

Minute for Carol Brantley

Carol was born July 23, 1947 in Elizabeth, New Jersey to Charles Brantley and Annie Lee Brantley. With her passing on October 17, 2018 she leaves her brother Glenn Brantley (Muriel) and sister Francena Brantley (who, known to us as Fran, became a beloved presence in our Quaker community during the year she was Carol's support and companion in the time of her illness.) And Carol treasured her ties to her two nephews, two nieces, five great nephews, one great niece and the daughters of long-time friends for whom she hosted "Camp Carol."

Carol's spiritual journey began in the Baptist church where she played the organ and sang in the choir. She loved Gospel music. As an adult she found her spiritual expression in the practice of Kundalini Yoga. The third strand in the braid of Carol's spiritual journey was the Annapolis Friends Meeting (AFM) community where she experienced spirituality and religion coming together.

Her professional work, her volunteer work, and her life as a member of the Annapolis Friends community all reflected her deep sense of the potential for all people to be whole, full contributors in the world, and to reflect the light of spirit in all they did. Whether it was as Board Chair and dedicated volunteer for the Light House, or in her work with organizations on long-term organizational change and the self-empowerment of women and people of color--woven throughout all that Carol did were repeated expressions of the Quaker values of simplicity, peacefulness, integrity, community, equality and environmental stewardship.

She was instrumental in forming and stewarding the Annapolis Friends Early Meeting for Worship that was held at 8:00 am on the second, fourth and fifth First Days each month. She was a guiding presence for Early

Meeting, reaching out to everyone, and watching the Early Meeting grow over the years. Her Early Meeting invitation emails always included a beautiful photograph and a verse to help focus on the Light within. As Building Use Coordinator, Carol was the face of AFM, welcoming a more diverse group of people to rent our building and become part of our community.

A deep thinker, a regular meditator who understood that we all have access to a rich spiritual life within, she loved beauty, and she embodied beauty and elegance, with a striking memorable minimalism. She had known suffering and loss and it had left her compassionate and generous.

Carol will be remembered for her quiet, calm, but passionate love for the Chesapeake, including diving into its waters for the Polar Bear Plunge. A woman of clear intent and desire to continually improve spiritually, Carol meditated and engaged Spirit regularly. She treasured walking in silence near the water and longed for silent retreats where she would gain greater perspectives on her current life and the next steps to reach for an even deeper connection with Spirit. Carol was a spiritual mentor who challenged the depth of commitment to Spirit.

In her Annapolis Friends monthly meeting, Carol was often the person who spoke most thoughtfully and directly to concerns often not seen or voiced by others, especially when it came to matters of equality and inclusion. In personal conversations, Carol listened deeply and thoughtfully. She was widely respected, both within our meeting and outside, for her wisdom, her personal strengths, her graciousness and her bold spirit. She has brought us the gift of presence, of being fully present to the moment. She was able to really see each of us, and love what she saw. She has truly tested joy at her core, and we have been warmed by its light. The gifts she brought us with her presence remain with us in spirit.