

April 2010

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FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

April 2010 Newsletter

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SPRING EVENTS

William Penn House

All Friends and neighbors are invited to attend a monthly potluck and Quaker dialogue at William Penn House. These informal dinners and dialogues are a good way to meet new Friends and to discuss interesting current issues. On Sunday, **April 4**, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. the program will be presented by Grigsby Hubbard from Bethesda Friends Meeting. The topic is: Pacifica Radio and Freedom of Speech.

Pacifica Radio was founded 61 years ago and has inspired community radio stations across the country. This community grassroots media network has brought listeners a wide variety of programming, including breaking news, political analysis and contemporary jazz. Grigsby Hubbard is one of the founders of WPFW/DC Pacifica and is currently general manager. He will share many experiences including how the life and death of Martin Luther King Jr. has influenced him and Pacifica Radio. William Penn House is located at 515 East Capitol St. SE, Washington, DC. For more information visit their website, or call 202-543-3814.

Adult Religious Education

The Adult Religious Education group will meet on Sunday, **April 11** at 9:15 a.m. and Sunday **April 25** at 9:15 a.m. The group will meet in the Decatur Place Room and will continue to discuss the writings of Rufus Jones. Everyone is invited to participate. For further information either contact the FMW Office or talk with John Scales.

FMW's Senior Center

Programs of slides or talks are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, at 2 p.m. in the Decatur Place Room. The program for the month is: on **April 14**, Carol Coffee will do a slide presentation of Australia. On **April 28** Clem Swisher will show slides from the Pacific Northwest and Columbia River Valley.

School for Friends Simple Meal

Every year the School for Friends parents prepare and serve a Simple Meal as an act of appreciation for their association and use of space to the members and attenders of FMW.

This year the Simple Meal will be served in the Assembly Room at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, **April 25**, 2010. This is a great opportunity for FMW Friends to meet parents and children from the school and an opportunity for School for Friends parents to attend a Quaker Meeting for Worship and interact with our community. As has been the tradition, you will have an opportunity to contribute to the School for Friends Scholarship Fund. This year the School is giving more than \$90,000 in financial aid.

Inquirers Class

All F/friends are invited to participate in FMW's next Inquirers Class. This is a great way to learn more about Quakers and the Religious Society of Friends, and is open to both newcomers and not-so-newcomers. The class is scheduled for 5 consecutive Mondays and will start Monday, **April 26**, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the Decatur Place Room. Attendance at all five sessions is not required. For further information please contact either Michael Cronin or the FMW office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Financial Assistance for Children Attending Quaker Schools

The Mary Walcott Lucy Foster Education Fund will be accepting requests between April and June for financial assistance to attend a Friends school PK to 12th grade, for children of members and active attenders of Washington area Meetings. Please forward a brief written request, a copy of the school's Parents' Financial Statement & Report of Financial Need, and most recent IRS Form 1040 to Bruce Kellogg, MWLF Ed Fund, 1202 Half St, SW, Washington, DC 20024. Assistance is predicated on the number of applicants and available funds. Friends may contribute to the Education Fund through FMW/MWLF Ed Fund.

Associate Members over 30

The Membership Committee has tried to contact these associate members, all over the age of 30 (we ask associate members to re-consider their membership status at age 25). If we do not hear otherwise from these Friends we will recommend termination of their membership at the April Meeting for Business:

Nicholas Warren Alexander Warren
Mary Johnson Aladdine Dory Joroff
James E. Rouse Asia Moore
James O'Neill Samuel Newman
Rebecca Newman Deane L. Kern

Thinking About Race

THINKING ABOUT RACE: From the article, "Teaching Young Children To Resist Bias: What Parents Can Do", by Louise Derman-Sparks, María Gutiérrez, Carol Brunson Phillips - National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Recognize that, because we live in a racist and biased society, we must actively foster children's anti-bias development. Remember that in such an environment, we are all constantly and repeatedly exposed to messages that subtly reinforce biases. If we do nothing to counteract them, then we silently support these biases by virtue of our inaction.

Create an environment at home or at school that deliberately contrasts the prevailing biased messages of the wider society.

Provide books, dolls, toys, wall decorations (paintings, drawings, photographs), TV programs, and records that reflect diverse images that children may not likely see elsewhere in

- Gender roles (including men and women in nontraditional roles)
- Racial and cultural backgrounds (e.g., people of color in leadership positions)
- Capabilities (people with disabilities doing activities familiar to children)
- Family lifestyles (varieties of family composition and activities)

Show that you value diversity in the friends you choose and in the people and firms you choose for various services (e.g., doctor, dentist, car mechanic, teachers, stores). Remember that what you do is as important as what you say.

