

College Park Quarterly Meeting

260th Session – Fourth Month 24 – 26, 2026

Root and Branch, Leaf and Fruit

In our Quarterly gatherings we often choose a theme that examines one aspect of our lives as Friends. This time, let us look at who we are as a whole:

The Root is our history and heritage, beginning with the inspiration of George Fox and others who recognized that traditional Christianity had moved away from personal experience of the Divine and become encumbered with “notions”.

The Branch is the particular division of the Religious Society of Friends to which our Quarter and Yearly Meetings belong. We share the Root, but we have a particular history, population and needs different in some ways from the rest.

The Leaf is the source of nourishment, transforming the Light which is given to all into the energy we in this Quarterly Meeting will use to bond individuals into community, to comfort the distressed, to take action within and outside our community, both urgent and long-term.

The Fruit is the product of combining Root and Branch and Leaf. Given care and time to ripen, we will grow in understanding of our kinship with all people and Creation, in closeness to the Center, in capacity to both spread the seeds of Quakerism and attract those who hunger for what we offer.

When we imagine an analogy to a Tree, we most often include a Trunk – the Trunk symbolizing just one connection between Root and Branch -- a single path from past to present conveying a sense of unitary core beliefs. We Quakers are more like a Bush than a Tree. We will never grow as tall, but we could grow in places trees will not thrive. Would we be stronger than a Tree if we acknowledge this difference?

-Eric Sabelman, CPQM Presiding Clerk
Second Month 20, 2026 (rev 3/3/26)