

Annual Report
Adult Religious Education Committee
June 6, 2021

The Adult Religious Education Committee develops and promotes the Adult First Day School programs throughout the program year. Programs are intended to inform, inspire, and educate all who attend. Presenters may be members or attenders of the Meeting, visiting Quaker leaders, educators, or other prominent speakers.

All first day programs were accomplished by the work of the ARE Committee and the active assistance of the Meeting. We would like to thank Norval Reece who ensured that all 21 of the adult programs this past year were promoted with news stories and photos prior to the events in the Bucks County Herald, the Newtown Advance, and Newtown Patch (online). In addition, thanks to Richmond Shreve who generously contributed his technical skills to the Committee.

Due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee presented all 21 programs on Zoom. They consisted of 2 updates, 4 Spiritual Journeys, and 7 sessions that started with planning for a new parking lot to examining our values as Quakers and the stewardship of the meeting house grounds. There were 8 other programs that dealt with COVID, Membership, Economic Justice, Science, Worship, Immigration, and war-resistors.

The first speaker on the calendar was Dr. David Fraser, MD and epidemiologist, who explained aspects of how scientists understand COVID-19. Spiritual journeys were given by Matt Chandler, Anesu Nyamupingidza, Terry Christenson and Nasser Otmani.

The remainder of the Class year was filled with the following talks:

- Care and Counsel informed us of a reexamination of how membership in the Society of Friends is being perceived by members and attenders.
- Pamela Haines challenged us to live our Quaker values in our economic lives.
- Jim McClellan spoke to us about Science and Religion in Historical Context.
- Norma Kaplis gave us practical tips on Creating a Deeper Silence in our Worship.
- Peter Vari related how he and his family escaped from Hungary.
- Danny Thomas gave an update on the activities of the Peace Center and the challenges it faces now.
- In a departure from our usual presentations we showed the film, “Sweet Home Monteverde” which chronicled the emigration of four Quaker War-Resistors from Alabama to Costa Rica during the Korean War.
- Sean Connolly discussed how Arch Street Meeting House has weathered the pandemic, updates, and improvements made while the building has been closed, and Meetinghouse programs and activities planned for the future.
- Emmet Gowan gave us a chance to slow down and listen to him reflect on the beauty in the world that he captures in his photographs.

- Our last program was led by Arthur Larrabee who addressed the salient points of Quaker decision-making in order help us with the discernment on the future of the meeting house grounds.

Engaging speakers for the 2021-22 schedule has begun. As always, all members and attenders are encouraged to make suggestions for programs and/or topics for consideration by the committee for our next year.

Committee Members

Richmond Shreve, Marguerite Chandler, Kevin Connor, Peter Martin (Clerk); Norval Reece, Wayne Heacock, Elizabeth Hurst, Jennifer Wolf