Camp Scholarships Awarded

We would like to inform the community and all RE Friends that we have awarded the Camp Scholarships for this year. We had two anonymous donors give generously in order to supplement our camp scholarship budget. We awarded 8 camping scholarships to attend Camps Catoctin, Opequon, Shiloh, and the Chinese language session at Sidwell Travelers Summer Camp.

FMW camp scholarships are awarded based on the family being FMW members or regular attenders and the designated camps as Quaker camps. There is no assessment as to financial need; all FMW families are supported equally.

Thanks to Rob Lipp-Farr for running an video educational program on Quaker summer camp selections as our BYM Camping Liaison. Tracy Hart, Clerk, Religious Education Committee

Baltimore Yearly Meeting Service Opportunities

Have you ever wondered how the Religious Society of Friends continues to thrive and change? The secret is Spirit-led Friends willing to dedicate time, energy and hard work.

Serving on a BYM committee can be a very special experience. It is an opportunity to engage in

meaningful work, deepen Quaker roots and widen horizons by working with Friends from the 53 Monthly Meetings/worship groups, etc. The growing knowledge and inter-visitation experience gained strengthens the Friend serving and your Monthly Meeting.

Areas of interest and service include administration, ministry and pastoral care, peace and social concerns, children and youth, advancement and outreach, and representing BYM at various Friends organizations.

Service is a three-year commitment, beginning at the August Annual Meeting this year. Most committees meet together at Interim and Annual Meetings as well as undertaking various activities throughout the year.

The Nominating Committee will be meeting this month on March 27th, at the BYM Interim Meeting at Patapsco. We will begin to try to fill vacancies on committees which will be nominated at the August BYM Annual Meeting.

If you would like to discuss the possibility of serving on one of the committees, please call Molly Tully at 202-965-0894 so we can talk about where your interests and gifts might fit one of the BYM committees.

Friendly Office Presence Workers and Volunteers Sought

When we host non-Quaker events, weddings and memorial events, a "Friendly Presence" is needed at FMW. We are looking for Friends who would be willing to work for compensation or as a volunteer providing security, information and handling hosting responsibilities. These events are usually held in the evening or on Saturday. Compensation is provided depending on the duties, and time of the event. If you are interested, or need more information please call the FMW Office at 202-483-3310.

FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

March 14, 2010

Minutes

03/10-1 Opening The Meeting opened at noon with a period of silent worship. David Etheridge and Bill Cousins were co-Presiding Clerks, Susan Lepper, Alternate Clerk, and Merry Pearlstein, Recording Clerk. Sabrina McCarthy joined the clerks on the facing bench holding the Meeting in the Light. The clerks read Advices, Queries and Voices related to stewardship as proposed by the Faith and Practice Revision Committee of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Advices

"To turn all we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives" - this, in the words of John Woolman, is the meaning of Quaker stewardship. This applies to all that we have and are, as individuals, as members of groups, and as inhabitants of the earth. As individuals, we are obliged to use our time, our various abilities, our strength, our money,

our material possessions, and other resources in a spirit of love, aware that we hold these gifts in trust, and are responsible to use them in the Light.

Investment of assets and consumption of resources require our careful stewardship. As Friends, we can direct our investments toward socially desirable ends, avoiding speculation and activities wasteful or harmful to others. We should seek to participate constructively and without greed in the economic life of the community and to refrain from undue accumulation of wealth as well as irresponsible borrowing.

Queries

Do we regard our time, talents, energy, money, material possessions and other resources as gifts from God; to be held in trust and shared according to the Light we are given?

What are we doing as individuals and as a Meeting to nurture our gifts?

How do we encourage the members of the larger community to be careful stewards of their gifts?

Voices

To turn all we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives. — John Woolman

For some there is a danger that care for the future may lead to undue anxiety and become a habit of saving for its own sake, resulting in the withholding of what should be expended for the needs of the family or devoted to the service of the Society. The temptation to trust in riches comes in many forms, and can only be withstood through faith in our Father and his providing care. — London Yearly Meeting, 1945

Of the interest of the public in our estates: Hardly anything is given us for our selves, but the public may claim a share with us. But of all we call ours, we are most accountable to God and the public for our estates: In this we are but stewards, and to hoard up all to ourselves is great injustice as well as ingratitude. — John Woolman, 1720 (quoted by North Pacific YM)

To "stretch beyond one's compass" grasping at shadows, and encumbering oneself with more than is needed for simple, wholesome living, is at variance with all our best traditions. — Caroline Stephens, Quaker Strongholds

As Christians, all we possess is the gift of God, and in the distribution of it we act as his stewards; it becomes us therefore to act agreeably to that divine wisdom which he graciously gives to his servants. — John Woolman, "A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich"

03/10-2 Attendance Approximately 40 Friends were present. Co-Presiding Clerk David Etheridge welcomed visitors Jocelyn Alt, Robin Stanton and Julie Scott, all of Washington, DC.

