O M	I S E	WEEK
18 Monthly Mtg/ Potluck Sue Kechnen	19 Worship Enhancement 5:30 pm At Block's	20 Linda Schwartz	21 Youth Activities 6pm Music team	22 TOPS 5pm Chris Beiers & Andrea Tuinstra	23 Bill Emery	24 Nelson Christmas Christmas Eve Worship 6pm
25 Christmas Worship 10am	26	27	28 Youth Activities 6pm Music team	29 TOPS 5pm	30	31



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Spokane, WA 99205

1612 W. Dalke

**Meeting**

**Spokane Friends**

### *Holding in the Light . . .*

- \* Paul & Martha Puckett as they adjust to their new home in Newberg, Oregon
- \* Amber's daughter
- \* Norm's friend Marsha
- \* Becky Williams' and her mother and father and the rest of her family.
- \* Those of our Meeting's families serving in the military
- \* Those in our care who are traveling
- \* Betty Bendixen as she is cared for by her family.