



The Tote Bag

PYM Religious Education
& Family Resources



April/May 2021

Dear Friends,

How we cross the threshold into the time "after" Covid has been on my mind. In some ways, with vaccines and outdoor weather, it feels like we're getting closer to an "after." We also know to remain vigilant, things can change, and it's unclear when children will receive vaccines. As we look toward the summer and fall, there are still many questions about resuming gathering in our meetings, including for First Day programs.

Perhaps the time "after" isn't going "back" or a return to "normal." Families may have been absent from online meeting for worship; children and youth have been away from the routines and peer community of First Day programs in-person. We have also been so creative, and tried many new things, in this time.

As we stand in doorways looking to "return," I see so much possibility -- to consider what we've experienced and learned in the last year+, and to rethink and reimagine how we welcome and include children, youth, and people who are parenting, more fully in meeting life.

Three opportunities to share:

- [A short questionnaire asking about your experiences, questions, and hopes.](#) Thank you for taking the time to share!
- [Looking Back & Ahead: slides with queries, articles, and resources](#)
- *Save the date and register!* [Tuesday, May 4, 6:30-8:30pm Gathering on Re-Opening](#) -- Friends will explore what are our biggest challenges

and our biggest opportunities when we re-open?

Thank you for passing along to youth and families in your meeting the information about events shared below!

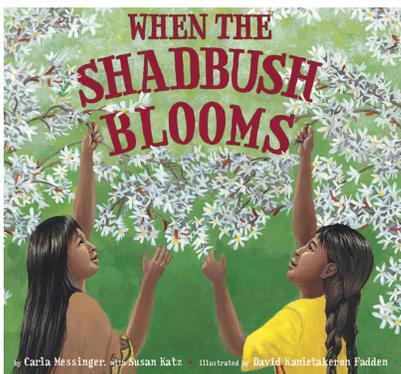
In friendship and service,

Melinda Wenner Bradley
Youth Religious Life Coordinator
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Books and Ideas:

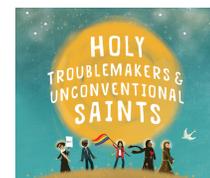


For Friends living on the traditional lands of the Lenape People, [this book](#) is a treasure and teaching tool. Told in the voices of "Traditional Sister" and "Contemporary Sister," the story takes us through the seasons on the land with their families in the past and present. A story about tradition and change, celebrating Lenape culture.

Holy Troublemakers and Unconventional Saints

[This wonderful book now has a companion curriculum!](#)

If your meeting is interested in this recommended resource, [please be in touch with me directly](#) so that PYM can get a copy of the book to you!





From Sesame Street: [Coming Together: Talking to Children About Race and Identity](#)

To share with families! Developmentally appropriate resources for exploring racial justice and celebrating identity with young children. It's Sesame Street, so there are songs, stories, activities, and familiar furry friends to help.

"God's Invitation to Creative Play"

Pendle Hill Pamphlet #468 by Jesse White is a joy to read! Friends supporting children's programs in meetings, and parents, will appreciate her insights about her childhood in a meeting and the importance of play for all ages. [Learn more about Pendle Hill Pamphlets here.](#)



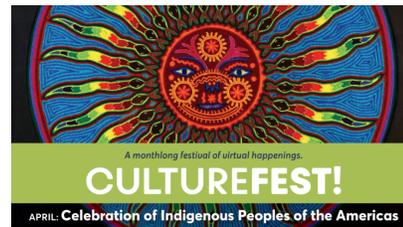
Workshops and Programs:

April Conversation Circles from [QREC](#): April 20 & 22
[Collaborative Quaker Youth Ministry: Linking Yearly Meetings, Monthly Meetings and Quaker Camps](#)

**pre-registration is required*

Penn Museum "CultureFest!" in April:
[Celebration of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas](#)

Take a virtual tour of Native American artifacts in the Museum's collection, learn how to play an Indigenous sport, meet a skilled Tlingit artist and language expert, and more. There's an activity for every age!



Talking with Kids About Identity Series: The next workshop in the series, [Talking with Kids About Family Structure](#), a workshop for parents, educators, and caregivers of children 3-9 years old, will be held on Zoom on **May 19, 7-8:40pm EDT.**

Sharing Ideas for First Day programs:

Patterns and Examples!

Blessed are . . . This spring, the children in our meeting spent three-weeks exploring the Beatitudes. I've added a powerpoint with the resources and ways we approached this topic to the "Patterns and Examples" folder that we share in Drive. I hope as you create programs, activities, and try ideas you're excited about, you'll share your lesson plans, handouts, calendars, etc. The place for easy access and sharing among our Community of Practice:



The [folder in Google Drive is available](#) to contribute and find fresh ideas.

PYM Camp Weekend for Youth & Families April 30-May 2 *Online and free*

All PYM youth and families are invited to join the Youth Programs staff for a weekend of activities that will center fellowship, fun, and a “camp vibe.”



MSF and Young Friends cannot be together at Camp Swatara with our Caln Quarter Friends this year, and our Spring Family Overnight won't be at Camp Dark Waters this spring, but we can be ALL together in spirit and on Zoom!

The schedule for the weekend includes programs for all ages — Pick and choose what's of interest and join! *We will look forward to resuming our in-person camping weekends in 2022!*

[Registration is open! More information on the PYM website!](#)

**Save the Dates!
Share with Families!**

Saturday, May 22, 11am-1pm *Gardening at Historic Arch Street Meeting House*

Join Friends of all ages and Youth Programs staff members to build garden boxes, get your hands in the dirt, and plant seeds for a community garden that will benefit Philadelphians. Bring a picnic lunch and take a meeting house tour! (Friends who register will receive information about safety practices for this in-person event.) Watch for registration and details on the [PYM](#) and [Arch Street Meeting House](#) websites!



July 27-August 1* -- *Annual Sessions*

Again this year, we're hosting Children's Sessions, Middle School Friends, and Young Friends (high school) online for Annual Sessions, with fellowship, fun, learning, and spiritual community. Watch for details in early June!

*[The Runway to Annual Sessions starts May 4!](#) Weeks of workshops, gatherings, and opportunities to connect with the work and witness of our community.

FGC Junior Gathering Summer 2021

FGC [Gathering](#) will be online this year from June 27 – July 3. Visit the FGC website for more information about [Junior Gathering](#) and [High School Program](#).

Junior Gathering serves families with infants through 9th Graders. The themes of the 2021 Junior Gathering are *culture, place, and belonging*. The week includes the StoryTime with the People of Color Center again this year. The **High School Program** will begin with a half-day anti-racism and decolonizing for liberation training. The training will be art-infused and healing-informed and will engage participants through sensory exploration. Read what youth and families are saying at on the [Testimonials](#) webpage!



[Registration](#) for Gathering opens April 15 and is [Pay as Led](#).

Stay in touch!



[The Quaker Religious Education Collaborative \(QREC\)](#) has a group on Facebook for sharing of support and resources, [Valiant Together](#). Visit [PYM Religious Education](#) for resources and support. When you find, "*I have a question about resources, programs . . . or a great idea to share!*" reach out to Melinda Wenner Bradley, Youth Religious Life Coordinator, MWennerBradley@pym.org

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