03/10-3 Clerks' Report Co-Presiding Clerk David Etheridge called upon Susan Lepper, who announced on behalf of the Planning Committee that Henry Freeman is nearing completion of his survey of the Meeting's probable ability to raise funds for the proposed renovations. She characterized the responses to the survey as being "positive and favorable." A meeting at which Henry Freeman will present his findings is scheduled for Sunday, March 28 at the rise of Meeting. Susan said that the Planning Committee will hold another meeting, at a date and time to be determined, at which Baird Smith of the architectural firm of Quinn Evans will present the plans and be available to respond to Friends' questions. Susan also announced that Grant Thompson has agreed to lead a capital campaign committee.

David Etheridge drew Friends' attention to the attached interim report from the Finance and

Stewardship Committee, which notes that two thirds of the way into the current year, there is a shortfall of nearly \$4,300 in contributions and that this shortfall is being considered in developing the Meeting's budget for next year.

David noted that there would be a potluck luncheon in the Assembly Room at the rise of Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business and urged Friends to conduct informal discussions at the rise of Meeting for Business in the Assembly Room to give the Hospitality Committee a better idea of how many people to expect for lunch.

Finally, David reminded Friends that they were participating in a meeting for worship, and that, to the extent possible, procedures would be like those of any other worship meeting with periods of silence being observed between messages.

03/10-4 Report and Recommendations from the Healing and Reconciliation

Committee Co-Clerk Bill Cousins presided over this portion of the meeting in which Neil Froemming presented the attached report from the Healing and Reconciliation Committee ("H&R"), which was formed in 2007 to respond to incidents of harmful behavior during meeting activities, and suggested two recommendations for consideration by the Meeting. The report prompted lively discussion centered primarily around three issues. Friends questioned the distinction between the work of H&R and that of the Ministry and Worship Committee. Others raised questions regarding the term "eldering," which seemed to have negative connotations for some. Finally, several Friends expressed discomfort at being asked to delegate to a few the authority to intervene in cases of hurtful behavior since Quakers believe in equality and shared responsibility for the health of the community.

The Meeting APPROVED the following recommendation: "That the Records and Handbook Committee work with H&R to draft proposed changes to the description of the H&R Committee to change the status of the committee from special to standing committee, and to modify some of the language describing the functions of the committee."

The Meeting asked H&R to season its second recommendation (regarding authorization for intervention), taking into account the messages offered in this Meeting and present it for further consideration by Meeting for Business on April 11, 2010.

03/10-5 Spiritual State of the Meeting Report (first presentation) Faith Williams, Clerk of Ministry and Worship, turned to Gray Handley to lead the discussion of the first presentation of the committee's report on the Spiritual State of the Meeting (attached). Gray expressed the committee's gratitude for the extensive input it had received, and invited Friends to carefully consider the proposed report and contact the committee with further comments.

03/10-6 Report from the FCNL Liaison on FCNL Priorities Elizabeth Goodman, Liaison to Friends Committee on National Legislation, reported that at a meeting for discernment held this past Thursday, Friends agreed to inform FCNL of our Meeting's interest in the following five priorities:

DC voting rights

Immigration

Education

Protection for Whistleblowers

Environmental issues

Elizabeth's response to FCNL will also include an invitation to FCNL personnel to worship with us, and will convey our hope that they will work to raise national awareness of the District of Columbia's disenfranchisement.

3/10-7 Report from Nominating Committee Marcia Reecer, interim Clerk of the Nominating Committee, reported the resignations of Ken Forsberg as co-Clerk of the Property Committee and Martha Solt as Clerk of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee. The Meeting accepted these resignations.

Marcia noted the nomination of Martha Solt as co-Clerk of the Property Committee and Susan Griffin as Clerk of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee. The Meeting APPROVED these nominations, along with the waiver required for Susan Griffin, who is not a member. The Meeting also APPROVED the nomination of Basil Kiwan to the Property Committee for a term ending in December, 2012.

03/10-8 Other items from Ministry and Worship Faith Williams, Clerk of the Ministry and Worship Committee, presented the attached letter of greeting to South Central Yearly Meeting to be taken by Byron Sandford and Susan Griffin on their upcoming travels. The Meeting APPROVED this letter. Faith also presented the attached travel minute for J.E. McNeil, who will be visiting Friends/friends in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa this summer. The Meeting APPROVED this travel minute.

3/10-9& 10 Annual Reports of the Membership and Personal Aid Committees were not discussed due to time considerations. Friends are referred to the attached written reports of those committees.

3/10-11 Report of Ad Hoc Welcome Committee Jocelyn Alt, Robin Stanton and Steve Coleman presented minutes of a recent meeting of their ad hoc committee and shared their ideas regarding ways to enhance the Meeting's welcome to visitors. Friends were invited to contact members of this group to offer additional suggestions.

