

Newsletter, April 2018

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

March 11, 2018

Query for Worship Sharing:

How do we listen for Spirit in all voices-- young, old, experienced and inexperienced?

Welcome of Visitors

The Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business opened at 12:25 pm with 25 Friends present. There were three visitors, Shannon Hughes of the Religious Education Committee, Arlene and Dan Lutenegger of the Library Committee.

Clerk's Report, 3.2018

Upcoming Events

- **3/24, Anti-Gun Violence March:** FMW will plan to march *as a Meeting*, gathering here in the Meetinghouse to journey together to the march, which begins at noon. We particularly want to hear from teens about how they would like us to support them. Details to come.
- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to Welcome and Host Marchers:** Plans are proceeding apace for our Meeting to host out-of-towners for the March against gun violence, “March for Our Lives.” We need volunteers to make dinner on 3/23 & 3/24, and to be present in the Meetinghouse during the day on Saturday. This is a great way for folks who are unable to march to still meaningfully participate. For more info, contact Jean Capps or the Office.

FMW Highlights

- **FMW Renovation Update:** Our ground-breaking event last Sunday was a huge success, thanks to help from Hospitality, Property, and First Day School folks, not to mention the Capital Improvements Taskforce and the Capital Campaign. Thanking everyone in advance for their patience through the next several months of construction.
- Our **new solar panels** are fully installed and doing a good job of holding us in the light. We’ve even had a couple of days in which we generated more energy than we used. If you’d like to take a peek at the panel showing electric generation, ask Neil Froeming, Brian Lutenegger, or Ken Orvis for a tour.

Renovation Update

- Permitting is being finalized this month
- Expect a 2-4 week delay due to complications connecting the Decatur Place water line to the water main pipe.

Major Business

Cross-Committee Proposal for the Welcoming of Newborn and Recently Adopted Children into the FMW Spiritual Community – Gray Handley

- After a dialogue together, the Meeting approved the proposal from Marriage and Family Relations, Religious Education, Ministry and Worship, Records and Handbook, and Membership Committees, which collaborated to develop a new set of policies and guidelines for special Meetings for Worship with the purpose of welcoming a new child into our community. This Meeting for Worship for Welcoming will be initiated by the parents of the child. The meeting will be open to all people committed to the child’s growth, and if the family desires it, can include a certificate which the community will sign (akin to the tradition of Quaker marriage certificates). The certificate declares the Meeting’s commitment to the family, and the family’s commitment to supporting the spiritual path of the child. For the child of an FMW member, the child will be offered Associate Membership, as is our current custom. Please see the attached proposal for more details.
- Some friends raised a potential concern that this may be too ritualistic or ceremonial. The committees considered this, and believe that since Quakers hold meetings for worship with a concern for marriage, for memorializing death, but not for welcoming new life, there was an opportunity. They also clarified

that it is not meant to be a ceremony, as it is a meeting for worship, so the group has weighed this concern and found discernment that it fits within existing Quaker process. At least one meeting in Baltimore Yearly Meeting and in other places around the country have had welcoming meetings for children (sometimes individual, sometimes group). It is a key support mechanism for not only the child, but also the parents.

Membership Committee Annual Report – Joe Izzo

- Friends accepted the annual report.
- Friends accepted the transfer of membership of Steve Chase to FMW from the Putney Monthly Meeting, Vermont, of the New England Yearly Meeting.
- Regarding the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting queries for membership, friends discussed the terminology used (i.e. God), but noted that it is not meant to be exclusionary, as there are no theological requirements to believe in God, and each person is accepted where they are at in their spiritual journey.

Library Committee Annual Report – Faith Williams

- Friends accepted the annual report.

Personal Aid Committee Annual Report – Emilie Schmeidler

- Friends accepted the annual report.
- A friend suggested keeping track of the numbers of people assisted, and other basic data to help the Meeting understand the scope of the Committees' work. The committee seeks some help to determine what kind of data would be useful to collect, for instance, around 75 cards were sent this past calendar year. However, measuring the impact of the work may be very hard to capture, as so much of the work is outreach related.

First Presentation of the Spiritual State of the Meeting – Malachy Killbride

- Please see the attached report for details. The report will be held over for one month, and during that time, Friends are encouraged to provide feedback to Ministry and Worship Committee. The final version will be presented at the April Meeting for Business, and if it is accepted by the Meeting, it will be submitted to Baltimore Yearly Meeting.
- In the past, the Committee has used polling, surveys and/or focus groups or threshing sessions to gauge the Spiritual State of the Meeting. This year, the Committee hosted a series of at least three Worship Sharing opportunities between November and February, however, there was low turnout at the gatherings. The Committee considered these in-person meetings to have a more spiritual grounding than online polls, and hoped to do more outreach to increase participation in the future.
- Friends suggested adding an introductory paragraph on methodology to explain how the information was collected, and how many people gave feedback, as well as any other context may help explain the

anecdotal nature of this report (especially since there was a low response rate this year).

