

THE QUAKER INSTITUTE:

Living Our Testimonies in
“The Fierce Urgency of Now”



PENDLE HILL

A Quaker Study, Retreat, and Conference Center

Proposed Schedule and Conference Guide
2024

Welcome to The Quaker Institute 2024

“We are not for Names, nor Men, nor Titles of Government, nor are we for this Party, nor against the other, because of its Name and Pretense; but we are for Justice and Mercy, and Truth and Peace, and true Freedom, that these may be exalted in our Nation.” —Edward Burrough, 1659

*“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with **the fierce urgency of now**. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history there is such a thing as being too late.” —Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1967*

As we face the illumination and escalation of longstanding structures of violence both in the U.S. and globally, and prepare for the 2024 US elections, Pendle Hill invites Friends to learn, vision, worship, and break bread together. We will explore the role of our communities in the context of our current political moment. We hope participants will leave this gathering spiritually grounded, with new relationships, strategies, and practices for living our testimonies, speaking truth, and walking with integrity through the world as Friends.

We will explore the queries below and those that rise in our time together, and we invite you to bring the queries that your Meetings, Friends’ organizations, and communities are grappling with:

- How do we live our testimonies with integrity today?
- When do we choose to name our political realities with truth and courage? When does silence leave space for Spirit, and when does it perpetuate harm?
- How does our commitment to answering that of God in everyone guide our speech and our action in this moment of polarization?
- What is the role of ministry in this time of political upheaval and violence?
- What visions, queries, and spiritual practices does the Religious Society of Friends have to offer us now?
- How can we rededicate ourselves to the struggle for a new world while grounding in our faith and the life of the Spirit?

Schedule

Day	Time	Program Title
Thurs	4:00–5:30pm	Registration
	6:00–7:00pm	<i>Dinner</i>
	7:30–9:00pm	Welcome Session with Francisco Burgos and Niyonu Spann
Fri	7:30–8:30am	<i>Breakfast</i>
	8:30–9:15am	Meeting for Worship
	9:30–11:30am	Plenary Session - Responding to Growing Political Polarization: Lessons from 17th and 20th Century Quaker History. George Lakey in conversation with Dwight Dunston and Ingrid Lakey
	12:00–1:00pm	<i>Lunch</i>
	1:15–2:15 pm	Affinity Spaces
	2:30–4:00pm	Breakout Workshops 1
	4:30–6:00pm	Breakout Workshops 2
	6:00–7:00pm	<i>Dinner</i>
	7:30–9:00pm	Audio Witness: Using Podcasting to Explore Testimonies in Community. Pendle Hill podcast host Dwight Dunston and producer Anna Hill/ Social Time
	Sat	7:30–8:30am
8:30–9:15am		Meeting for Worship
10:00–11:30am		Plenary Session – Guardians of the Status Quo: Recognizing and Disrupting Our Patterns, with LJ Boswell and Lauren Brownlee
12:00–1:00pm		<i>Lunch</i>
1:15–2:15pm		Affinity Spaces
2:30–4:00pm		Breakout Workshops 3
4:30–6:00pm		Breakout Workshops 4
6:00–7:00pm		<i>Dinner</i>
7:30–9:00pm	Pendle Hill Spring Chorus "The Time is Now: Music for the Current Era" and Community Singing/Social Time	
Sun	7:30–8:30am	<i>Breakfast</i>
	8:30–9:15am	Meeting for Worship
	10:00-11:30	Closing Session
	12:00–1:00pm	<i>Lunch</i>

Breakout Workshops

Breakout Workshops 1, Friday 2:30 – 4:00 pm

Living the Peace Testimony in Dark Times: No More Scapegoats, with Tom Gates

What might the peace testimony mean in a time when armed conflict seems endless, and deep partisan divisions are ever-increasing? One approach to understanding our peace testimony is through Rene Girard's "scapegoat" interpretation ("mimetic theory"). We will summarize Girard's insights, and explore how it might be relevant to understanding and living our peace testimony today.

Quaker Action for a More Just and Sustainable World, with Brian Blackmore and Lina Blount

Join us to learn some of the theory of change behind people powered social movements and develop skills and understanding for the work you may feel called to do. What are the structures of power which reinforce injustices, and how can we effectively challenge them? What roles can we play to make a difference towards a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world? What thoughts and feelings stand in our way? Towards the end of this workshop, we will share opportunities for Friends to get involved in AFSC and EQAT's programs and campaigns, and will share stories of our work throughout.

Visualizing Our Ministry: Creating your Own Linocut Peace Poster, with Todd Drake

This workshop will be repeated on Saturday

Learn the basics of lino cutting and create a peace poster based on your abilities. No prior art experience required. These prints will be shared through The Quaker Institute and participants will be able to take them home.