3/10-12 Approval of Minutes The minutes were read and APPROVED.

3/10-13 Adjournment With approximately 24 Friends present, the Meeting closed with a period of silent worship at 2:45 p.m., to reconvene as way opens on Sunday, April 11, 2010 at 11:45 a.m.

Attachments:

- [Interim report from Finance & Stewardship Committee](#)
- [Report from the Healing and Reconciliation Committee](#)
- [Draft Report on the Spiritual State of the Meeting](#)
- [Letter of Greeting](#)
- [Travel Minute](#)
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- [Annual Report of the Personal Aid Committee](#)
- [Minutes and Ideas from the Ad Hoc Committee on Welcome](#)

Interim Report from Finance and Stewardship Committee

Through February (2/3s of the way through our current fiscal year), we have a shortfall of nearly \$4,300 in contributions needed to meet budget. This is offset somewhat by lower expenses mostly due to the delay last fall in filling the ass't administrative secretary position and a few other savings, but some property and program items have gone over budget. Overall, Friends have contributed a total of \$160,400 toward our goal of \$225,000. Two more appeal letters will be sent this year. The first mailing will go out by the end of this month to Friends who have given in the past 2 years but have not made a contribution so far this fiscal year. The second, planned for early June as a fiscal year-end cleanup, will go to a broader list of Members and Attenders, donors and non-donors. However, with only 3 1/2 months to go, F&S is now projecting that contributions will reach only \$220,000 -- essentially equal to the efforts of the last few years.

The knowledge that FMW's annual contributions have been historically flat affects the FY 2011 budget now being refined for the year beginning July 1. At its meeting earlier this week, F&S examined the draft budget that incorporates all the budget requests from committees as well as estimates of staff, property, and other annual operating costs. If ALL of these expenses are included in the budget, our fund-raising goal for next year will be over \$255,000. F&S does not believe such a large increase is achievable. Therefore, we will consult with other committees and staff to reduce projected expenses as judiciously as possible. The completed draft budget will have its first presentation at the May Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business.

Healing and Reconciliation Committee Report to Meeting for Business

Committee Status

In January, 2007, following an altercation in the Meeting Room, an ad hoc committee was formed to consider procedures to be used when there are disputes between two Friends in the Meeting. In April, the ad hoc group reported to the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business proposing "the creation of a permanent, standing Committee of Healing and Reconciliation to deal with the consequences of the harmful behavior we have recently experienced, and to deal with similar events whenever they might occur in the future. The proposal was discussed and held over to May, when a

revised proposal was presented and approved.

The revised proposal did not specify whether the new committee was to be a standing or special committee, and the Records & Handbook Committee proposed to list it in the Handbook as a special committee (reportedly to relieve the committee of annual reporting and Committee of Clerks responsibilities). The Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business approved the proposed Handbook entry in July of 2007, describing the new committee as follows:

The Healing and Reconciliation Committee consists of one group of persons, "hands on" members, to respond immediately to limit any disruptions in Meeting for Worship and to follow up after an incident by active listening to the disruptive person and by active and concerned listening to persons most adversely affected by the disruption. The committee also includes a second group, "resource" persons, who provide support and expertise to the "hands on" committee members. Resource persons are chosen to have special skills and training or experience that is helpful to the "hands on" persons. Some may be professional counselors and others "well-seasoned" and "weighty" Friends. The Healing and Reconciliation Committee is not empowered to take actions changing the relationship of any individual to the Meeting (for example, limitations on participation in worship or other Meeting activities) but may make recommendations to the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business if such actions are deemed to be needed.

In December, 12 members were nominated and approved and the committee began to meet. In the course of the discussion leading up to the formation of the new committee, "the Clerk of Ministry and Worship cautioned that her Committee is alerted to issues needing healing and reconciliation at least once every two months, not once every two years. The Ministry and Worship Committee is being drained by such issues to such an extent that they are unable to address their main Committee responsibilities."

Our subsequent experience has confirmed this view of Meeting's needs. Although the proposal for the new committee arose out of a series of incidents involving a particular Friend, the committee has since dealt with several incidents and concerns involving other members and attenders.

The H & R Committee is presently somewhat depleted, having lost six of our twelve members, including our clerk. Current members are Debby Churchman, Bill Cousins, David Etheridge, Neil Froemming, Merry Pearlstein, and Marcia Reecer. Of the remaining members, three are Meeting officers and all are active on other committees. We look forward to having the Nominating Committee restore the H&R Committee to it's original strength of 12 members.

Upon reviewing our first two years of activity, we conclude that the committee would more appropriately be listed as a standing committee, and propose that Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business approve that change in the Handbook.