- One friend shared that the survey's used in the past were a useful tool for more guided reflection, and suggested a combination of approaches for next time.
- One friend raised a concern about the final paragraph of the report which criticises the renovation project, even though the renovation project has garnered great unity from the Meeting, with much discernment over 12 years for us to get to this point of action.
- Comments and questions should be submitted to the committee within the next month either through Malachy Killbride or Greg Robb.

Nominating Committee Update– Todd Harvey

Friends approved the following:

- Chad Dobson (M): Representative to the Interfaith Conference of Metro Washington (no term specified)
- Barbara Briggs (A): Peace and Social Concerns (term ending December 2020). A friend noted how much she has already brought much value to the committee.

Sanctuary Task force Informational Update – Jim Bell

**Please note that the Meeting has taken no official action (approval or disapproval) for hosting undocumented individuals for Sanctuary. As this necessary vetting by trustees and legal approval of the Meeting for Business has not been done, the Meeting has “released” the task force to exercise its good judgment in exploring the legal ramifications and fiscal sustainability of all options in order to take official action in the future.*

- As follow up from the pledge forms circulated in the last month to gauge the Meeting's potential future financial or volunteer support to host individuals for Sanctuary, the Task force informed the Meeting that it intends to do outreach to other nearby BYM houses to gauge their interest. Friends suggested that the outreach be understood as exploratory.
- A friend is concerned that asking the meeting to take official action to approve outreach without prior official approval from FMW to host individuals for Sanctuary is not right order. A member of the task force noted that the Task Force is responding to the Meeting's request to thoroughly vet the legal factors and fiscal sustainability of hosting an undocumented individual before the Meeting can take official action. The committee noted that part of the reason we are not yet able to commit to formally providing Sanctuary, is due to the fundamental changes the Meeting has with the renovations, which include major changes in our income flow during and after its completion.

Friends APPROVED the minutes as improved, with any necessary edits.

The Meeting closed at 2 pm with approximately 11 persons in attendance to reconvene as Way opens on the second Sunday of the Month, April 8, 2018.

Proposal for the Welcoming of Newborn and Recently Adopted Children into the FMW Spiritual Community

- For each Welcoming Meeting a welcoming document (certificate or something similar) will be prepared by FMW for the welcomed child and FMW Members and Attenders, as well as all those attending the Welcoming Meeting, will be invited to sign. For the child of an FMW Member, the document will welcome them as an Associate Member; for the child of an FMW Attender, the document will welcome them as a Member of our Spiritual Community. The text of the document will express the Friends Meeting of Washington's joy and commitment to help nurture the spiritual wellbeing and growth of the named child.
- The Friends Meeting of Washington enthusiastically welcomes children born or adopted into families within our Meeting Community.
- When Members and Attenders families have children joining their families, by birth or adoption, they are invited to request that the Marriage and Family Relations convene a meeting for worship with a concern for welcoming their child into our spiritual community (a Welcoming Meeting).
- Marriage and Family Relations will invite the child's parents or guardians to name a clerk for the Welcoming Meeting (the Committee will provide a co-clerk) or, if they prefer, the Committee will identify a clerk and a co-clerk.
- The Welcoming Meeting will be scheduled on a First Day that is convenient for the family for up to half an hour following the regular 10:30-11:30 a.m. Meeting for Worship and children will be especially welcomed to attend. Other dates and times also may be used, depending on the wishes of the involved families. As is the case with Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Marriage, others who care about the child and the family (grandparents, family friends, relatives) also will be welcomed. The Welcoming Meeting may be convened in the main FMW Meeting Room or elsewhere on the FMW Campus, depending on individual family preferences.
- Following the Welcoming Meeting the family may choose to host a celebratory reception or a similar event, but it is not expected.

2018 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Members: Rob Farr, co-clerk, Judy Hubbard, co-clerk, Marcia Reecer, Gray Handley, Joe, Izzo, Janet Dinsmore

While the duties of the Membership Committee remain largely the same —interviewing individuals who apply for membership to Friends Meeting of Washington and presenting recommendations to the Meeting for Business—Committee members continue to be inspired by the moving letters from and discussions we have with applicants. The variety of paths applicants have taken to bring them to us is a continual source of wonder and appreciation.

This past year, the Meeting was enriched by the following new members:

- Nicole Else-Quest
- Chris Wickham
- Leonard Eoussa
- Greg Robb

- Mary Melchior along with Associate Members Preston Bernard Melchior-Fisher, Gregory Montfort Melchior-Fisher and Charles Xavier Melchior-Fisher
- Monique Russell along with Associate Member Luca Romero Russell
- Rashid Darden
- Jesse Finkel and Associate Member Jacob Benjamin Finkel

We are currently looking forward to meeting several new individuals who have requested membership. It has been an unusually rich period. Unfortunately, since we didn't receive answers from 19 over-25 year-old Associate Members whom we contacted to see if they wished to become full members, we had had to remove their names from FMW's membership rolls. We would welcome them back, of course, and otherwise hope they find spiritual homes in new communities.

