



# THE VIEW FROM PENDLE HILL

Francisco Burgos, Executive Director

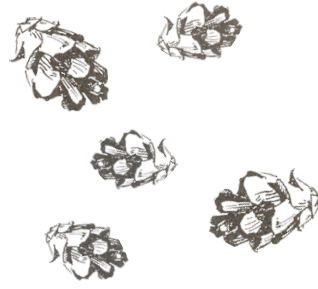
Dear Friends,

February 2024

Each time I go for a hike, I like to pay attention to those moments after a steep climb when I can pause, catch my breath, and appreciate the labor that brought me to that resting point. It is often in that moment, when I pick my head back up and realize there's more trail ahead than I could see at first, that I feel a call to linger in that spot, perhaps to write in my journal or ask for conversation with the Divine, before I renew the journey up the mountain.

I can't help but feel that Pendle Hill stands in such a moment now. We have climbed through the difficult challenges of closing and reopening our Quaker retreat center over the past three years, with Herculean efforts that leave many of us still catching our breath. We are simultaneously seeing new possibilities for how Pendle Hill can adapt and thrive in the future. I want to share with you today three lessons the pandemic has solidified for us, and three goals these past years have encouraged us to walk towards. Certainly, there are some things that living through the pandemic has affirmed for us about who Pendle Hill is and why we have persevered, and yet, there are also ways for us to renew our purpose to experiment with ideas and lead the way towards the personal and communal transformation envisioned in our mission. Welcome to The View from Pendle Hill in 2024.

Today, Pendle Hill is once again welcoming and supporting people and organizations as they engage deeply in learning and transformation. The reopening of our spaces made clear to me again that ours is a community of the faithful and the hopeful, who are **united in a Quaker belief in liberation**. As our workshops returned, I saw reignited interest in making spaces safer and more accessible, and in lifting each other up through barriers of injustice and inequality. We received this social witness in recent [First Monday Lectures](#), which I recommend viewing online: January's "[Addressing Patterns of Racial Wounding and Racial Justice in Quaker Communities](#)" and February's "[Truth and Justice: The BlackQuaker Project Challenges Quakerism in the 21st Century](#)." I hope you can engage in some of our upcoming workshops furthering liberation work in our community, like [Dreaming Sanctuary](#), [Beyond Diversity 101](#), [Clearness Committees](#), and [The Quaker Institute](#).



## *"I am so grateful*

*for the virtual experiences that Pendle Hill offers, particularly morning worship. As someone who can no longer be indoors with others, it is a way I can be part of the beloved community."*

The pandemic's challenges also reaffirmed that **Pendle Hill's faith community is an active and vibrant hub for seekers expecting divine guidance**. We experience this daily in [meeting for worship](#) from the Barn, which continues to offer insights on how we worship together in a hybrid setting. I'm so grateful for the financial support that made it possible in December to install professional quality audio/visual broadcasting equipment in the worship room, making worship more accessible

with better connection, picture, and sound quality. The Pendle Hill tradition of starting our days in worship together looks different than it did in the past, but for the nearly 100 F/friends who gather on any given morning from around the world, we know it is just as strong.

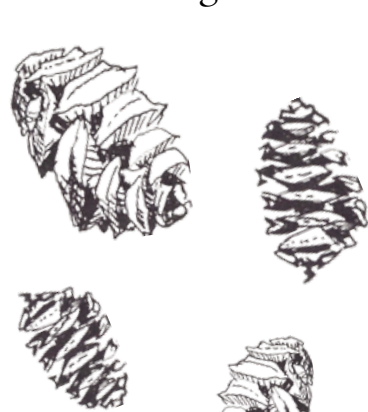
These past few years have also confirmed the **importance of our role as host to spiritual and thought leaders who are furthering important conversations in our world**. Our unique position allows us to welcome and sponsor on-campus scholars and sojourners, and to promote conversations through our podcast and pamphlet series. Today, Pendle Hill is supporting the work of our [resident and scholar community](#), which includes Resident Friend, Ann Jerome and Artist in Residence, Reverend Rhetta Morgan; and Resident Scholars Tom Gates, Dorothy Henderson, Calliope George, and Steve Chase. You can learn more about these individuals' work on our website, including Steve's recent talk, "[Why Peace with Justice? Reflections on a Quaker Delegation to Israel/Palestine](#)." Other voices are being lifted up through Pendle Hill's podcast, [The Seed: Conversations for Radical Hope](#), including Parker Palmer, who discusses how Pendle Hill's nurturing of both spiritual and scholarly conversations influenced his own work. And perhaps the most well-known way we continue to amplify voices is through the [Pendle Hill Pamphlet series](#), which will be celebrating its 90th anniversary this spring.

