



# INSIDE NORTH VALLEY

*A monthly publication of North Valley Friends Church*

**July 2011**



by J Rourke

## TEACHING ABROAD IN CHINA: CALLING FROM GOD, OR GAS?

Why would an intelligent, capable and subjectively attractive young man, Bachelor's degree in hand, decide to go to China to teach English to students that are barely younger than he is? Surely this is a story of Graduated Adventure Syndrome, or GAS (pun intended) for short: young twenty-somethings, wanting to live life to the fullest, depart for unfamiliar territory to "find themselves." "There's a whole world out there I haven't seen, so I should find a paid way to see a good chunk of it!" However, few who exhibit symptoms of GAS will admit to its influence on their post-undergraduate decision-making, and although many are genuinely affected, I did not count myself among their numbers. I was (and still am, to some degree) very comfortable tending my roots for a more permanent settlement, or at least a more American one.

So why am I now reading a textbook on teaching English to Chinese college students? How did I end up writing support letters and asking (perhaps pleading) for prayer partners? This seed was planted in a very vague form at an evening session of 2010 Yearly Meeting. While semi-uncharacteristically not listening to the speaker, I began to reflect on my few weeks in South Africa, back in the good ol' days of May 2009. During that trip I was challenged in a completely new fashion, and returned stateside bewildered and confused. As if this wasn't enough, or perhaps because my prayers for humility have found bitter and ironic fruition, I felt an undeniable call that summer evening to consider seriously: What would pursuit of international missions be like after I graduated from George Fox University?

My first (quite hilarious) reaction was a desire to preach it. During the time of open worship I restrained myself from proclaiming to the entire assembly of Friends present that I had received this call, and that I needed (and expected) their support. I mentally rehearsed the two-sided commitment: "I feel this call is real. Should I devote my life to this movement of the Spirit, I hope, Friends, that you will respond in support and praise. Will you, then?" I had planned a rather convicting and demanding podium moment in my mind, and for whatever reason chose not to speak it.

Conveniently enough, there was space at dinner the following night to write notes to those who work in the Yearly Meeting office, specifically to ask for more information about programs or Yearly Meeting functions. I compromised mentally and wrote a succinct note to Shawn McConaughy expressing a bit of my interest. A few months later, after school started, Shawn contacted me and hoped to discuss the possibilities of me fulfilling this call. He didn't say much about Teaching Abroad or hoping that I'd teach in China specifically, but instead he asked, "What's this calling all about?"

Shawn and I met, and he inquired about my thoughts and how seriously I considered my calling. By this time I considered the call a dead thing in my life, and it even took me a few minutes to remember what he was talking about. I spent a lot of that afternoon talking about the logistics of international missions, foreign dependence theories and my apprehensions about furthering globalization by teaching English anywhere, let alone anywhere outside of the United States.

In short, I was not taken or impressed by the allure of going abroad in any capacity. I had been exploring graduate degree programs, career paths and places to live in town to take a break and figure out my life to come. I decided to follow the process I've used for all big decisions: pursue it until the decision becomes obvious or I become convinced it's a completely terrible idea. So I sent in an application, made up a quick resumé, made a few phone calls and considered my portion complete. I told myself, almost as an

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## TEACHING ABROAD CONTINUED

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excuse, “It’s in God’s hands now.” I was eventually called in for an interview with a small group of people I didn’t know very well.

Somehow it had slipped my mind that I exposed quite a bit of myself in my application materials. I spoke vividly of my experience in South Africa, and how shaken I came back from that. I intimately described my family life, and even some philosophical ideas I was currently considering. The interview felt very comfortable, but all the same very unreal. The amount of vulnerability in that room was something of a beautiful scene; it was the most honest and open I had been in quite some time—all this with people who I’d either never met or seen only a few times.

Something about this “China” deal impacted me deeply, and when I was accepted to the Teaching Abroad program, I found myself surprisingly ecstatic. Part of me wanted this to go through more than I had admitted. Nonetheless, I remained pragmatic. I met with Shawn again, asking why I had been accepted and what was expected of me now. I sought advice from friends currently teaching abroad. Most importantly, however, I spent time with my doubts.

