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FMW Newsletter - August 2020

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MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP ~ ALL ARE WELCOME

--**Sunday: 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.**

--**Tuesday: 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.**

--**Friday: 12:00 noon**

--**Monthly Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business:**

12:15 p.m. 2nd Sunday of Month (3rd Sunday in July, suspended in August)

*All meetings for worship are being held via Zoom due to the pandemic.
For more information, email admin@QuakersDC.org.*

8th Month Query: Outreach

Do you, as the way opens, share Friends' principles with non-Friends? Do you witness to your Quaker faith by letting your life speak? Do you make non-Friends welcome in your meetings for worship? Do you find ways to encourage their continued attendance? (See: [Fellowship and Community](#)) Source: [BYM Faith & Practice, Part II The Queries](#)

Events

Baltimore Yearly Meeting's (BYM) Annual Session, July 27-August 2 (Virtual).

BYM is the constellation of of 46+ Quaker Meetings in Maryland, DC, Virginia, and central Pennsylvania to which FMW is affiliated. BYM is the second oldest Yearly Meeting in the US (300+ years. Only Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is older.) In normal times, many FMW members and attenders would head to Hood College in Frederick to attend. But this year, Annual Session worship, bible study, workshops, and meetings will be held virtually. This can be a good opportunity to learn more about our broader Quaker community. The suggested fee is \$100 but you pay as you are led. Learn more and register here: <https://www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession/>.

FMW Community “Zinner” Get-together via Zoom, Monday, July 27, 7:00-8:00 p.m. For more info, contact co-hosts, FMW co-clerks Debby Churchman and Rebecca Nelson. **Click here to join by Zoom.** Join by phone: **(929) 436-2866**, on prompt enter: **827 113 859 23#**

More Events below (in Business Meeting Minutes)

Thinking about Race:

New Smithsonian “Talking About Race” web portal

The following is from an email that the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) sent out on June 1, 2020. It includes a portal with tools for people wanting to have conversations about race, racism, anti-racism, bias and more.

“From the recent racial altercation in Central Park to the deadly shooting of jogger Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia; to acts of police brutality resulting in the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and other African Americans; to the protests these deaths have provoked in cities around the country; the rash of racially charged incidents prompted the Museum to move up the release date of its powerful new web portal **“Talking About Race.”**

“‘Talking About Race’ provides digital tools, online exercises, video instructions, scholarly articles, and more than 100 multimedia resources tailored for educators, parents, and caregivers, as well as individuals committed to racial equality. In releasing this resource now, we hope to help individuals and communities foster constructive dialogues on one of the nation’s most challenging issues: racism, and its corrosive impact.

“Since opening the Museum, the number one question we are asked is how to talk about race, especially with children,” said Spencer Crew, NMAAHC interim director. “We recognize how difficult it is to start that conversation. But in a nation still struggling with the legacies of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and white supremacy, we must have these tough conversations if we have any hope of turning the page and healing. This new portal is a step in that direction.”

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each local Meeting. The BYM WGR meets most months on the *first* 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 or *via Zoom*, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

Meeting for Business Minutes & Attachments - July 2020

Friends Meeting of Washington
Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
July 19, 2020

FMW Anti-Racist Queries

1. How will we provide opportunities for those most likely to be directly affected by the choices we are contemplating to influence the decision making process?
2. How could the choices we are contemplating affect those who have been harmed by systemic, institutional, interpersonal and/or internal racism?
3. To what degree have privilege, class, stereotypes, assumptions, and our ability to include other perspectives affected this decision making process?
4. How will the choices we are contemplating promote equity, diversity, and inclusiveness? Will they enable us to be more friendly and whole, engaging across racial divisions?
5. How do the choices we are contemplating support the declaration of our Yearly Meeting that we aspire to be an anti-racist faith community?

Query for Worship Sharing: *How is your spiritual life during this time?*

A Friend shared that COVID is employing the testimony of simplicity in their life, and is asking how they can bring value to this present moment. A Friend shared that their spiritual life is like a seesaw toggling between despair and hope, and they shared their difficulty in staying centered.

