

Newsletter, August 2014

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Order of Worship

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

July 2014

Queries

Do you respect that of God in every person? Do you search yourself for and strive to eliminate prejudices such as those related to race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and economic condition? In what ways do you accept and appreciate differences among your friends and associates? Do you avoid exploiting or manipulating others to accomplish ends, however worthy?

Advices

Our Religious Society endures as a community of friends who take thought for outward society by first taking care of one another. Friends are advised to maintain love and unity, to avoid tale-bearing and detraction, and to settle differences promptly and in a manner free from resentment and all forms of inward violence. Live affectionately as friends, entering with sympathy into the joys and sorrows of one another's daily lives. Visit one another. Be alert to give help and ready to receive it. Bear the burdens of one another's failings; share the buoyancy of one another's strengths.

- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, paraphrased from the Epistles of the Yearly Meeting of Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, 1694 and 1695

Voices

As a black Quaker, I see the Inner Light as the great liberator and equalizer able to erase the psychological deficits of racism. The internalization of this divine principle has the potential to remove the sense of powerlessness that so often characterizes the thinking of the downtrodden. For if the Divine Light is the Seed of God planted in the souls of human beings, in that Seed lies all the characteristics of its source. Consequently, the Light within is also the Divine Power within. It is the indestructible power in us that is able to create from nothing, able to make ways out of no way, able to change what appears to be the natural order of things. It is the power in us that can never be overcome by the darkness of fear and hatred or altered by the might or money of people. It is the power in us in which lies unfathomable capacity to love and forgive even the most heinous of crimes.

- Ayesha Clark-HalkinImani, 1988

2014/7-1 Welcome of Visitors

Meeting for Business opened with 30 people present and welcomed newcomer Ralph Wilson.

2014/7-2 Clerk's Report

- The Clerk introduced the Fauquier Friends Worship Group
- The Clerk expressed the Meeting's gratitude to those who participated in the work day.
- The Meeting hosted a one-woman show of "Lucretia Mott"

Major items

2014/7-3 The Clerk requested for reports from those attending BYM annual session. Margaret Greene, J.E. McNeil and Marsha Holliday volunteered to report back to FMW.

2014/7-3 Recommendations from Trustees– Dan Dozier

Trustees have recommended that a portion of the accrued income and capital appreciation from the Ross Trust Bequest, in the amount of \$80,000, be used to pay for the construction documents. This \$80,000 will not be taken from the principle of the Ross Trust Bequest. Friends **approved** this recommendation.

The question was raised as to the impact this \$80,000 expenditure will have on the Meeting's annual operating budget. It is believed that the impact will be a reduction of approximately \$3,600 to \$4,000 to the operating budget income. MfB has asked that the relevant committees attend MfB in September with a report on the impact the expenditure for construction will have on both the capital budget and operating budget for the meeting.

Other Business

2014/7-4 Committee of Clerks report– Dan Dozier

The Committee of Clerks re-appointed Debby Churchman as FMW's Administrative Secretary. The Committee is hoping to have their next meeting in September.

2014/7-5 Report on Baltimore Yearly Meeting Interim Meeting– Windy Cooler
BYM Interim Meeting discussed diversity and is exploring hiring a diversity specialist. Minutes from the Interim Meeting will be available soon.

2014/7-6 Membership Committee– Hayden Wetzel

Member Helen Horton has requested to transfer her membership to Redwood Forest Friends Meeting in Santa Rosa, California.

Friends **accepted** this transfer.

2014/7-7 Nominating Committee– Beth Cogswell

Nomination of Susan Meehan to the Peace and Social Concerns. Friends **approved** this nomination.

2014/7-8 Quaker Chaplaincy at American University, Annual Report– Gene Throwe

Gene Throwe presented his work as Quaker Chaplain at American University. There was one attender for worship this past year who will be working with Gene on Quaker outreach. Gene has been working closely with the Kay Spiritual Life Center and reaching out during freshman orientation.