I decided that every night during Lent I would take twenty minutes of solitude to allow God to speak into this issue. It turns out God had a lot to say, and about a lot more than just Teaching Abroad. For the first few nights this practice was bliss. I would sit cradled in a blanket in a silent room and become overwhelmed by the Spirit’s wash of grace and love. I slept each night feeling forgiven, and even a bit redeemed. However, something changed in these times, and slowly enough to deceive me.

I began to reject the idea of going to China, to think it foolish, unnecessary, and too adventuresome. My excitement dissipated into fizzled apprehensions and doubtful hesitancy. Why did I even want to do this in the first place? Oh, right, *one* night when I felt like this was a calling. One night structured for those in attendance to be intentionally exposed, emotional and receptive.

How foolish I had been! I’ve no good reason to go to China of all places! Who did I think I was that I considered this acceptable? For a few weeks I took this answer as good enough. My evenings became disparate and disconnected, and I felt a separate presence speaking into my decisions. This voice told me I had a right to be scared and apprehensive, that raising support isn’t my strong suit, and I needed to root my faith *much* more deeply before I could embark on something like this.

This voice was right regarding a lot of things. My doubts are important, my weaknesses will be prevalent and this decision is not easy or simple. This voice, which was revealed to be my own, forgot that I claim subservience to the one who created and continually molds the fabric of existence itself, and who had recently reminded me that it loves me very much. I became embarrassed, but mostly ashamed. Am I so unfamiliar with the voice of God in my life that I mistook my own for it?

This at first seemed to confirm my fears: my faith seemed insufficient for something as large as ten months abroad. But when I began to listen again I heard a familiar and comforting tune. Scripture reminded me that the weak lead the strong, that all things are possible with faith and love and, most importantly, that God will never leave me, nor forsake me—even in China.

So I took the gig. Even now I feel a bit silly telling people, “I’m going to China for ten months to teach English to college students.” I feel very unqualified and insufficient, like this is something I’m not naturally very good at. I also feel at peace, though. There’s a big part of me that’s apprehensive and still doesn’t want to go, but a small and affirming voice says this is right.

Thus, Friends, won’t you join me? Won’t you also hear that sweet song and remember it is true? I ask that you’d send me, not just see me go. Commission me in your prayerful support, if you believe my story. Please keep in touch with me while I am in China, and tell me times when a small voice says, “Yes.” Thank you for all you have been to me thus far, and all you will inevitably be to me in the future. Mostly, thank you for your present selves, with whom I feel comforted and welcomed. May you continually seek Christ and the kingdom.

- J leaves for China on August 24
- To contact J in China you can write to him at: [jrouркеiv@gmail.com](mailto:jrouркеiv@gmail.com)
- To contribute to J’s fund or indicate your commitment to prayer support, find his support letter in the foyer at North Valley, or view his [online support page](#)
- He plans to blog about his experience here: <http://chinaahoy.wordpress.com>



## SUMMER SUNDAYS

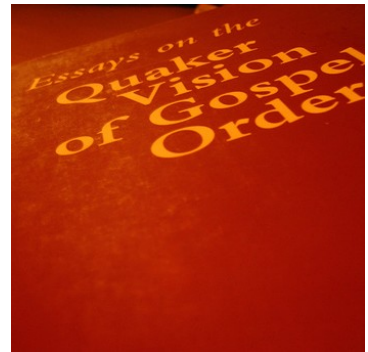
This summer, we're excited to try some new things in order to experience our community in new and fun ways, and hopefully in ways that connect us more deeply to God and to each other. We plan to continue some of them into the fall.

### CHILDCARE

Childcare is available each Sunday morning this summer for babies through fifth grade. We hope this will free you to attend a Sunday school class or unprogrammed worship, to have a conversation with a f/Friend, or to experience God in nature by utilizing the North Valley Friends Trail and labyrinth.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Lynn will lead a 6-week Sunday school class on the Friends view of the "Gospel Order," starting July 3. Participants will read a pamphlet entitled, "Gospel Order: A Quaker Understanding of Faithful Church Community," by Sandra Lee Cronk. Friends traditionally understood the Kingdom of God as present in the living out of our lives—our present lives, together as a community. This class will discuss some Friends history on this topic as well as its implications for how we think of spiritual formation today and how that connects to our living-out of the Kingdom of God. The pamphlet is available on the front page of our [web-site](#), and paper copies are available in the foyer. See more about this class on page 5. Our ongoing adult Sunday school class will also continue, with lessons from the Adult Friend curriculum.