Breakout Workshops 2, Friday 4:30 – 6:00 pm

Building Skills and Grounding for Uncertain Times, with Eileen Flanagan and Ingrid Lakey

Many Friends are afraid of what is happening in our country and the world. In this session, we will make space to explore our fears and practice ways to build our spiritual grounding and skills, so we are not overcome by fear, however we might be led to act.

Grief + Gratitude: Obeying the Ebbs and Flows of Our Hearts, with Dwight Dunston

As things intensify in the current social and political climate, we are being asked to both notice with much acuteness the wonder and splendor of life, while also carefully cultivating, as Francis Weller puts it, an "apprenticeship with sorrow." In this workshop, participants will explore a gratitude and grief practice together, sharing about the experiences and the ways such practice can support us to have a healthy, balanced spiritual life.

The US, Zionism, and Palestinian Rights: Quaker Discernment and Dialogue on Israel/Palestine, with Steve Chase

In this interactive and reflective workshop, we will address the diversity of Quaker responses to the crisis historically and now, as well as engage in deep and respectful dialogue and discern together what might be a faithful response to US policy towards Israel/Palestine.

Breakout Workshops 3, Saturday 2:30 – 4:00 pm

Grieving Space for “the Fierce Urgency of Now,” with Rev. Rhetta Morgan

Come together to sit in compassion and worship, and allow space to notice and tend to the feelings this urgent moment elicits. The workshop will offer space for witnessing and sharing our realities, and practices for metabolizing our grief.

Uprooting Patterns of Racism and Planting Seeds of Racial Justice in Quaker Communities: Action Planning for Change, with LJ Boswell and Lauren Brownlee

In this practical exploration we will build on the work of the “Guardians of the Status Quo” plenary by supporting you to consider how the “Patterns of Racial Wounding and Racial Justice in Quaker Communities” guide can be a resource for your communities. We will give examples of how it has been used in other contexts and F/friends will come away with plans you can implement in your own Quaker spaces.

Visualizing Our Ministry: Creating your Own Linocut Peace Poster, with Todd Drake

This workshop is also offered Friday.

Learn the basics of lino cutting and create a peace poster based on your abilities. No prior art experience required. These prints will be shared through The Quaker Institute and participants will be able to take them home.

Breakout Workshops 4, Saturday Friday 4:30 – 6:00 pm

From Woolman Land (Back) to Nisenan Land: From Reckoning to Rematriation, with Dorothy Henderson

Day unto day takes up the story. And night unto night makes known the message. Psalm 19:2, Grail Psalms. As we move beyond land acknowledgment to answer the call for rematriation, what stories do we have to tell to tell the truth? What messages are given to us to strengthen our voices? In this workshop, one story of denial, awakening and reckoning as Woolman land becomes Nisenan land (again) invites other stories, other messages. As we listen, can we find ourselves in each other’s stories? Can we begin to build a widening circle of stories, into a future of rematriation?

Politics and Worship: Sink Down to the Seed, with Lori Piñeiro Sinitzky

Ever have a fierce political concern and a leading to share it in meeting for worship? Friends advise that meeting for worship is not a place for political messages. So what do we do when such concerns arise? We’ll explore how to notice when such concerns show up, and how to follow the thread of political messages to their source.

Elder and Leader Bios – Alphabetical by First Name

Elders



,O is a Friend and co-clerk of the Racial Healing and Wholeness Committee at Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. They engage in environmental racial justice work as a community activist in the Philadelphia area. They serve as Elder for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PhYM) and have facilitated programming for Annual Sessions Spiritual Formation Retreat. ,O has also led On Truth & Transformation workshops with PhYM Quaker Life Counsel, exploring the transformative practice of deep listening to increase our capacity for healing through compassionate responses to incidents of racial wounding.



Ann Jerome is returning to Pendle Hill as a Friend in Residence. A longtime Friend active in Southeastern Yearly Meeting, Ann was born and raised in West Philadelphia. She earned degrees in American Studies from Yale and Brown before moving to central Florida to join the faculty at Stetson University. Her life's work has spanned academia, complementary and alternative medicine, and nonprofit management, most recently turning to writing and service in the Quaker world. Pendle Hill has been a touchstone in Ann's life since her first visit in 1979, when she stepped into Brinton House and heard the word "Home."

Leaders



Anna Hill (she/her) serves as the education engagement coordinator at Pendle Hill and the producer of Pendle Hill's podcast, *The Seed: Conversations for Radical Hope*. She previously served as a Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow and is currently based in Philadelphia.