The Committee revised its application form adding coverage of sojourner status and transfers. Gender categories now include "Other" and the form specifies the need for an accompanying letter while providing guidance on content. We added a checkoff for Inquirers' Class attendance and a line seeking an email address. Applicants can choose whether they wish to add their children as Associate Members or decline. We also changed the title to "Requests for Membership." Debby Churchman was asked to reproduce and use the new version for all future "requesters."

Among appeals from other FMW groups to which we responded was a request to review a task force report on Assessing Racial Inclusion and Justice. We did so and asked Marcia Reecer, a task force member, to forward recommendations regarding readings for FMW members and consideration of an interfaith forum at which Quaker practices would be explained. Member Joe Izzo mentioned plans to serve as a Quaker chaplain at Howard University when he retires.

Another appeal regarded the creation of Baby Welcoming Certificates and special Meetings for Worship following the birth of a child. The Committee supported the idea noting that the certificate would not, however, confer Associate Membership unless the parent was a member and requested it. We await further direction from the Marriage and Family Relations Committee or Ministry and Worship Committee.

The Committee continues to be grateful to Debby Churchman for her insights and work in following up new memberships and membership requests. Attached are questions we explore, among others, during the clearness interview process with new applicants. It is an enriching experience.

Submitted by Rob Farr and Judy Hubbard, co-clerks, Membership Committee

Suggestions to Committees Interviewing Applicants for Membership—Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends

1. *Does he believe that God endows every human being with a measure of God's own divine spirit, which if followed, will lead into all Truth?*
 2. *Does she understand that Quakerism is rooted in Christianity?*
 3. *To what extent is he familiar with and sympathetic to the historic testimonies of the Society of Friends, such as non-participation in war, simplicity of living, and human brotherhood?*
 4. *Has she any reservation regarding testimonies or other matters included in the queries?*
 5. *Does he impress you as a person of integrity?*
 6. *To what extent does she feel herself already a part of the Meeting fellowship distinct from formal membership?*
 7. *To what extent do members acquainted with the applicant feel he is in spirit a member?*
 8. *Does she feel that the Meeting for Worship strengthens her spiritual life?*
 9. *Does he understand his responsibility for regular attendance at Meeting for Worship, for supporting the concerns of the Meeting, and for sharing in its work, as well as for supporting it financially? Does he realize his responsibilities for attending Meetings for Business, including the sessions of quarterly and yearly meetings?*
 10. *Is she familiar with and understanding of the method of the Meeting for Business?*
 11. *To what extent is he familiar with the wider family of Friends beyond the local meeting?*
 12. *If she has up to this time been a church member, why does she wish to change? If she previously had no membership in any church, why does she wish to join Friends?*
 13. *What is the attitude of other members of his family toward his joining?*
1. *Does she realize that she is asking to join a group which does not accept the final authority of any person or creed but which individually and collectively trusts to the continuing revelation of Light and Truth?*

LIBRARY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT, March, 2018

I. Introduction

The Library Committee continued to prepare for renovation. Some of the shelves will be removed during the construction, and therefore we have moved most reserve books and bound magazines into the Terrace Room. We have been going over the shelves, restoring order, and repairing book labels.

We continue our new system for checkout, using a sign out notebook.

II. Finding Books in the Collection and Checking Them Out

First, find the library website, by going to the Quick Links at <http://quakersdc.org/>

Or by going directly to <http://quakersdc.org/Library>

The books in the Library have been cataloged on <http://www.LibraryThing.com>. The FMW Library catalog is viewable at <http://www.librarything.com/catalog/FMWLibrary> or on mobile devices at <http://www.librarything.com/m/> by entering the collection name FMWLibrary.

Locate books by author, or subject, or title. To find where the book you want is located, find the call number under the Comments section. If necessary, ask Library Committee members for help. If you can't find the book you want on the shelf, check the notebook to see if someone else has it out.

Try to return books within three weeks so that others may use them too.

III. Size, Growth and Scope of the Collection

In February, 2018, the Library held 2214 books in the collection, about 30 more than last year at this time. Additions to the collection came partly from donations this year. We will continue to seek suggestions from the community and look for new titles relating to Quakerism to add to the collection.

Before donating books, please talk to committee members. The Library's scope for collecting includes Quaker history and biography, spirituality, LGBTQ spirituality, mysticism, social justice, and non-violence. We do hold occasional book sales, and would like permission to sell duplicate or inappropriate books.

IV. Kindles and E-Books

The library owns 5 Kindle paperwhites which are available to be used by reading groups in the meeting. Ask the librarians about this if you are interested.