### CELEBRATION FOR STAN THORNBURG | JULY 10

We will be celebrating Stan's released ministry among us with a potluck lunch after worship on July 10. Please bring a dish to share, and a card of appreciation for Stan. Bring your own card, or write on a card available in the foyer.

### INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP | JULY 17, AUGUST 21

We will practice intergenerational worship together the third Sunday of each month this summer, and perhaps into the fall. We hope you enjoy and are challenged by these times of worship that intentionally include North Valley worshippers of all ages.

### TRAIL DEDICATION, BARBECUE & GFU FUNDRAISER | JULY 17

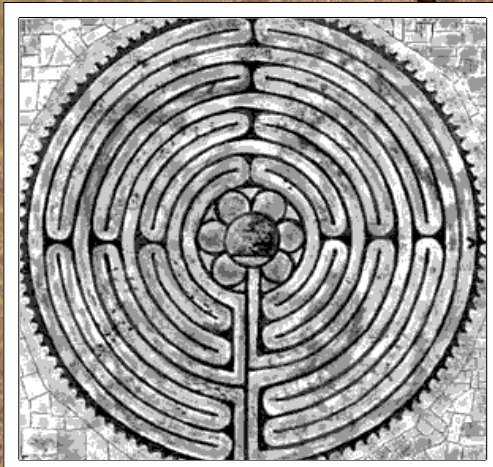
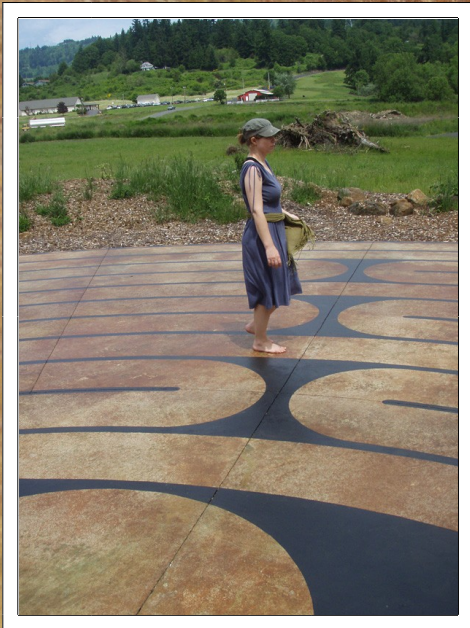
During this intergenerational worship day we will officially dedicate the North Valley Friends Trail. We will enjoy a celebration barbecue after worship (you're welcome to bring a side dish to share), and George Fox University students will scoop ice cream as a fundraiser for their Church Matching Scholarships. We will also host an "open house" on the trail where the community will be invited to experience the labyrinth, the peace poles and flags and an activity for children.

### SEMI-PROGRAMMED WORSHIP | JULY 31

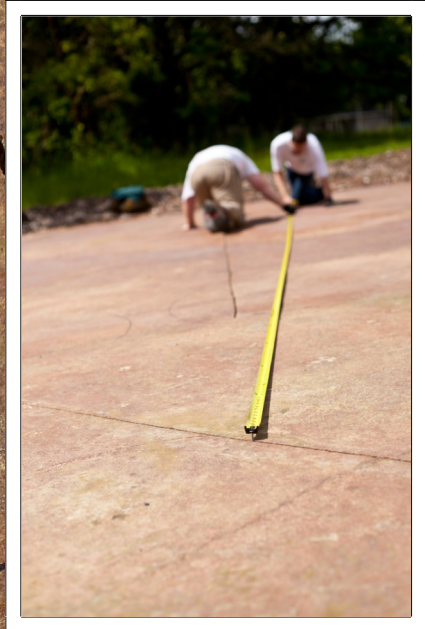
Each quarter, one month ends up having a fifth Sunday. On these Sundays we will have semi-programmed worship. We will worship through music and a brief centering thought and then continue with silence for the rest of the service, waiting for the Spirit to speak to and through those gathered. This silence is "worship in the manner of Friends," the traditional way that Friends worshiped together. If you would like more information about this form of worship, please talk to one of the pastors and they would be happy to give you more background. There is also an explanatory brochure in each pew entitled, "Open Worship: 'Friendly' suggestions for making sense out of the silence of open worship."