2014/7-9 Update on draft policy for welcoming and safety– Meg Greene

A draft policy has been created addressing the welcoming and safety issues at FMW and this draft will be circulated to the meeting as a whole shortly.

2014/7-10 Capital Improvements Task Force update–Merry Pearlstein

The design and development phase of the FMW renovation has been completed and the architects are beginning creation of the construction documents. The task force will be meeting with the Historical Preservation Review Board in the fall.

A Friend expressed concern that the Meeting for Business was being asked to approve budgetary decisions without full information and requested that those requesting funds ensure they are able to present all necessary financial information at the time they ask for approval.

2014/7-11 Report on YAF Conference at Pendle Hill– Kevin Camp

Kevin Camp attended YAFCON 2014 at Pendle Hill to look at Leadership in Community. His participation at YAFCON was supported by FMW.

2014/7-12 Semi-annual report on changes to *Handbook*– Margaret Greene

One change has been made recently to the handbook to remove references to a librarian, due to the fact that FMW no longer has a librarian. The new wording in the Handbook was **approved**.

2014/7-13 Minutes, Friends **approved** the minutes.

2014/7-14The Meeting closed with approximately 26 members in attendance.

Recommendation from Trustees:“Trustees recommends that a portion of the accrued appreciation from the Ross bequest be used to finance the approximately \$80,000 needed to pay for the architects for the construction documents.”

American University Annual Report 2013-2014 - Quaker Chaplaincy

- Gene Throwe

I started the Quaker chaplaincy in November of 2013. I had one contact from the earlier freshman orientation and contact from a student who had attended Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW). The student that I met at FMW, Nick, attended campus Meeting religiously in the spring. Some of the Young Adult Friends from FMW would also join us, especially the new Quaker chaplain at George Washington University. On average, we would have three of us at Meeting. We held Meeting on the first, third, and fifth Tuesday of the month during the spring semester. After Meeting, we always had a discussion period and social time. In April, I made a care package for Nick, who sent me a wonderful thank you email.

Because my chaplaincy is new, I am still developing ideas for additional programs. I have been approached by members of FMW about possible programs concerning peace and social justice programs. I am sure as I continue to work at AU, and more students attend Meeting, I can develop mentorship programs between freshmen and upper class students. One idea that Josh, the Quaker chaplain at GWU, and I are planning this year are some socials between Quaker students at both campuses. As events at FMW or within the Baltimore Yearly Meeting come up, I will invite students to attend.

I have enjoyed my first semester and look forward to supporting Quaker students in the future.

YAFCON 2014 Synopsis

From June 6 to June 11, 2014, approximately 45 Young Adults convened for YAFCON 2014 at Pendle Hill. The focus of the conference was Leadership and the Testimony of

Community. Past conferences have highlighted other Quaker Testimonies, as will next year's YAF con.

Each day's scheduled activities included intensive workshops. It should be noted, however, that participation was not one-sided. Group participation was integral to every program, to prevent them from becoming dry, dull lectures. In addition to a variety of Friends who hailed from all across the United States, speakers and participants also came from as far away as Rwanda and Kenya.

Most attendees had specifically Quaker jobs. For example, many worked for AFSC, FCNL, and Quaker Voluntary Service. Their employer provided them the time and the money to attend. Many attendees had known each other for years, through their Yearly Meeting and now their occupation. However, they were no less warm and accepting of newcomers. Regrettably, several Friends were unable to stay for the entire conference due to work demands.

YAFCON 2014, though enjoyable, was a serious, intense affair. Participants were told that taking part in every activity was likely impossible and that practicing self-care was important. Many found themselves thoroughly drained halfway through each day's activity, needing to take naps to rest and decompress. Each structured activity lasted for two hours and two sessions were scheduled each day, one in the morning and a second in the evening.