The Library has also added more links to electronic versions of classic Quaker titles to the Library's homepage, including John Woolman's *Journal*, Robert Barclay's *Apology*, and *Journal of the Life and Religious Labours of Elias Hicks*. We have included a basic introduction to Quakerism website, and a link to another Quaker library which has even more material. If people need assistance downloading these to their own Kindles or other e-book readers, please contact Library Committee members

V. Membership

We could always use assistance and actively welcome new members. If you have an interest, please approach one of the committee members.

Members of the Library Committee:

Abby Thomsen (emeritus)

Patrick Lynam (emeritus)

Michael North (Meeting Librarian), belgrade18@yahoo.com

(Michael North, at present not active in the library, is the one who set up Library Thing and cataloged all the books that we have.)

Gene Throwe ex officio gthrowe@gmail.com

Arlene and Dan Lutenegger dalutenegger@gmail.com

Judy Hubbard hubbard.judy@gmail.com

Lucy Norman lucystarnorman@gmail.com

JiWon Park parkjiwonssi@gmail.com

Frank Weiss frankgreyhound@hotmail.com

Faith Williams (Clerk), faithmw@gmail.com

Personal Aid Committee Annual Report for 2017

We must be concerned about the welfare of every member of the Meeting community. While Friends need to guard against prying or invasion of privacy, it is nevertheless essential that Meetings be aware of the spiritual and material needs of members of the community and express caring concern in appropriate ways. – Faith and Practice, BYM

Committee members: Steve Brooks, Pam Callard, Tom Libbert, Mary Melchior, Lydia Pecker, Emilie Schmeidler

The Personal Aid Committee (PAC) is asked by the Meeting to provide caring concern through practical assistance to meet short-term needs of members and attenders, e.g. transportation, shopping, or meals for those who are injured or ill; compassionate support; limited financial assistance; and by making contact with community members we have not seen for a while. In the process, we listen, identify resources, visit, make telephone calls, track down absent friends and family, and serve on support groups.

PAC meets monthly to review new or ongoing needs of FMW community members who have sought the Committee's help or been referred by others. These deliberations are confidential; we strive to maintain the privacy of Friends while responding to their needs. PAC also plans special assistance and public education projects, and addresses other concerns brought to our attention.

Two years ago we picked up an earlier custom of having cards to sign or to write a little note to FMW community members who are celebrating a life event, or who are ill or suffering a loss. In 2017 we sent out over seventy-five cards. We also offer to hold in the Light anyone who requests it for whatever reason.

PAC works with the Hunger and Homelessness Taskforce to try to address needs of people connected to the Meeting who are homeless (or in danger of becoming homeless). We also developed links with people in Meeting who have extensive experience with social service agencies that may be able to help with financial, mental health, or other needs. This year we were especially concerned about the welfare of two people. One is settled, at least for the time being, and continues his loose relationship to the Meeting. The other, a regular attender, continues to live in a shelter.

Beyond providing short-term personal assistance to individuals, the Committee administers two scholarships to enrich the spiritual life of individuals and contribute to the Meeting's corporate life. BYM provides each monthly meeting with certificates to encourage those who have not attended the Annual

Session to go by providing two days free. In 2017, we distributed certificates for three adults and one child. In addition, PAC gave small scholarships to enable one friend to attend FGC Gathering and another to attend the FCNL Annual Meeting.

PAC continues to work with Ministry and Worship Committee and Healing and Reconciliation Committee on issues of Pastoral Counseling and Community Building. In 2016 and 2017, this working group sponsored a series of workshops. For 2018, the group has organized a reading and discussion of the book, *Out of the silence: Quaker Perspectives on Pastoral Care and Counseling*.

During 2017, PAC sponsored "Silence and Solidarity" an interfaith memorial gathering for people who have lost a child. PAC also sponsored several "Active Bystander" trainings at FMW and in Texas.

PAC relies on members of the Meeting community beyond its formal membership. We rely on the invaluable informal assistance of past members, especially past clerks. Debby Churchman, as Administrative Secretary, helps us in a multitude of ways, especially alerting us to FMW members and attenders in need. For years, sale from Bob Meehan's Treasure Bread has provided the funds for the Personal Aid budget. The Committee is tremendously grateful to Bob for this long standing and significant contributions to the welfare of our community!

Respectfully submitted,

Emilie Schmeidler, clerk

Spiritual State of the Meeting, 2018

This year the Spiritual State of the Meeting was conducted through gatherings of worship sharing. We focused on our worship together and our experience of community within Friends Meeting of Washington. Several common themes emerged which are reported here. Friends' experience and concern with the various Meetings for Worship, recent conflict and disturbances, our building project, and social action were shared.

A Friend observed that there are a significant number of young people who attend Friends Meeting of Washington. The Friend thinks this is important. "Young people change the character of the meeting." Said the Friend. Another Friend remarked that there was a sense of joy when the children join us for worship and this Friend said the presence of the children is a blessing. Another Friend was impressed by the support we give the children at FMW.