We note that, in addition to our work with the parties involved in various incidents and misunderstandings, we have had extensive and fruitful discussions around issues of how Quakers can and should appropriately manage and respond to conflict. We are considering ways we can organize or encourage workshops and other activities that may deepen the spiritual life of the Meeting community as it relates to conflict and related issues, such as division, eldering, and forgiveness. We are considering recommending additions to the committee's official description to recognize this additional focus.

We notice that the majority of the incidents and issues referred to us have involved concerns that arose outside Meeting for Worship. It seems appropriate to extend the description of our responsibilities to

provide for intervention in disruptions that occur in connection with Meeting events or on Meeting property.

We request that the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business approve these changes, with specific wording to be worked out with the Records & Handbook Committee and proposed at a future Meeting.

Recent Incidents

Recent altercations, first outside the Meeting Room and then in the Assembly Room have commanded the attention of both the H&R Committee and Ministry & Worship and many members and attenders. Some have expressed impatience with the repetitive pattern of incident and discussion and seek some final resolution.

After an incident in 2003, the Meeting minuted the declaration that "deliberately hurtful behavior toward any member, attender or guest during any Meeting activity is not acceptable." As a practical matter, however, the Meeting has accepted such behavior by continuing to accept, if not welcome, the attendance of a Friend who is likely to repeat it.

Our efforts, over decades, to reconcile our aspiration to "love the sinner and yet hate the sin" have brought us heated dissent, prayerful thought, feelings of frustration and betrayal, and spiritual deepening around the many difficult issues raised by our Queries.

A great deal of suffering results from our reluctance to accept our position on the knife edge between our desires and aversions. This conflict is not likely to be suddenly resolved in the Meeting, in our committee, or in each of us, but there is more that we can do to manage our difficulties.

H&R Committee believes that our work has been helpful, but we need to focus on that part of our charge that calls for us to intervene to limit disruptions as they arise. We have made some efforts in the past to educate ourselves about doing this work, but intend now to make concerted efforts to seek out thorough training and also to make appropriate training available to others in the community.

Past experience suggests that intervening to limit disruptive behavior is difficult when the person who intervenes is perceived as having no authority to make decisions on behalf of the community (for example, to request participants to leave an event or to leave the Meeting property for a time). The Meeting Handbook presently tasks H&R members with responding "immediately to limit any disruptions", but does not address the question of what actions they may take.

The Handbook says that H&R "is not empowered to take actions changing the relationship of any individual to the Meeting..." We do not seek to change this limitation, but we do request that the Meeting agree that members of the Committee and others designated and trained by it are authorized, when intervening to limit a disruption, to exert reasonable authority on behalf of the meeting, to include, for example, excluding disruptive individuals from continued participation in a particular event.

The Healing and Reconciliation Committee requests that the Meeting approve the following recommendations:

- That the Records and Handbook Committee work with H&R to draft proposed changes to the description of the H&R Committee to change the status of the committee from special to standing committee, and to modify some of the language describing the functions of the committee.

- That members of the H&R Committee and others designated and trained by it are authorized, when intervening to limit a disruption, to exert reasonable authority on behalf of the meeting, to include, for example, excluding disruptive individuals from continued participation in a particular event.
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Friends Meeting of Washington Spiritual State of the Meeting, 2009 Draft Report

As a spiritual community The Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) has many blessings. Its bedrock consists of members and attenders deeply committed to Quaker values and principled action. Our physical home is a historic cluster of buildings set within a well-tended garden that manifests a commitment to peace and simplicity. And, perhaps most importantly, we enjoy a never-ending and diverse stream of seekers - drawn to Washington for secular reasons and to FMW in pursuit of a spiritual home. As is often the case, these blessings bring challenges and opportunities. 2009 was a year when these blessings and challenges were particularly noticed at FMW, just as they were for our nation as it welcomed a new Administration and faced with deep concern complex problems that had accrued over many decades.

"[FMW enjoys] the dedication and commitment of Friends who have been attenders and members for decades, to staff committees, to maintain the property and especially to nurture the life of the Spirit in worship and through acts of compassion, justice and peace"

As treasured elders have left us this year through death or other transitions, others have seen their way clear to provide guidance and leadership within our community. With our property entering its eightieth decade, the care and attention it has received from dedicated members for two generations has been followed by an intense renovation planning process. This process approached its conclusion during 2009 with completion of a comprehensive architectural plan that will soon be laid before the full Meeting after long seasoning. The Meeting will be challenged in 2010 to find unanimity on the scale of this endeavor and on how it will be financed so that our buildings remain manifestations of our vigor and our commitment to full inclusion. During 2009 the Meeting also has given special attention to welcoming newcomers and fortifying our collective spirit with a series of actions designed to foster to spiritual growth through opportunities convened throughout the year.

