

Port Townsend Friends Meeting, Port Townsend, Washington

**A Memorial Meeting for Worship to Celebrate the Life of
Florabel “Belle” J. Zimmerman
July 18, 1923 – March 21, 2009**

St. Paul’s Episcopal Parish Hall
Port Townsend, Washington
April 18, 2009

On behalf of Port Townsend Friends Meeting, I extend a warm welcome to you all—to Belle’s family, and to her many friends from here and elsewhere.

My name is Bob Schultz and I am presiding at this celebration of Belle’s life at her request. Belle came to Port Townsend in 2001 and soon became an attendee, and later a member, of the Friends Meeting. But as you know, her activities also included participation in the Peace Movement, Women in Black, “The Artist’s Way,” her life story writing group, and the community at San Juan Commons.

When death comes to someone in a Quaker community, we gather in silent, expectant worship in the presence of God, partly to acknowledge our loss, but also to experience consolation, hope, thanksgiving, and joy. This afternoon we rejoice as we remember Belle’s life—her big smile, her loyalty to family, her commitment to peace, her continual seeking for truth, and that infectious spirit that touched so many with love and encouragement.

Although our worshipful silence is not to be interrupted in a casual way, we do—in a memorial service such as this—speak, sometimes sing--out of the silence. We speak from our hearts, to remember the life and spirit of the one who has left us. No one with a deeply felt message should leave it unexpressed, but no one should feel obligated to speak. It is our practice that a space of silence should follow each message that is offered. We are recording the sounds of this service to share this experience with Belle's extended family who are not here this afternoon; also, some of our ears don't hear as well as they once did. If you find you do have something to share, please rise and wait for a microphone to be brought to you.

After an hour or so, I will signal the conclusion of our worship and I'll make a couple of concluding announcements.

[At the end of the service] – There are at least two sites on the Internet where Belle's life is celebrated—the yellow slips on the table will tell you how to find them. Also, Belle asked that any gifts in her memory be made to the Quaker peace lobby, the Friends Committee on National Legislation. There are informational leaflets on the table containing the FCNL address. Now we welcome you all to join us in continuing our celebration over refreshments.