Several Friends concurred that committees are a huge part of the spiritual life of FMW. Committee work is important and contributes to the spiritual life of the meeting, Friends said. "It is important to be on a committee. It is how the meeting functions. It is how one gets involved." one Friend said. Another Friend shared that there is a great strength to the FMW community now. There is activism and people are involved with various social causes these days.

Friends discussed our worship together at FMW over the last year. There has been some conflict and change within the last several months. One Friend noted that we now have 6 separate Meetings for Worship at FMW. The most recently added Meeting for Worship came into existence to address and resolve a recent conflict. The new Meeting for Worship has now taken on a life of its own. “All our Meetings for Worship shouldn’t be the same, each Meeting for Worship has its own characteristics,” a Friend said. However, more than one Friend wondered if the newest Meeting for Worship will survive? A friend stated that the latest Meeting for Worship will survive but only if there is energy behind it. “The uncomfortable things that happen are a sign of some good which will come” another Friend said regarding conflict in the meeting. Other Friends also remarked on the various Meetings for Worship at FMW. A Friend noted that there has been a “spiritual deepening” in the last several months since disturbances at Meeting for Worship, in the Meeting Room at 10:30, has been addressed. The goal of our worship is to be “gathered and deep”, a Friend shared. Other Friends agreed that it is a good thing to have Meetings for Worship which have different characteristics and numbers of those who worship together. “Different People have different needs” a Friend remarked speaking to the different Meetings for Worship at FMW. Although, another Friend observed that “...we are not meant to be a home for everyone, we are a lay-by for some who come to worship with us.”

Although the FMW construction project and our social action was not a specific topic of the worship sharing for the Spiritual State of the Meeting, Friends were led to share their concerns and thoughts.

The building project has gotten people “disturbed” and it is a part of the upheaval we have been experiencing one Friend said. “We cannot be a part of a community which is only about a building project” one Friend said. “We should be both about social action and a building project” another Friend said. One Friend raised a concern about whether our involvement with social issues will “flourish”? “Having to pay a mortgage is a huge part of what we have to do for the next 20 years. What will this do to our meeting” a Friend said and asked, “What is our dream for the next 20 years?” It was pointed out that the construction project leads to the vibrancy of the meeting because Friends see a future here at FMW. In addition, the growing meetings in Baltimore Yearly Meeting are those under construction, a Friend noted. “What keeps us together at FMW? Is it the construction project or our social action? Or is it the reason for why we are undergoing a building project and for our social action?” a Friend said. One Friend concluded by stating that within the Religious Society of Friends, we value listening. The Friend said “I look forward to holding that value in The Light because we will be tested by the commercial aspect of what we are doing and our social action. Listening will be important to us as we move through the next 20 years.”

Pledge to Support Provision of Physical Sanctuary

at Friends Meeting of Washington

In the case that Friends Meeting of Washington comes to host an individual facing the threat of deportation, I/we will support this cause by making donations of

• \$10

• \$100

• \$250

• \$25

• \$50

• Other: \$ _____

every month to FMW's Sanctuary Fund, which will be used to provide support to an individual in sanctuary. I will continue to make these donations until no individuals remain in physical sanctuary on FMW's campus or FMW's Sanctuary Task Force determines that this support is no longer needed.

Contact Information

Name	
Street/Apt	
City & Zip	
Phone	
Email	

Signature

Date

Please return this pledge form to:

Friends Meeting of Washington

2111 Florida Avenue NW, Washington DC 20008

(202) 483-3310

Email: admin@quakersdc.org

(This ends the minutes & reports from Meeting for Business, March 2018)

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 4: Help make sandwiches for the **Grate Patrol** to take to our vulnerable neighbors, starting at 5:00 pm. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at sbrooks@uab.edu

April 3–5 – **ACT Now! Unite to End Racism** Baltimore Yearly Meeting is supporting three days of action planned by the National Council of Churches and other religious organizations in honor of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. **Please join in this effort in any way you can.** Participate in the events—offer hospitality to traveling Friends and others—publicize the event among your own social network—and hold in the Light healing around race in our country. The organizers of this event write: “We challenge ourselves and our communities to join in truth-telling, leading to actions that right the wrongs, and, with God’s grace, bring healing and wholeness to all people, and unity to the nation.” For more information, go to www.rally2endracism.org/. **Annapolis Friends Meeting has gotten things organized for all of us. (Thank you!) Please go to causes.annapolisfriends.org/ to see how you can help and to sign up.**

The Events of ACT Now! Unite to End Racism:

Tuesday, April 3: Ecumenical Worship Service in the Orthodox Tradition

- 6:30pm: St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 2815 36th St., NW, Washington, D.C., 20007

Wednesday, April 4: ACT to End Racism Rally on the National Mall

- 7-8am: Silent Prayer Walk to the National Mall
- 8-9am: Interfaith Service
- 9am-4pm: Rally and Call to Commitment

Thursday, April 5: National Day of Advocacy & Action

April 4 – **Discover SSFS Event for Prospective Families, Sandy Spring Friends School (Sandy Spring, MD)** Do you know a family that has been meaning to come and check out the school? **The Admission Office is hosting a Discover SSFS event on Wednesday, April 4th.** Check-in is from 8:15-8:45am. Parents take a campus tour to learn more about what makes Sandy Spring Friends School such an amazing place for personal and academic development. The event will conclude at 11:00am. Spaces are limited so be sure to ask your friends to [pre-register](#) by Friday, March 30th.