While the pandemic served to magnify these institutional strengths, it also highlighted how Pendle Hill must keep trekking up this mountain as we respond to the dynamic changes of the day. Around these still-forming edges of Pendle Hill, we are exercising our experimental mindsets with new programming, evaluating new ideas, and making iterative refinements to better realize our mission. There are many queries that guide me as I think about Pendle Hill's future, and here are three that I return to often.



Line art in this document by Glen Hutcheson and Alison Belding

**What does radical hospitality look like online, and how can Pendle Hill support more hybrid connections to ease a growing epidemic of loneliness?** We know how our environment on campus can promote connections and intentional community, and we are actively working to create equally safe and supportive spaces in hybrid and online settings. We have refined our use of technological equipment, particularly to advance accessibility, and are working consistently to support greater safety and inclusivity in our online spaces. With people of all ages and backgrounds struggling with isolation, Pendle Hill has become a vital resource to many for cultivating reflection and inner peace wherever they are in the world. We are connecting more with F/friends who are not able to visit campus but can share valuable ministry from across the globe. Our work in these areas is still just beginning.



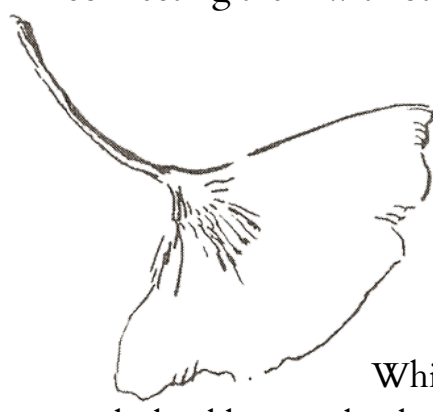
**How can Pendle Hill safely support the conflicting viewpoints and beliefs that are inevitable and essential in a community like ours dedicated to individual and collective social witness?** As a Quaker center welcoming all for Spirit-led learning, retreat, and community, we

must be prepared to navigate conflicting perspectives and experiences when they arise. To better promote this mission inside and out of the workplace, Pendle Hill has joined The Retreat Center Collaboration to apply our values of advancing diversity and justice in our operational culture. We've chosen for our entire staff, along with other key partners, to participate in courageous and challenging conversations through the Collaboration's [Racial Healing Initiative](#).

Pendle Hill is still building our practices in this domain, but I know we are on a journey to learn what a healthy, nourishing, and cherished workplace looks like in today's world.

**What does transformation mean for the groups of people that are serving the critical needs of their communities?**

It's clear to me that one of Pendle Hill's unique gifts is to be a resource for other organizations in the same way we are for students, sojourners, listeners, readers, and individuals in worship as they seek an environment for nurturing transformation. Our vision of promoting peace and justice in the world by transforming lives extends to the organizations that use Pendle Hill as they seek to realize their own missions and values. To these groups, Pendle Hill is more than a place to hold conferences; it is a steppingstone along their own journey up the mountain. We want to increase support for their growth by making the Barn suitable for their hybrid meetings, connecting them with other mission-centered practitioners, and providing opportunities for inspiration and renewal. We're proud to host groups like [Friends Council on Education](#), [Cristo Rey Philadelphia High School](#), [Asian Pacific Islander Political Alliance](#), [The Organizing Center](#), [Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology](#), [Neighborhood Land Power Project](#), and the [Environmental Leadership Program](#), to name just a few.



While these questions guide our future thinking, we are also grappling with the dilemma that has been with Pendle Hill since its origin in 1930: how can we sustain our work financially and spiritually while the needs of our community—and our costs—are increasing every year? The reality, we've learned, is that this holy experiment relies on the generosity of so many. Charitable gifts have sustained Pendle Hill throughout its life and today philanthropy funds roughly half of each year's operating budget, with the other half coming from fees for services delivered. Just over a quarter of that philanthropy comes from individual donors, with the rest coming from foundation grants and endowed funds. We are so grateful for our community, who recognizes these needs and continually makes [generous gifts](#) to the annual fund throughout the year.

There is more happening across Pendle Hill, including our urgent work to prepare our arboretum for resilience, to restore Upmeads for retreats, and to recruit and nurture new generations of staff and volunteers. So, I pause on the trail, taking it all in, listening and waiting until Spirit urges me to walk again and follow where the path leads. Pendle Hill's journey continues, and I invite you to walk with us, to add your energies and gifts to our collective climb up this mountain.

With love and prayer for peace,

*Francisco J. Burgos*

Francisco Burgos  
Executive Director



**PENDLE HILL**

A Quaker Study, Retreat, and Conference Center