

**Children's Religious Education
2018-2019 Annual Report
By Sarah Buxton**

The children's religious program continues to thrive. We have an average of 15 attenders each week ranging from ages 3 to 14.

In the first part of the year the First Day program was guided by the overarching theme of exploring Quaker values. Children played collaborative games that fostered communication around a common goal. They explored the Meetinghouse and its history through discussions of the Peaceable Kingdom scripture (Isaiah 11:6) and Edward Hicks' paintings. The children participated in yoga and mindfulness lessons. They learned a pebble meditation to help them focus their attention on breathing during silent meeting for worship. They also participated in a drum meditation. Later in the year much of the programming focused on letting our lives speak to make the world a better place. For Martin Luther King's birthday, the children discussed non-violent direct action through peaceful means. Our young Friends also participated in a two week playmaking exercise where each child applied the Quaker principle of stewardship to the creation of a play. Toward the end of the year, a mixed-age group dedicated two weeks to our well-attended "God Is" classes that encourage children and adults alike to discuss their own views of Quaker faith and of spirituality more broadly.

The committee hosted a successful Christmas celebration once again. The committee also participated in the Easter service; providing the children with an opportunity to learn about several facets of Easter including the Christian story of death and resurrection, as well as a focus on the reawakening of the earth. Bibles were presented to fourth graders: Charlotte Paces-Carter, Nana Courtney-Bacher, Sadie Good, and Madeline Harr. Faith and Practice was presented to eighth graders: Julian Courtney Bacher, Oliver Li, Colby Stebbins, and Devin Vandenberg.

Two of our most popular events continue to be the Fall Simple Supper and our Spring Lasagna dinner. Our young Friends used Quaker discernment to select Honey Hollow Education Center in New Hope as the beneficiary of the \$1,078.00 raised from the Fall Simple Supper. The \$1,655.25 raised from the Spring Lasagna Dinner went to Mercer Street community schools. This year we added a game night to the Lasagna Dinner to provide an opportunity to build connections among both our young and adult friends. We plan to have more opportunities in the coming year for building those connections.