April 5–8 – **QPCC – Quakers in Pastoral Care and Counseling: Annual Conference**

Quaker Hill Retreat Center (Richmond, IN) QPCC members are Quaker (mostly) chaplains, counselling professionals and pastors. Quaker life and counseling practice has always included elements of mindfulness, and we find there is always more to learn. With this in mind, we invite you to come to the next QPCC conference/retreat to be held on April 5 to 8 at Quaker Hill Retreat Center in Richmond, IN. Our conference retreat theme is: *Awakening Together: Exploring Mindfulness, Healing Ourselves, Healing the World.* Led by Valerie Brown, JD, MA, PCC, a Friend, international retreat leader, spiritual director, author, accredited leadership coach, and Center for Courage and Renewal facilitator. Registration is open now. Check the QPCC website for more details at www.qpcc.us/. ‘Small groups’ as usual, sharing with new and old friends and we hope to adopt a new strategic plan for QPCC.

April 6 – 8 – Young Friends Conference, The Clearing (Richmond, VA) Young Friends should plan to begin arriving at 7:00 pm on Friday. For information, check the Young Friends website (www.bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/yfs/yfcon.html) or contact Jocelyn Dowling. (301-774-7663) Remember that the deadline to register at the discounted rate and be guaranteed a slot is two weeks before the conference (March 23). Any one registering after that date may be placed on a waiting list.

April 7: Help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. Convene at 6:15 am at **So Others Might Eat**. For more information, contact Tim Schleicher at timothy.c.schleicher@gmail.com

April 8 – Programmed Worship, Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Stony Run (Baltimore, MD)

Everyone is invited to worship with Kenyan and Evangelical/ Orthodox Quakers from the Baltimore area. This Meeting for Worship is under the care of Stony Run Friends, but operates with its own Committee of Care, monthly on the second First day of the month, at 2:00pm. Kenyan Friends seeking a Kenyan Meeting are warmly invited. Social hour at the rise of Meeting, approximately 4pm. Please contact Sujata Massey, sujatamassey@mac.com, or Gilbert Imbayi, gilbert.imbati@gmail.com for more information.

April 14 – Friendly Sing, Gunpowder Friends Meeting (Sparks, MD) The Quaker Women's A Capella Choir invites you to a Friendly Sing on Saturday, April 14th from 10am to 3pm in the Meeting House. F/friends from all over BYM are invited to join our singing leader, Ruth Fitz, for a day of singing. We will break at noon for a meal so please bring a bag lunch. Drinks and dessert will be provided. Please let us know if you need childcare by emailing the names and ages of your children to Diane Bowden at bowden.diane@gmail.com by Wednesday, April 5th. Contact Kathryn.beaton@gmail.com for overnight hospitality. Strong and shy singers are welcome to join this circle of F/friends singing rounds, sacred chants, spirituals, peace songs, hymns, and fun songs. We will sing together to energize our bodies and nurture our souls, with music that affirms our diversity, reflects our beauty, and celebrates our unity. No singing or music reading experience is necessary to participate, just a willing spirit and a desire to sing.

April 14: Friends Wilderness Center: Finidng and Telling Stories 10 am to 2 pm. Lisa Libowitz will guide participants through the creation and sharing of personal stories. Feel free to hike the trails following the program. A \$10 donation is requested. Please RSVP to Sheila Bach (snbach@earthlink.net) and let her know if you would also like lunch (for an additional \$10).

April 21 – Clerking Workshop, Sandy Spring Friends Meeting (Sandy Spring, MD)

Are you a prospective clerk? A reluctant clerk? An experienced clerk with wisdom to share? Come to a Clerking Workshop sponsored by the BYM Nominating Committee from 10:00am to 3:00pm. Lunch will be provided and there is no charge. For more information, or to RSVP, contact Deborah Haines (deborah.haines@gmail.com) or Bette Hoover (bette@justpeacecircles.org).