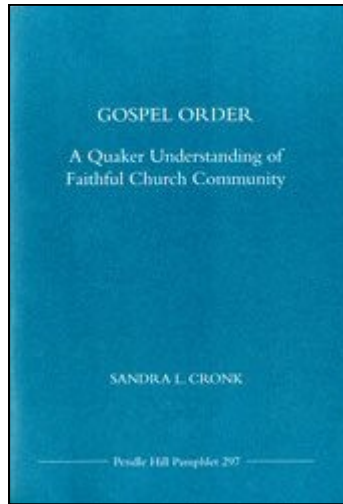
THE LABYRINTH IS FINISHED!



The labyrinth is patterned after the one at the [Chartres Cathedral](#) in France.



## GOSPEL ORDER



During the education hour on Sunday mornings July 3-August 7, 9:30-10:30 am, we will use Sandra Cronk's pamphlet, *Gospel Order: A Quaker Understanding of Faithful Church Community*, to guide our discussion about the Friends view of "gospel order" and how we live that today. Copies of the reading are available in the foyer or [online](#).

"Gospel order" is the term which historically gathers together many of the most significant elements of the Friends understanding of the church community. Gospel order is the order established by God that exists in every part of creation, transcending the chaos that seems so often prevalent. Through Christ the original relationship is restored between creation and the Creator. Two distinctive aspects of Quaker belief about this order are: 1) that the restoration is effective now, in the present moment, and 2) that every human being is capable of achieving that spiritual maturity which brings one fully into the gospel order. Our calling as followers of Christ, therefore, is to live in this gospel order. We do this out of the desire to do God's will, from the joy that being in that right relationship brings and as a testimony to the rest of the world about the gospel. Participation in the church community is a witness to God's new order of love, peace and justice coming to birth in the world.

Early Friends placed great importance on the church community. Its meaning had nothing to do with buildings. The church is the people who are drawn to live in God's order. Sandra L. Cronk writes, in a Pendle Hill Pamphlet entitled *Gospel Order: A Quaker Understanding of Faithful Church Community*, that we tend to think of religious life in a bi-polar way because of our individualistic framework. It is primarily as individuals that we relate to God via our inward life of prayer and worship and our social concerns often take the form of individually supported programs and projects. Early Friends' experience of being gathered into gospel order seems to bespeak another model.

My hope for our time together is renewed faithfulness to live in God's order and to deepen our understanding of the importance and role of the church community. The understanding of the pattern of gospel order grew out of reflection on the lived history of Friends as they attempted to respond faithfully to the work of the Spirit within their particular circumstances and time. God doesn't call us to live in the past but certainly for God's new order to take shape and form in our lives today will require that we are people who listen to God. Our listening and mutual support for one another will help us gain spiritual strength and clarity as we attempt to be in harmony with our Divine Creator and Guide.



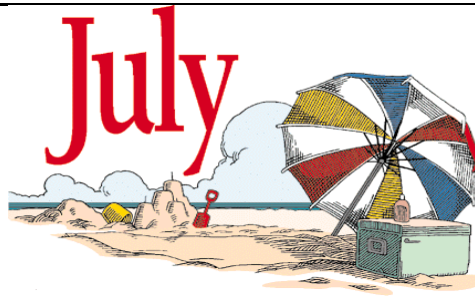
—Lynn

## JUNE COMMUNITY DANCE PHOTOS



Mark your calendars for the next community dance, **August 26, 6:30-8:30 pm.** Kids are welcome to dance for the first hour, then childcare is provided. View a slideshow online!