But in the meantime, there was time for fun. The second full day concluded with a campfire, s'mores, and singing. For those who had energy left, each day, a silly community building activity was scheduled shortly before dinner. While on the topic, dinner offered a variety of food options for all diets. The food was uniformly excellent. The first day we ate Indian food from a local restaurant, but the rest was prepared by the kitchen staff.

By the end, many had made fast friends with each other. An Excel document was circulated among us, providing contact information of each of us, encouraging us to continue the connections we had made during the week. The atmosphere was pleasant and we learned quite a lot, both about the topics covered in workshops and ourselves.

- Kevin Camp

FMW Records & Handbook Committee semi-annual report of changes to the Handbook. July 2014

In the period January through June 2014, there was one change approved to the *Handbook* by Meeting for Business. At the May 2014 Meeting for Business the Library Committee proposed removing the reference to a librarian in the *Handbook* to reflect the fact that the library at FMW does not have a librarian. Friends **approved** this request. Changes are noted below:

“The FMW Library seeks to provide resources to the community about Quakerism and issues of interest to the members, including Quaker biography and history, spirituality, social justice, and nonviolence. The Committee supervises the selection and acquisition of books, periodicals, and other informational materials for the library and, in cooperation with the Religious Education Committee, does the same for the First Day School. It also formulates rules for the care and use of these materials and seeks to stimulate interest in new and old publications relating to our testimonies. ~~The Librarian serves ex officio on the Library Committee and may be its clerk.~~ The Library Committee consults with the Records and Handbook Committee when appropriate.

Library 10 M, S, Q, A Yes Librarian

~~Librarian~~

~~The Librarian is responsible for operating the library and for carrying out the decisions of the Library Committee. The Librarian serves ex officio on the Library Committee and may be its clerk. The Librarian is appointed annually and is a member of the Religious Society of Friends or an attender at Friends Meeting of Washington.”~~

(this ends the Minutes and Reports from the July 2014 MfB)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Come to **So Others Might Eat** on **Saturday, Aug. 2** from 6:15 to 8:15 and help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. For more information, contact Betsy Bramon at betsy.bramon@gmail.com

There will be **singing** in the Meeting Room on **Sunday, Aug. 3** from 10:00 to 10:30. All voices welcome. For more information, contact Debby at admin@quakersdc.org

Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s Annual Sessions run by **August 4 to 10**. Be a part of important decision making. Join Friends for a week of fun, education, worship, and business at Frostburg State University. Check the Yearly Meeting website for full information—www.bym-rsf.org

The **Grate Patrol** will prepare sandwiches and soups to take out to the city’s vulnerable people on **Wednesday, Aug. 6** starting at 5:30. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at sbrooks@uab.edu

On **Wednesday, Aug. 6** from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, modern-day abolitionist Matt Friedman and his two teenage sons will bring their **Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign** to Friends Meeting of Washington. They will introduce a new action-based campaign, “**Breaking the Links,**” to raise young people’s awareness about modern day slavery. For more information, contact Betsy Bramon at betsy.bramon@gmail.com

There is **no Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business** in August.

On **Sunday, Aug. 10**, there will be a **Bible study group** meeting. For more information, contact David Etheridge at david.etheridge@verizon.net



There will be a 3-day workshop on **Godly Play** (a technique for introducing young children to Bible stories) at Pendle Hill from **Aug. 15-17**. Faith & Play™ is a Montessori-inspired resource that helps children find words and images for expressing the experiences of holy mystery and wonder in their lives. Using stories, tools, and was created by Quakers to add elements from Quaker faith and practice to core Bible stories. Learn and practice skills to help children explore the existential limits of their lives through wonder, play, and core stories scripted and tested to work well with multiage groups of children. Certified trainers will model the stories, and you will have opportunities to practice them with your peers. For more information, check the Pendle Hill website at www.pendlehill.org