"The people and activities are very important to me. I feel blessed to be part of the history of FMW, helping me grow - challenges me to grow. I feel a strong sense of community but I had to open myself to it. The sense of community did not just happen"

Asked to consider their personal relation to the life of the Meeting, Friends expressed deep connection and gratitude for the "groundedness", "expressions of strong personal faith", "open-mindedness" and "diversity" of the meeting and its members. Several spoke of FMW as being central to their lives, "sometimes like a touchstone...sometimes like a life-line". Friends were especially grateful for some Quaker practices they experienced at FMW, especially the practice of deep listening, and of holding one another in the Light. One friend saw this as "training in faith and in generosity."

"Many Friends at this meeting are always ready to listen, to console each other, as well as challenge us to grow. We keep working diligently at the hard task of creating the beloved community"

Friends also offered varying perceptions on whether and how worshippers stand together in love and conviction. It is rare for a large proportion of FMW Friends to work together on a single goal or initiative; some feel that in a Meeting our size, this is neither achievable nor necessary. Some feel that regular endeavors such as the annual Shoebox Project and working at local soup kitchens and shelters, special events such as the Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Inauguration Day hospitality, work days that have given loving attention to our facilities and built community through shared labor, and the memorial services of cherished members, show our strengths. Others feel that such events are perhaps too few and far between. Many members and attenders hope to see more caring, openness and love expressed within our community and in our actions toward the outside world.

"[I would like to see strengthened] Generosity. Open-heartedness. Loving kindness to one another. All this takes listening and learning. [We] need to address long standing issues! Problems, conflict, difficulty - facing these with each other and alone is our opportunity to deepen our spiritual life."

Friends remain grateful for the many different ways FMW has gathered in worship and spiritual seeking-four different meetings for worship each 1st day, classes for children, youth and adults, special workshops and working groups around different topics. This year there was a deeply satisfying gathering where Friends and attenders shared spiritual gifts brought to FMW from various religious traditions. Friends also continue to seek better grounding in Quaker faith, practice, thought and history. In response, Ministry and Worship compiled a list of FMW spiritual education opportunities and it has held an exploratory workshop on Quaker Quest. The Religious Education Committee has revived the "Friendly Eights" dinners. Nevertheless, some still have concerns that FMW "is splintered into cliques and separate groupings...a bit unfriendly and dismissive, at times".

Many Friends expressed a hope that some aspects of Meeting life might be strengthened, including the nature of its silent worship. Several cited a wish for more Spirit-centered vocal ministry, noting the need for sensitivity in gently encouraging that end while realizing that Spirit-led revelations are not always easily recognized. There are also concerns related to "Eldering". And, FMW continues to struggle with serious budget shortfalls which leave some Members deeply troubled that as a community we seem unable to meet our fiduciary responsibilities. Asked "how do we stand together in love as well as in conviction," one friend responded, "Well, do we stand together? Or do we avoid conflict and avoid facing our financial responsibilities?" The Meeting continues to clarify the ways in which Quakers can share Spirit-led guidance with kindness, respect, and sensitivity.

"There is much enthusiasm about the ideas of Quakerism from new inquirers/ attendees, but it is difficult for new folks to gain the necessary information about 'effective' ministry and worship practices."

"Part of seeing the light in every person to me means welcoming each individual as a valued potential member of a group, and finding out what truth and nurture that person may be seeking and whether there are ways a meeting can help to meet those needs or foster that person's gifts."

Amid our distractions and eagerness to connect with the individuals who hearten and strengthen us, many feel we need to be more welcoming of newcomers. In response to these concerns, FMW has given attention to signage, Meeting for Worship procedures, and personal outreach - striving to make our community more welcoming. Other ideas are also being considered such as the formation of a dedicated "welcoming committee" or widening hospitality outreach. As more, younger families and individuals find their way to FMW; our community has a great opportunity to welcome their entry into our physical and spiritual home, recognizing that they are integral to our future vitality.

While recognizing the blessings of our historic and dynamic Meeting, our community is responding to the concerns we have identified. We are working together with compassion to find better ways to welcome new attendees, enhance diversity, and resolve fiscal and facility stewardship challenges. We are also striving to make our meeting a more caring and nurturing home for all spiritual seekers guided by the Light within "to create the beloved community". We trust the Spirit to lead these efforts and to inform our hearts. In so doing, we draw on the love, tolerance, and patience that have long sustained the Friends Meeting of Washington.

Letter of Greeting

March 14, 2010 (on letterhead)

To South Central Yearly Meeting of Friends

Dear Friends,

Our member Byron Sandford and his wife Susan Griffin are traveling in Texas and will attend South Central Yearly Meeting annual session on their trip. We at Friends Meeting of Washington are pleased to take advantage of this opportunity to convey our greetings to South Central Yearly Meeting. We hope that you have a productive and Spirit lead annual session, May we all walk in the Light.