2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5 9 am MS boys to Wahclella Falls 7 pm Missions Cmte.	6 10 am Youth Lake Day	7 9 am HS boys to Wahclella Falls	8	9
Girls Camp, Twin Rocks Friends Camp						
10 12 pm Celebration potluck for Stan Thornburg	11	12 6:30 pm Land Use Cmte.	13	14	15	16 8 am Men's Breakfast @ Hospital
Tween Camp, Twin Rocks Friends Camp						
17 10:45 am Trail Dedication 12 pm BBQ & GFU fundraiser 12-2 pm Trail Open House	18 10 am MS boys to Colum- bian Cemetery	19 7 pm Stewards Cmte.	20 10 am HS boys to Colum- bian Cemetery	21	22	23
Boys Camp, Twin Rocks Friends Camp						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Tilikum Day Camp						
Northwest Yearly Meeting Sessions & Youth Yearly Meeting, GFU						
31 10:45 Semi-programmed Worship						

# JULY WORSHIP CALENDAR

<u>July</u>	3	10	17	24	31
<b>Greeters</b>	Vonnie Burton	Rob Felton	Verna Munn	Earl Tycksen	Janine Saxton
				Annie Tycksen	
<b>Ushers</b>	Bill Rourke	Don Parrish	Daryl Burton	Daryl Burton	Don Parrish
	Michael Pender	Ron Fieldhouse	Bill Rourke	George Piper	Stuart Griffith
	John Frost	Stuart Griffith	Jared Jones	Alan Parry	Anna Baker
	Jim Allison	Anna Baker	John Frost	Jeremy Baker	Eric Funk
	Eric Funk	Jeremy Baker	Jessica Trout	Jim Allison	John Frost
<b>Music</b>	Janine Saxton	Joel Bock	Sandi Thornton	Jared Jones	Paul Bock
	Michael LeClair	Wes Cropper	Lukas McKennon		
	Linda LeClair	Michael LeClair	Emily-Grace		
	Steve McKennon	Linda LeClair	Peter McKennon		
	Aletha McKennon	Jon Holt	Adria McKennon		
			Steve McKennon		
<b>Sound</b>	Joel Bock	Steve McKennon	Mike McConaughy	Rawlen Smith	Steve McKennon
<b>Power Point</b>	Peter McKennon	Jessica Trout	Jennie Harkema	Nathan Murray	Jessica Trout
<b>Media</b>	Aletha McKennon	Joel Bock	Sandi Thornton	Jared Jones	Paul Bock
<b>Preach/Facilitate</b>	Lynn Holt	Lynn Holt	Paul Bock	Colin Saxton	
<b>Monthly Focus</b>	Peace Prayer				YCEW
<b>10:45 Nursery</b>	Janelle Olivarez	Laura Dunn	Adina McConaughy	Jeanne Boyd	Liz Majdecki
under 3	Becky Headley	Cherice Bock	Verna Munn	Vicky Burgess	Anna Baker
<b>Children's</b>	Austin Huelsbeck	Austin Huelsbeck	Bryanna Henry	Austin Huelsbeck	Austin Huelsbeck
<b>Worship</b>	Emily-Grace	Emily-Grace	1 volunteer	Emily-Grace	Emily-Grace
age 4-5th grade	Bryanna Henry	Bryanna Henry		Bryanna Henry	Bryanna Henry
<b>4-1st helper:</b>		Aletha McKennon		Janine Saxton	Aletha McKennon
<b>Boys helper:</b>	Hal Thomas	Elaine Cropper		Lukas McKennon	
<b>Girls Helper:</b>	Nancy Thomas	Lynn Holt		Brenda Jolliff	
			<b>Intergen./GFU BBQ</b>		<b>Semi-prog.</b>

## ABOUT OUR PEOPLE



### Church News

bring meals to them as they adjust to this new stage of family life.

- Kim Boyd's service to our community as the Children's Ministry Coordinator is complete. Her ministry to our kids has been amazing! Next time you see her, let her know how much you appreciate her good work.
- Joy & Jess Howell wish to extend their heartfelt thanks to the North Valley community for their love and support as they go through this difficult time of Jess' illness. Thank you so much for all the food, prayers and kind words.
- Cherice Bock is transitioning out of her role as North Valley's Administrative Assistant as Kylan gets to the stage where he is getting more difficult to take to work! She will stay on as our Web Administrator, and will cover the office on Sunday mornings.
- Erinn Hampton will be the new Administrative Assistant starting July 25. She worked here temporarily during Cherice's maternity leave and proved a good fit for the staff. She attends Newberg Friends and is Brendon Connelly's sister.