April 21 – This Evil Thing, St. Stephens Church (sponsored by William Penn House) Join us at 7pm for a one-man performance and discussion of **This Evil Thing**, the shocking and inspiring story of the "Richmond 16", a group of men who said no to war. Michael Mears - 'The Fringe-First Award winning master of the one-man show' – portrays a gallery of characters from conscientious objectors to army generals, from Prime Ministers to world-famous mathematicians. This highly original piece of storytelling uses verbatim testimonies, a multi-layered sound landscape and vivid visual imagery. RSVP on Facebook if you would like to attend. (<https://www.facebook.com/events/2000659940197990/>)

April 27 – 29 – Family Camp Weekend, Shiloh Quaker Camp (Hood, VA) Family Camp Weekends at Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camp Properties offer us a chance enjoy our beautiful camp properties during

this delightful time of year. Individuals and families are invited to come to camp for a day or for the weekend. A program coordinator will plan camp-familiar activities for Saturday and Sunday mornings, as well as Saturday afternoon and evening. Perhaps you will explore a creek, create a crafts project, play a favorite camp game or take a hike in our precious woods. There will also be plenty of work projects to do! Work projects offer people with all kinds of skills the opportunity to enjoy some meaningful and satisfying service! We will savor meals together, have time to explore and even spend time around a camp fire in the evening. We invite you to join us for a BYM Quaker Camp experience, give the gift of your time, participate with children in activities and find yourself rejuvenated. Participants are asked to contribute according to their ability – \$25-50 per person. For additional information or to register please contact David Hunter, Camp Property Manager. (301-774-7663 or davidhunter@bym-rsf.org) For more information, see the BYM Camps web-site at bymcamps.org/programs/family-camp-weekends/.

April 27 – 29 – Men’s Retreat, Catoctin Quaker Camp (Thurmont, MD) Since 2002, men from Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Stony Run have gathered early in the spring to build connections among Friends at one of BYM’s magnificent camps. In recent years, male Friends from other Meetings have participated in the weekend. This year, all men Friends in BYM are invited to register and gather at Catoctin for dinner sixth day through lunch first day - or any portion thereof. The retreat is very loosely programmed and includes time to relax, work cooperatively, hike (or nap), talk, tell stories, play, and have fun. For more information, including the registration form, contact Blaine Keener (443-414-9103 or blkomg@hotmail.com).

SAVE THE DATE!

May 12 – BYM Peace and Social Concerns Committee Networking Day, Friends Meeting School (Ijamsville, MD) THIS HAS BEEN MOVED FROM MARCH 24

Based on last year’s survey & other suggestions from Monthly Meetings, Networking Day will offer an opportunity for folks from various BYM Meetings to meet and exchange ideas and resources about each other’s successful Peace & Social Concerns programs. We also will offer four, practical 90-minute workshops for your most popular topics--two in the a.m. (A) and two in the p.m. (B), each led by Friends with experience in these areas:

- A)** How Friends can speak to polarization & racism in our communities
- B)** Strategies for addressing homelessness, reentry & poverty – shelters, “open tables” & more
- C)** Immigrants, refugees & sanctuary in our midst (update - new resources)
- D)** Issues and outreach: Peace festivals, death-with-dignity, LGBT, animal rights, healthcare under Trump

Workshop sessions will begin at 11 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. During breakfast/arrival time, Friends will be encouraged to mingle and share info. about specific programs/activities of our own Meetings. Coffee, bagels & pastries will be provided at 9:30; lunch (wraps, salad, chips, drinks) will be provided at noon. Vegetarian/vegan treats may be included both times. **Donations are welcome, but not required**, to assist with our Networking Day costs (est. \$14 per person). REGISTRATION INFORMATION: **Please let us know by reply email-a) participant name(s), b) email(s), c) Meeting for each participant, and d) which two workshops you prefer to attend. (NOTE: If you are interested in more than two workshops, but cannot attend them all, we will have extra copies of resource materials that you may take with you back to your Meeting.) Also, please tell us if you need child care or have any other special needs. Our final date for responses will be Mon., 3/19/18.**

May 19th at 930am in Douglass Hall, Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church (our partner church in the sanctuary movement). Join one of our youngest activist leaders, Reverend Stephen Green of Heard AME church, our key note speaker for "**Lessons From Richard Allen and Martin Luther King Jr. : Strategies to Achieve Justice**". An interactive panel including Pastor Lamar and young community

activist leaders will expound on Allen and King's leadership as well as current issues of interracial cooperation and inter generational leadership in the contemporary fight for justice and civil rights. Free. Contact Celeste Bryant for information bryantcm12@gmail.com

July 1 – 7: The Gathering of Friends General Conference, Toledo, Ohio The 2018 Gathering is fast approaching. **The Power of Truth** is our theme and it is a year with powerful speakers and workshops. It holds the potential for deep worship, close fellowship and powerful ideas that we can explore together. **Come join us at the University of Toledo July 1-7, 2018!**

Early Registration for the Gathering starts April 2nd through 11th, 2018 at 10:00am EST. Register [here](#).

Thinking About Race – April 2018 – “Get Out”

“‘Get Out’ made these [Academy award] voters uncomfortable by showing that black people can be silenced, whether ignored, stereotyped or even, as happens in the movie, kidnapped. So those voters’ response was to attempt to silence the movie, which paradoxically proves one of its main points.