Benigno Sánchez-Eppler (former Carroll Scholar) worshiped with Quakers for the first time in 1981 and soon became a member of the Religious Society of Friends at Homewood Friends in Baltimore Yearly Meeting in the mid-1980s. During the 1990s he joined Northampton Monthly Meeting and worked with Friends in Cuba and New England to create a sister yearly meeting. He teaches at Amherst College, and at the Cuban Quaker Peace Institute of Cuba Yearly Meeting. Together with Susan Furry he is a founding co-editor and translator for raicescuqueras.org, an online library of Quaker classics in Spanish. He is a teacher of the 2024 Spring Term.



Brian Blackmore is the Director of Quaker Engagement at the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) where he works to build enduring relationships between AFSC and Quaker faith communities, Friends schools, and Quaker organizations worldwide. Before coming to AFSC, Brian was the Religious Studies Department Chair and Quaker Worship and Spiritual Life Coordinator at Westtown School. He is a member of Gainesville Monthly Meeting, a part of Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM), and he holds a PhD in Religious Studies from Temple University with a research focus on the role that Quakers played in the advancement of gay rights during the mid-twentieth century.



Dorothy Henderson (Carroll Scholar) is a member of Grass Valley Friends Meeting in the Sierra Nevada foothills. After becoming a Quaker in her early thirties, Dorothy was active in the Sanctuary movement, war tax resistance, and as a civil disobedient. Several years ago, Dorothy wrote about being guided by the Psalms and the words of Jesus. That writing and that guidance led to a three-year sojourn with a group of white Quaker Friends into their privilege, their complicity in racism and oppression, and their personal responsibility to live truth with love. Dorothy plans to integrate her earlier writing with new work and publish a book that presents the Bible as a living resource for spiritual growth in our Quaker communities.



Dwight Dunston is a West Philly-based facilitator, hip-hop artist, educator, and activist who has brought his creativity, care, and compassion to schools, community centers, retirement homes, festivals, and stadiums all over the country and internationally. He is the host of Pendle Hill's podcast, *The Seed: Conversations for Radical Hope*, and a teacher of Pendle Hill's Spring Term.



Eileen Flanagan has served as both clerk and campaign director of Earth Quaker Action Team, which uses nonviolent direct action to pressure corporations contributing to climate change. She has also been a Pendle Hill Resident Teacher, a university lecturer on racism, and Trainings Coordinator for Choose Democracy, which trained 10,000 people in nonviolent strategies to prevent a coup in the lead up to the 2020 election. Her online courses on effective activism have engaged people around the world. The award-winning author of three books, she tells the story of her leading to work on climate justice in *Renewable: One Woman's Search for Simplicity, Faithfulness, and Hope*. Read more about her work at eileenflanagan.com



Francisco Burgos is the executive director at Pendle Hill and has facilitated spiritual retreats and *lectio divina* sessions for many audiences. Francisco was a De La Salle Christian Brother for almost ten years, serving in Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Costa Rica, and has been a Friend since 2004. He is a member of Harrisburg Friends Meeting and an attender of meetings including Monteverde Friends Meeting in Costa Rica and Adelphi Friends Meeting in Maryland.



George Lakey, 86, taught social change for four years at Crozer Theological Seminary in its division named the Martin Luther King, Jr. School of Social Change, and later at Pendle Hill, Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges and the University of Pennsylvania. For the National Council of Churches he served on the nonviolence training staff for Mississippi Freedom Summer 1964, which prepared nearly a thousand college students to go to Mississippi to run Freedom Schools and do voter education. His first of many arrests for civil disobedience was in the civil rights movement. He has spoken at churches and meetinghouses across the U.S. and Europe, and led trainings in Thailand, Burman, and Cambodia. George Lakey's eleven books and hundreds of articles focus on the application of peace and nonviolence in situations of war, inequality and injustice. His 2022 memoir shares adventures and his spiritual undergirding: *Dancing with History: A Life for Peace and Justice*, published by Seven Stories Press.



Ingrid Lakey is one of the founders of Earth Quaker Action Team, a grassroots organization working to build a just and sustainable economy using nonviolent direct action campaigns. More than ten years ago, she gave up a career in public radio to follow her leading to be a climate justice activist. Ingrid has been a trainer and facilitator for 25 years, leading workshops on anti-racism, diversity, team building, non-violent direct action, and conflict. She is a member of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting.



Lauren Brownlee, a member of Bethesda Friends Meeting (BYM), is Deputy General Secretary at the Friends Committee on National Legislation. She leads FCNL's Governance, Community and Culture department and helps to steward FCNL's shared anti-racism, anti-bias, justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion commitments. Lauren previously served on FCNL's General Committee and Friends General Conference's Central Committee, and currently serves as a co-clerk of the Quaker Coalition for Uprooting Racism Steering Committee and a co-clerk of the on the American Friends Service Committee's Community, Equity, and Justice Board Committee. Before coming to FCNL, Lauren was the upper school head at Carolina Friends School and, before that, the director of social action at Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart.