- Rob & Kim Felton welcomed a new baby girl into their family on June 22! Her name is Madeleine Sophia. Contact Leslie if you want to

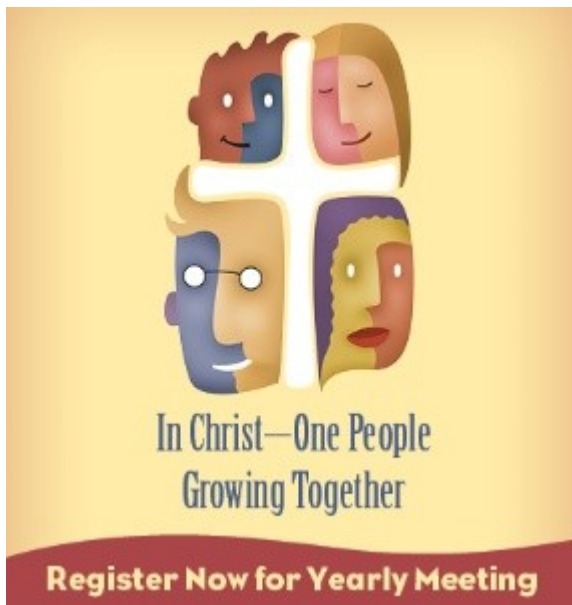


#### BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jessica Trout
- 2 Cathy Thornburg
- 3 Karin Majdecki
- 7 Darleen Ortega
- 14 Carla Anderson  
Betsy LeClair
- 17 Henry Murray
- 18 Debbie Headley  
Joel Sandoz
- 19 Roy Gathercoal
- 21 Vonnie Burton  
Ethan Jones  
Bryna Parry
- 23 Truman Connelly
- 25 Amy Saxton
- 26 Abby Woolsey
- 27 Michael Pender
- 31 Paul Bock

#### ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Brent & Tabatha  
Weaver
- 8 Rob & Kimberly Felton
- 11 Doug & Karen Pugsley
- 28 Jeremy & Jessica  
Baker



### NORTHWEST YEARLY MEETING ANNUAL SESSIONS

At George Fox University  
July 24-28, 2011

- Register and see the schedule [online](#)
- Adult sessions including workshops, meetings for worship for business, evening worship, board meetings, ice cream social and more!
- [Youth Yearly Meeting](#) for those entering 7th grade through 2011 high school graduates
- Children's programming
- Evening sessions: Colin Saxton (Sunday), Outreach Celebration Rally (Monday), Jan Wood (Tuesday & Wednesday), Celebration Banquet Thursday (\$10 before July 27, \$11.50 at the door)
- The Hoot: music on the lawn after evening sessions

# NORTH VALLEY FRIENDS CHURCH

4020 North College Street  
Newberg, OR 97132

## NORTH VALLEY FRIENDS CHURCH

### Staff:

- Lynn Clouser Holt Lead Pastor
- Leslie Murray Youth Pastor
- Kim Boyd Children's Ministry Facilitator
- Cherice Bock Administrative Assistant
- Paul Bock Worship Coordinator

## CHURCH OFFICE

### Hours:

- Monday 9:00 am-1:00 pm
  - Tuesday 9:00 am-1:00 pm
  - Wednesday 9:00 am-1:00 pm
  - Thursday 9:00 - 11:00 am
  - Friday 9:00 - 11:00 am
- Phone:** 503-538-5340  
**E-Mail:** office@northvalleyfriends.org

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

- Sunday:** 9:30 am Sunday School for all ages
- 9:30 am Unprogrammed Meeting
- 10:45 am Programmed Meeting

*North Valley Friends is a Quaker community of ministers who seek to follow Jesus Christ faithfully, love each other deeply and continue His ministry in the world.*

## VISIT US ONLINE:

**NVFC:** [www.northvalleyfriends.org](http://www.northvalleyfriends.org)

**NWYM:** [www.nwfriends.org](http://www.nwfriends.org)

*This newsletter is available online at [www.northvalleyfriends.org](http://www.northvalleyfriends.org)*