On **Saturday, Aug. 16** from 10:00 to 2:00 there will be an **Introduction to Qi Gong** at the Friends Wilderness Center. FWC Board member, Rich Weidner, will lead this program that will introduce you to the ancient practice of Qi Gong and allow you to experience firsthand the inner opening and centering that this practice provides. You do not need any prior experience with Qi Gong to participate but should have reasonably

good physical mobility to get maximum benefit from this program which will involve movement. We'll go from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. RSVP to Sheila for the program(s) and dinner if you wish to partake. www.friendswilderness.org/qigong.aspx

On **Sunday, Aug. 17**, the group studying Karen Armstrong's **12 Steps to a Compassionate Life** will meet in the Parlor. We now have five copies of this book on FMW's Kindles. For more information, contact Joe Izzo at jizzo@whitman-walker.org

There will be a **Quaker Religious Education Collaborative** on **Aug. 17 & 18** at Pendle Hill. We invite Friends who hold a sense of stewardship for the faith formation of Quaker children to join with us. This includes: First Day School teachers, Religious Education Coordinators, RE Committee members, Quaker parents and grandparents, and others. This first meeting will take place at Pendle Hill. We'll gather from 3 pm Sunday to 3 pm Monday. We hope this gathering will acquaint us with how beneficial it can be to share formally and informally with our community of practice. There will be five sessions with substantive presentations and discussions, and a poster session to which we hope each participant will offer a contribution. Pendle Hill will provide dinner Sunday evening, breakfast and lunch on Monday, and refreshments to sustain us as we work. Pendle Hill has graciously made space for us, but this is not one of their programs. Please register by August 4 to facilitate Pendle Hill's planning Send Questions to: Beth Collea, recoord@neym.org or Melinda Wenner Bradley, mwennerbradley@gmail.com.

There will be a **Catoctin Camp Reunion** from **Aug. 22-24** at Catoctin Quaker Camp. Dinner on Friday night will be at 7pm to allow time for those that are coming to camp after work. We will have dinner on Saturday night at 5pm so that we have plenty of time after dinner for the evening's events. The weekend will also include morning activities, afternoon activities, socio economic groups and chores, plenty of time to catch up, and possibly a small service project.

The **Fibre Party** will meet on **Sunday, Aug. 24** at noon in the North Room. Bring your sewing/yarn/etc. projects and join in the fun. All skill levels welcome.

The **Sixth Annual Session of Christ-Centered Friends** will be held from **Aug. 29-31** in Powell House, New York. This extended weekend conference has become a favorite for many Friends. During the weekend, we often have extended times of worship, small groups, a prayer partner, singing and plenty of opportunities for one-on-one conversations. We'd love to have you join us. For more information contact: John Edminster. (john.edminster@gmail.com) Register by Aug. 15th for lower rates. Children's Program and Childcare with 3 weeks' notice. To register, call, e-mail, or write Powell House (524 Pitt Hall Road, Old Chatham NY 12136; 518-794-8811; www.powellhouse.org or info@powellhouse.org)

A program called **Poems and Planets** will be held on **Saturday, Aug. 30** at Friends Wilderness Center. The first part of this program will be focus on poetry with published poet, Janet Harrison. Janet will share some of her own work and encourages others to bring poems they would like to share (their own or others) and also provide exercises that will allow all participants to tap into their inner poet and craft some verse of their

own using easily applied techniques. Then there will be a break for conversation, fellowship and dinner followed by the second part of the program: sky-watching led by astronomer, Kevin Bowles who will give you a guided tour of the night sky (weather permitting) and views through his powerful telescope. We'll go from 1:00 until 9:30 pm. RSVP to Sheila for the program(s) and dinner if you wish to partake. www.friendswilderness.org/poetrysky.aspx

THINKING ABOUT RACE – Wishing away racial inequality?