Blessings,

David Etheridge and Bill Cousins

Co-Clerks of Friends Meeting of Washington

Travel Minute for J.E. McNeil

March 14, 2010

RE: Travel Minute for J. E. McNeil (on letterhead)

We at Friends Meeting of Washington, DC commend our member, J. E. McNeil, to your care. She is traveling among Friends to build bridges of understanding. She has been a part of Friends Meeting of Washington since the early 1980s and she has shown herself to be a well grounded and spiritually centered Friend. J. E. has a strong interest in deepening her understanding of the diverse world of Friends. She feels called to travel among Friends on behalf of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Intervisitation Program as well.

The Intervisitation Program of Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) seeks to strengthen the Religious Society of Friends and nurture the beloved community of Friends, especially within Friends United Meeting (FUM). While BYM's concern regarding an issue arising from FUM's personnel policy planted the seed, that concern is not the program's focus. Rather, as we in BYM faced the pain we felt as a result of that policy, we awoke to the fragility of the relations among the yearly meetings and monthly meetings of FUM. The goal of BYM's Intervisitation Program is to encourage, prepare, and support Friends to travel among Yearly Meetings with the faith that we can listen deeply, strengthen our relationships, and build our faith community. The program assumes that intervisitation will be in all

directions and those interested will offer and receive hospitality.

J. E. has been active among Friends for the past 30 years. In past years, she has served on House, Marriage & Family, and Finance Committees and as the Meeting Treasurer. She currently serves on the Records and Handbook Committee as well as is a Trustee of the Meeting for a second term. J. E. has served as the clerk of the BYM Peace and Social Concerns Committee and currently is one of the BYM Board Representatives of Friends United Meeting where she also serves as clerk of the Finance Committee. In her work to defend and extend the rights of conscientious objectors to war as Executive Director of the Center on Conscience & War, she has traveled among all the branches of Friends in the United States as well as among other religious traditions.

J. E. travels with our hopes and prayers, and we trust that you will find her time amongst you fruitful, prayerful and enriching.

In the Light,

David Etheridge and Bill Cousins
Co-Clerks, Friends Meeting of Washington, DC

Membership Committee Annual Report

Our Meeting Handbook calls for members of the Religious Society of Friends to be seekers of the truth as a member of Friends Meeting of Washington and the wider body of the Society of Friends. In this seeking, new members are asked to:

- Seek more fully to understand the testimonies of the Religious Society of Friend and to express them in everyday living within the family, the community, the nation and the world.
- Use the queries frequently as a means of examining and directing oneself.
- Cultivate a quality of spirit and an approach to social problems based on principles of Friends.
- Develop an increasing understanding of religious truth through reading appropriate books and religious periodicals.
- Attend regularly the Meeting for Worship and the Meeting for Business in a spirit of devotion and love, seeking to participate in the life of the Meeting accordance with Divine Guidance.
- Accept an appointment on Meeting committees and to serve faithfully on them.
- Be aware of Friends projects and participate in them as there is opportunity to do so.
- Contribute generously to the financial support of the local Meeting and its commitments.

We were pleased to assist Beverly Reader, Basil Kiwan and Margot Greenlee as they began the membership process. We look forward to introducing them to the meeting at the New Member Reception to be held May 23 in the Assembly Room.

As part of our responsibility to the Meeting, the Committee has continued two special projects this year:

- Contacting Out of Touch Members - Under the leadership of Molly Tully, the Committee with

participation by other Meeting members, contacted members we have not heard from in several years. This has been a great experience as we reach out to our membership, learn how the Meeting community can be of better service and encourage them to attend Meeting for Worship.

- Transitioning Associate Members to Regular Members - With Hayden Wetzl providing the leadership, the Committee has begun reaching out to Associate members who joined as children and may be ready to change their status to regular members of the Meeting. The Committee hopes to be helpful in assisting Associate members in making this transition. Parents are encouraged to ask their children to convert their membership from associate to regular when appropriate.
- Guidelines for Membership - the Meeting has available on the handout rack in the downstairs hallway a number of handouts reviewing the membership process in an effort to assist prospective members as they write their letters of application. The Committee is currently reviewing and updating these documents to ensure they are helpful to new members.

In 2009, the Meeting welcomed the following new Friends to our meeting:

- Desaray Smith welcomed by Mary Campbell and Bill Strein
- Lauren T. Evans welcomed by Mary Campbell and Bill Strein
- Ellen Massey welcomed by Molly Tully and Hayden Wetzl
- Beverly Reader welcomed by Beth Cogswell

As we seek volunteers to serve as Welcomers, we will continue coordinate the welcoming of all new members.

The Membership Committee is uniquely privileged to share the often deeply profound statements of faith and spiritual practice by applicants for membership. Not only are applicants' letters overwhelmingly heartfelt and moving, they provide a rich basis for later intimate discussions. Time and again, we have come away enriched by our meetings with those who apply and challenged to explore our own commitments more. It is an honor.