Lina Blount is an organizer, trainer, and nonviolent action strategist who has been working on environmental justice campaigns in the Philadelphia area for over a decade, currently as the Director of Strategy and Partnerships with the Earth Quaker Action Team. Lina worked on the education team at Pendle Hill Quaker retreat and study center for over six years and was on the Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT) board from 2013-2020. Lina has also worked with the Divestment Student Network and spent two years as a canvas director and anti-fracking organizer in Pennsylvania. Originally from the pacific northwest, Lina loves spending time around trees and mountains. Lina considers herself Quaker and the Earth Quaker Action Team her primary spiritual community.



LJ Boswell, M.Div, M.Ed, is passionate about living and serving at the intersection of spirituality, creativity and social justice. LJ is a white, queer, Quaker mystic, [spiritual director](#), [artist](#) and [chaplain](#) with over 20 years experience in educational and organizational management and racial justice education. They were a founding member of New England Yearly Meeting's Noticing Patterns of Oppression and Faithfulness and have also facilitated many opportunities for Quakers to talk and reflect on race, including a bi-weekly drop in group for New England Quakers that met for over two years. They are a member of Humboldt Friends Meeting in California and currently attend Putney Friends Meeting in Vt.



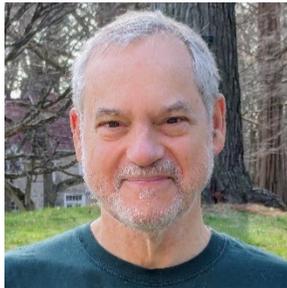
Lori Piñeiro Sinitzky (Ashkenazi and Caribbean) is an Equity, Justice, and Inclusion educator. She is informed by her identity as a 52-year-old cisgender woman. She is a member of Green Street Meeting in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and one of the clerks of the 2024 FGC Gathering. She is a single mother of two young adult children and works to create a liberated and just world in which they can live and thrive.



Niyonu Spann is a member of Chester Monthly Meeting and taught in Friends schools for thirteen years. She brings over 30 years as an organization development practitioner with a current focus on root-level transformation. She is leading an effort to found a high school, Academy for Peace & Liberation Education, a calling that came to her while she served as Dean at Pendle Hill. Niyonu is also a trained meditation teacher and singer-songwriter. In 2021, Niyonu released her second solo album, *Spirit Fuel*.



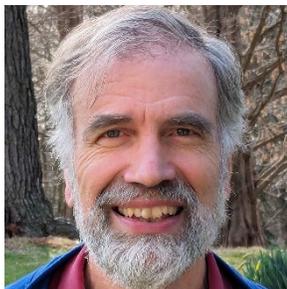
Reverend Rhetta Morgan, who will be serving as Artist in Residence at Pendle Hill between Fall of 2023 until late Spring 2024, is a singing healer, spiritual activist, and interfaith minister who has been gathering tools for healing and inspiration for over 40 years. Through her gifts of prayer, poetry, facilitation, and sermonizing, she cultivates hope and nurtures connection in her community as a pathway back to belonging and wholeness. As a facilitator and coach, Rhetta is known for her ability to support others to be bold, heal their self-limiting beliefs, and integrate their internal healing with their social movement work. This support is essential to cultivate the powerful spiritual activism that is needed in these times.



Steve Chase (Cadbury Scholar) is a long-time Quaker activist, educator, and writer living in Washington, DC. A member of Friends Meeting of Washington and the Quaker Palestine Israel Network, he is the author of the Pendle Hill pamphlet *Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions? A Quaker Zionist Rethinks Palestinian Rights*. He is currently working on a book entitled *Seeking Justice in the Holy Land: The Evolution of Quaker Perspectives on Israel/Palestine*. He also visited Israel/Palestine in June 2023 as part of an annual Quaker service-learning delegation sponsored by Friends United Meeting.



Todd Drake is an artist and experienced teacher living in the East Village area of Manhattan in New York City. During the Covid Pandemic he stayed, along with his wife, to continue running a Quaker collaborative community called Penington Friends House. Drake has also collaborated with other Quakers in creating “Quaker Canvassing Peace Walks” that allow Quakers to engage successfully with other people across political divides. Today, Drake continues to print and post his linocuts and silkscreens. His most recent posters speak to how war begets war. Originally from North Carolina where he earned an MFA in Painting, he was also a Rockefeller Fellow at the University of Chapel Hill. Drake has exhibited his work all over the United States and overseas, including in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Palestine. Drake is a member of the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting. You can follow his work on Instagram @QuakerPirate.



Tom Gates (Carroll Scholar) is a member of Lancaster (PA) Friends Meeting, and is the 2023-24 Kenneth Carroll scholar in residence for Biblical and Quaker studies at Pendle Hill. He is currently working on a book on how Girard’s mimetic theory, the Bible, and the experience of early Friends can inform each other.

