



The Tote Bag

PYM Religious Education
& Family Resources



November 2021

Dear Friends,

Last summer, a Friend shared these thoughts with me and gave permission to share more widely:

"I remember well those adult Friends who reached out to me all through my growing up years. To include me, to value me for me, and to guide me through my early Friend's journey in conjunction with the teaching and patterning of my parents have truly shaped who I am as a Friend today."

Serita Spadoni, Birmingham Meeting

What a beautiful description of the possibility for care and relationship with the children and young people in meetings -- and support for their parents, too. Knowing one another across generations, and sharing our paths as Friends, is a gift.

**I wonder how your meeting is finding ways to
nurture intergenerational community?**

In service and joy,
Melinda Wenner Bradley
Youth Religious Life Coordinator
mwennerbradley@pym.org

Recipients are subscribed to the PYM Religious Education news list.

REsources for Meetings & Home

Ideas from Meetings!

More wisdom from Birmingham Meeting to add to the sharing above -- thank you, Friends.

One thing we do, which some folks might find useful, is that at the top of the page of our RE committee meeting minutes each month, our recording clerk lists *why we do what we do and what we hope to achieve*. That way our goals are right in front of us as regular reminders. This list was created when we had a session to think about what we were doing and why. We find it helpful to keep us grounded.

The Religious Education Committee provides programming for Birmingham Meeting's children and youth that

- Makes them feel safe, welcomed, valued, and loved*
- Reflects Quaker values and the Quaker Testimonies*
- Connects them to the Birmingham Meeting community*
- Supports and involves families*
- Inspires wonder, thought, and reflection*
- Is a meaningful part of each child's or youth's spiritual journey*

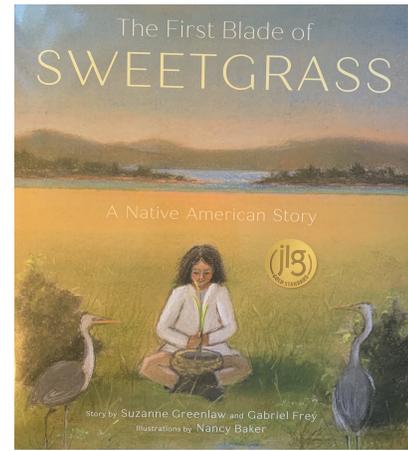
Books and Resources:

While right relationship with Indigenous people is a topic for all the time, November is Native American Heritage Month and creates an opportunity to center Native voices in stories and conversations with children. Keep this resource and the guidance it provides in mind when looking at books:

["Choosing Excellent Children's Books By & About American Indians"](#)

- New this month: [100 Native American Books for Children and Teens from Colours of Us](#)
- Here are titles of some favorites on my shelves this fall:

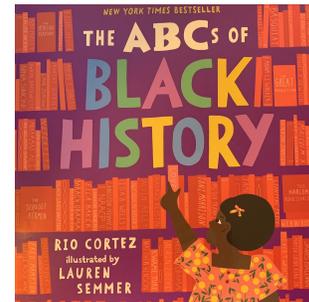
- *When the Shadbush Blooms* by Carla Messinger -- about the traditional and modern Lenape people whose land we live on in much of the PYM region
- *The First Blade of Sweetgrass* by Suzanne Greenlaw and Gabriel Frey
- *We Are Still Here! Native American Truths Everyone Should Know* by Traci Sorell
- *We Are Grateful Otsaliheliga* by Traci Sorell
- *Fry Bread* by Kevin Noble Maillard



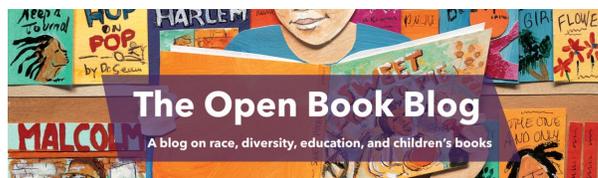
Anti-racism Learning and Action

For parents and adults working with children:

This book is wonderful! [***The ABCs of Black History***](#) by Rio Cortez opens with the quote from James Baldwin: *"History is not the past. We carry our history with us. We are our history."* An extensive "Terms and Figures" section expands on each page and supports discussion, exploration, and celebration.



This is a great blog with lots to explore . . .



[Watch the Webinar: Children's Books About Joy](#)

[Booklist: CHILDREN'S BOOKS ABOUT JOY](#)

"A disproportionate number of books about BIPOC protagonists focus on their marginalization. Though it is important for children to understand the history and complexity of oppression, racism, and discrimination, children—especially children of color—also deserve to see themselves thrive and to experience the joy of being part of a loving community. We've compiled a list of diverse books that reflect the daily lives of children and the joy of play, family and friends, and being themselves!"

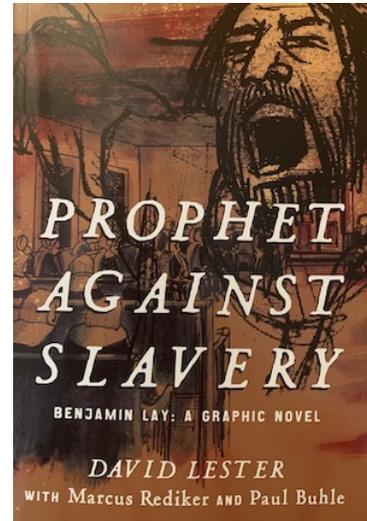
NEW!

[Prophet Against Slavery, Benjamin Lay: A Graphic Novel](#)

For older elementary and middle school

"*Prophet Against Slavery* is an action-packed chronicle of the remarkable and radical Benjamin Lay, based on the award-winning biography by Marcus Rediker that sparked the Quaker community to re-embrace Lay after 280 years of disownment. Graphic novelist David Lester brings the full scope of Lay's activism and ideas to life."

Brief essays at the end of the book can be read first to inform the history and intentions of the story.



PYM Religious Ed Community Conversations

Thursday, December 2 at 7:00pm online



Exploring prayer with children

There are many ways to pray, and teach prayer. What are some we use or are curious about how to share with young people in our meetings? (We'll talk a little about resources for Christmas, too!)

[Register to receive the Zoom link.](#)

Quaker Religious Education Collaborative Upcoming Events!

Conversation Circles on Nov. 16 at 1pm ET and Nov. 18 at 8pm ET

Quaker Youth: Faith formation through action

- What types of experiences or practices can ignite curiosity in young Friends about Quaker faith and practice?
- How can we offer meaningful experience of Quaker practice as young Friends come back together after this long time apart?
- **[Registration and great list of resources here!](#)**

Tuesday, December 7 at 7:30 PM ET online

"Preparation, Formation and Belonging: New growth from RE Roots" is a reprise of the conference keynote delivered in August by Melinda Wenner Bradley from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. [Register for the event here!](#)

Please share: an invitation to Families who may be interested to learn about Quaker Boarding Schools

Families are invited to join a Zoom session in which current parents and a recent graduate speak to why selecting a Quaker Boarding school mattered to them. Quaker Boarding Schools provide exposure to Quaker educators and an environment in which Quaker values are lived out daily. These are special communities that seek out and treasure the Light in each student and that help each student more fully discover what makes them special.

Tuesday, November 16th @ 7:00PM EST
[Register here](#)

"Keeping the Light" is a collaborative partnership in support of Mid-Atlantic Quaker Boarding Schools: George School (PA), Sandy Spring Friends School (MD), and Westtown School (PA).



Sharing Ideas for First Day programs: Patterns and Examples!

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.



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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