As a Committee, we are only part of the membership process. All members are important in helping each of us grow in our faith. We appreciate the meeting support for our work and for our new members

Submitted by

Jean Capps
Janet Dinsmore
Monica Jacobe
Elise Storck
Harry Massey, Clerk
Molly Tully
Hayden Wetzl

Associate Members over 30

The Membership Committee has tried to contact these associate members, all over the age of 30 (we ask associate members to re-consider their membership status at age 25). If we do not hear otherwise from these Friends we will recommend termination of their membership at the April Meeting for Business:

Nicholas Warren
Alexander Warren

Mary Johnson
Aladdine Dory Joroff
James E. Rouse
Asia Moore
James O'Neill
Samuel Newman
Rebecca Newman
Deane L. Kern

Personal Aid Committee Annual Report

Committee Members: Beth Cogswell, Susan Meehan, Jim Steen, Thurla McCash, Beverly Reader, Pam Callard and co-clerks Mary Campbell and Merry Pearlstein

Faith and Practice calls on all Meeting members "to care for one another and for the Meeting." The Personal Aid Committee is formally charged with these tasks, but we also rely heavily on the assistance provided by other individuals to members and attenders who are in need. We would also welcome new committee members.

As always, this past year brought many and varied concerns to our attention. Requests for assistance generally come directly from individuals and indirectly from staff referrals, other Meeting members, family members or concerned friends. The committee responds to the best of its abilities as respectful, concerned friends. We gather relevant information, listen, make telephone calls, identify expert resources, visit, cook, drive, clean, recruit assistance from other Meeting members, and sometimes offer limited emergency financial aid in response to dire need. We arrange car pools. We also send flowers and cards, and occasionally gifts. Sometimes we take someone out for a simple, friendly meal. Many situations are resolved with individuals' recovery from temporary illness or other crises. Others involve chronic, longer-term needs. Committee members frequently struggle with questions of how best to be helpful given limited resources, and how much we should intervene with individuals who appear deeply troubled but refuse assistance. Our work is confidential; we strive to protect Friends' privacy while being responsive to their needs.

The committee maintains resource lists for members and attenders in need of mental health, legal, and social assistance. We are reviewing and expanding this listing in anticipation of increased need during this time of financial uncertainty.

Personal Aid also allocates first-time attender certificates to those attending Baltimore Yearly Meeting for the first time, and we handle scholarship funds for persons needing assistance to attend Friends annual meetings, conferences and seminars.

The committee strives to steward its limited financial resources to best serve the needs of members and attenders experiencing financial crisis. We are truly appreciative of Bob Meehan's holiday bread baking, which continues to provide vital, substantial additions to our operating budget.

Minutes and Ideas from the Ad Hoc Committee on Welcome

Physical Welcome

Install welcome and directional signs.
Install boxes next to entries to hold informational bookmarks.
Post Decatur door "open" signs.
Remove peep holes (small windows instead?) and repaint Decatur entries.
Improve and unify Decatur streetscape, remove overgrown shrubs, repair sidewalk.
Turn off outdoor lights during the day.
Test out opening East Lawn more during the day to make campus more welcoming.

Materials

Create simple bookmarks with summary information about the Meeting.
Create basic orientation guide to the life of the Meeting.
Use materials from Pendle Hill, FGC, other Meetings.
Develop newcomers' packet.
Put the FMW Handbook and other orientation materials online.

Greeting

Position greeters outside the Phelps and Decatur Gates.
Explain options for Worship.
Have greeters ask: Have you been to Meeting? Do you have questions? What is Your Name?
Encourage name tags.
Cultivate a practice of greeting among all Members.

Before Rise of Meeting

Introduce greeters and Committees.
Invite questions.

After Meeting

Who's going to be the Betty Morris? (take responsibility to greet newcomers afterwards).
Have refreshments in a different place such as the Meeting Room or Terrace/ East garden.
Create welcome table after Rise of Meeting to help people connect.
Offer weekly simple lunch (PB&J, tuna sandwiches) to encourage people to stay around awhile.

Follow-up

Provide ways for visitors to register questions, concerns, ideas.
Find someone to follow up with each person who signs the Guestbook.
Post information about help needed or offered by Committees.
Convene welcome meeting once a month-- "Newcomers Reception".
Hold tours of the Meeting campus.
Bring back tradition of post-Meeting potluck meals, perhaps on 5th Sundays.
Ease access/ integration into committees - burden is now on new people to find out how.
Create database of local newcomers.

Program

Increase outside uses of the Meeting campus

Enhance weekday welcome

Produce special programs - "Spiritual Journeys", Quaker Quest, presentations by embassy, neighbors, Quakerism through the lens of other religions

Ask clerks of other committees what each Committee can do to enhance welcome

Create other ways to boost welcome/ engagement of diverse people, families