“Such willful ignorance isn’t unique to the Oscars, however. This kind of attitude is also partly to blame for the lack of progress for African-Americans in rates of homeownership, incarceration and employment over the past 50 years. The Economic Policy Institute recently released a study showing that the black homeownership rate stayed about the [same](#) from 1968 to 2015. But during that time, the black incarceration rate nearly tripled, and it’s now more than six times the white incarceration [rate](#). And the unemployment rate among blacks is worse than in 1968, and now twice the rate of white unemployment.

....

“Many white Americans desperately want the “post-racial” idea to be real; they want to think the country has made progress. But given statistics that show discrimination is still hindering black economic progress, and the desire to keep the black condition invisible, it’s clear that we have to work harder on producing the improvement in black life too many Americans think already exists.”

From a March 8, 2018, op-ed in **The New York Times**, “Why Didn’t ‘Get Out’ Win Best Picture?” by Kashana Cauley, a television and freelance writer and a contributing opinion writer. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/08/opinion/get-out-oscars.html>

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting. The BYM WGR meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Locations vary to allow access to more Friends. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

Well, you did it again. Once more, Friends Meeting of Washington stepped up to nurture and nourish and quietly support folks from all over who came to Washington to protest gun violence. It was a massive effort, done in the manner of Friends—kindly, humbly, in community, and with lots of carbohydrates.

At the risk of accidentally leaving someone out, I do want to give a shout out to everyone who helped, by name. First, some New York Friends asked if we would be providing housing for the March for Our Lives. **Jean Capps** and **Brian Lutenegger** started us off, with Jean stepping up to lead this effort and Brian doing one of his masterful sign-up sheets for folks looking for housing. Olney Friends School in Ohio jumped on our offer, as did other Friends, mostly from the East Coast. At one point, as many as 60 people signed up; that number dwindled as the day grew closer and push came to shove, but we were ready for whatever came our way.

On Thursday, **Steve Brooks** went shopping at Costco and Safeway, purchasing scads of mostly nonperishable items. On Friday, the cooking began. I made an Afghan soup in the morning, and **Malachy Kilbride** showed up around lunchtime to make a baked ziti. **Betsy Bramon** was scheduled to come around 2 but developed a hideous plumbing problem. So **Bill Strein** came to take her place and start organizing all the groceries and making hard-boiled eggs.

That afternoon, **Laurie Wilner** brought homemade scones, **Elaine Wilson** brought a pot of soup, **Meg Greene** delivered a large vat of something with Indian flavoring, **Judy Hubbard** came with soup and bread, **Michael Wood** delivered a black bean soup, **Alex Mathews** brought a huge batch of homemade bread, and someone named **Camille** brought hot chocolate mix. Speaking of huge batch, **Susan Bien** brought a gajillion cookies. Okay, I ate one. Okay, two.

Erin Murphy showed up and started cooking vegetable soup before our guests arrived, beginning around 6. Jean Capps came to supervise. Guests partook of the vast bounty, telling Jean they could “taste the love in the cooking.” The Olney kids did the dishes! Erin, Bill and **Jim Fussell** stayed overnight to shepherd everyone and get all the sleeping arrangements sorted out.

The next morning, **Emilie Schmeidler** came to help with breakfast—a huge spread by this point—and put out more food for the marchers to pack and carry. **Greg Robb** and **Jane Coe** (of Bethesda Friends Meeting) pitched in as well. Jean and **Beth Cogswell** brought poster board, and folks went to work creating wonderful signs (personal favorite: *Chalk, not Glock*).

J.E. McNeil arrived, gently shoved the sleeping bags to the edges of the Meeting Room, and led us in a meaningful Meeting for Worship to prepare for the march. Then she and **Jose Woss** stayed in the Meetinghouse while the rest of us went off to join 800,000 others and speak out against gun violence.

While we were marching, **Mary Lou Schram** took over from J.E., and was joined by **Leonard Eoussa** and, for awhile, **Charlie and Susan Bien**. They set out snacks for stragglers. About 20 folks came

back for dinner, polishing off the baked ziti and much of the soup. This is how good the soup was—the kids said they preferred it to pizza.

That night, **Jim Bell, Chris Wickham, Patty Murphy** and **Jim Fussell** stayed to support the tired marchers. They were on hand the next morning to set up the breakfast bar and help folks clean up before worship began. The teens from Olney held an intense worship sharing. Other teens joined our First Day School and had a good discussion about what it was like to attend Quaker schools.

Patty and others from Hospitality packed up all the leftovers and either stuck them in our freezer for Souper Sunday or in our cabinets for the next big march, or took them over to a local soup kitchen. Wonderful Jean stayed to be sure all of our guests had their stuff before heading out.

I just can't believe the generosity of this Meeting. I know Quakers don't do pride (it's bad, apparently), but if we did, I would be ever so proud of you all. As it is, I'm just grateful.

- Debby