Justice Sonia Sotomayor's fierce defense of affirmative action efforts such as the ones that helped move her from a Bronx housing project to the upper echelons of American law found renewed voice (in *Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action*, April 22, 2014) in an impassioned dissent that accused colleagues of trying to "wish away" racial inequality - and drew a tart response from Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.... The court's first Latina justice directly took on Roberts's view that the nation's continued reliance on racial classifications hinders rather than promotes the goal of a color-blind society... She said, "This refusal to accept the stark reality that race matters is regrettable. The way to stop discrimination is to speak openly and candidly about race, and to apply the Constitution with eyes open to the unfortunate effects of centuries of racial discrimination." ...she said her colleagues ignored "the importance of diversity in institutions of higher education" and the decision "reveals how little my colleagues understand about the reality of race in America."

From "Sotomayor accuses colleagues of trying to 'wish away' racial inequality", by Robert Barnes, *The Washington Post*, April 22, 2014. Note: Only Justice Ginsburg supported her dissent.

--Elizabeth DuVerlie

The *Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism* will meet Wednesday evening during Yearly Meeting annual sessions and on the third Saturday of most months from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information you may contact David Etheridge at david.etheridge@verizon.net.

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

One of the many households I've lived in used to have weekly meetings in which we would each do a happy/crappy analysis of our lives—what was working for us individually and as a community, and what was not. I've been doing this kind of analysis lately on the FMW campus—this large chunk of real estate in the middle of D.C.

There are a lot of happys involved with owning such a beautiful place. The biggest one is that it allows us to hold five meetings for worship each week—and more, if we need it. Worship is the glue that draws us in and holds us together as a people, and the depth of worship experienced here has seemingly sunk into the furniture and the floorboards and ceilings. I'm not making that up—it's palpable. So many visitors comment on the wave of peace they feel walking into the Meeting Room.

We don't just worship together, of course. We work through the business of conducting a Quaker meeting, support each other in our spiritual journeys, eat together, blow bubbles together, sing together and play games together. The Meetinghouse is also a venue for our personal concerns—a place to bring speakers and films and discussion groups around the topics that call to us.



And now, as we rent out our space for occasional use, we are providing support for larger groups dealing with issues of concern. Last month, more than 200 transgender people and their supporters took over the Meeting House for two days, morning to night, so they could train in how to lobby Congress for better treatment. Staff and FMW volunteers all said how delightful this group was, and how courageous. The

Meetinghouse felt well-used. Then, a few days later, a program supported by the American Museum of Peace brought an actress in to do a one-woman show on the Quaker abolitionist/suffragette/peace activist Lucretia Mott—starting with a meeting for worship! What could be a better venue for this event, really?

Not all groups are in such direct support of Quaker values, and some requests, I'm finding, are really beyond our ability to support. There were two recent examples of groups who wanted, shall we say, clothing to be optional. I showed these to a couple of guys on the Property Committee, who wanted to know if they could participate (No! Down, boy!), before telling the groups that I just didn't feel we were the right venue for them. So having to deal with that's a crappy. So is the wear and tear that some groups make to the building (though it provides employment to our cleaning staff). But for the most part, I'm really happy that the building can meet the needs of such diverse groups, and that the participants come away knowing that the Quakers are still active, don't just eat oatmeal, and provide a peaceful place for those seeking respite. Bottom line: more happy than crappy, thumbs up.

Special thanks this month to **Joe Izzo** for bringing folks from Whitman Walker to volunteer at the transgender event, to **Mark Haskell** and his wonderful gardening folks for making the grounds so gorgeous, to **Patty Murphy** for going WAY beyond the call of duty while I was away, to secret chocolate replenishers **Heather Carter, Zoe Plougher** and **Steve Brooks**, to **Neil Froemming** for replacing the nonfunctioning HP printer and instructing all the various computers to use it, and to **Windy Cooler** for transforming our an entire First Day School program. Thank you, Friends.

- Debby



**Hey, I'm not sayin'
you're the wrong
kind of Quaker.**

**But I will hold
you in the light
til you find the
right way . . .**



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JJ TIZIOU
PHOTOGRAPHY

Let Love Be the First Motion.
Everyone Is Photogenic.