Clerk's Report, July 2020

Holding in the Light

- Steve Williams

Upcoming Events

- **Fostering Community at FMW. July 26, 9:15-10:15 am.** Facilitators Roseanna Stanton and Bill Parker lead a discussion, referring to Charles Vogl's book, *The Art of Community*. You are welcome and you don't have to read the book to join the discussion! [Join by Zoom Video](#). By phone, dial: **301-715-8592**. On prompt enter meeting ID: **85658143370#**
- **Spiritual Friendships. July 26, 12:00-1:00 pm.** You are welcome to join our check-in. [Join by Zoom with this link](#). To Join by phone dial: **301-715-8592**. On prompt enter mtg ID: **84128957864#** For more information, contact Sabrina.McCarthy@verizon.net
- **YAF Zinner get together, Tuesdays, 6:30 - 8:00.** [Join via Zoom here](#). For more information contact Joseph d'Antonio, 89dantonio@cua.edu
- **Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Session, July 27-Aug. 2, More information:** <https://www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession/theme.html>
- **Spiritual Formation, Thursday, August 2, 6:30 p.m. and following 2 1st Thursdays of month.** All are welcome. For more information email: John.Bluedorn@gmail.com

FMW Community Highlights & Kudos

- **FIRST HARVEST FMW GREEN ROOF HONEY!**
The beehive on FMW's green roof is thriving and Clerk of Bees Mary Melchoir has brought in our first harvest--20+ pounds of hyper-local honey packaged in 8-oz honeybears and 32 oz jars. If you would like to enjoy some of this honey and make a contribution to support the meeting, contact FMW's administrative secretary, Barbara Briggs, admin@QuakersDC.org (who is generally at the Meeting on Wednesdays and Fridays).
- **Black Lives Matter / End White Silence Yard Signs** are available from FMW Peace & Social Concerns. Contact: P&SC co-clerk BarbaraHBriggs@gmail.com

- **Friends Wilderness Center** is a resource you may not know about, south of Harpers Ferry, WV on more than 1,400 acres of rolling country. Friends are welcome to hike or overnight camp in this natural setting bordering the Shenandoah River and the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. You can spend a night in a geodesic dome or yurt or your own tent. Some bathroom facilities are available. After months of pandemic, FWC is the perfect place to refresh and recharge in the beauties of the natural world. Please call before driving out, especially if you want to camp. For details, contact Sheila Bach at 571-271-6267 or www.friendswilderness.org

Tenant Updates- Activities at our Meeting House

- See Events Manager report, below

Major Business

Proposed Re-opening Protocol

After transmission rate drops below 1 and cases drop in the DC area for 14 days, we are thinking of re-opening FMW for OUTDOOR worship only at 9:00 am on Sundays in the front garden, lower garden, and the patio outside QHLR. Each space would hold 10 people maximum, who would be expected to set up their own chairs and clerk their own meeting. ([COVID-19 DC Metrics](#))

Other expectations:

These outdoor meetings would be weather dependent. If it rains, the worship is canceled.

Everyone enters through the main lobby door, where they will be greeted by an Events Manager. They sign in so we can capture contact information in case tracing is necessary, squirt themselves with hand sanitizer, and are assigned to a garden.

Masks would be required. Barbara Briggs has ordered a small supply of disposable masks which are available if a Friend forgets their mask.

Bathrooms are open, and contain disinfectant spray and Clorox wipes. Everyone is expected to clean up after themselves (and before, if they like).

No food or drink, at least for the first few weeks.

Everyone out by 10:30.

We will have a sign up sheet, and if more than 30 people sign up, we'll run the numbers like a lottery and let people know on Saturday evening if they can come the next day. The sign-up sheet could include an option to indicate if attending Meeting is a priority (ie. willing to step aside if there are more people interested than spaces). Family/household units could possibly sign up as one unit.

Zoom meetings will continue exactly as they are now.

Discussion:

A Friend shared that this was a well thought out plan and asked what we miss by splitting apart into garden Meetings, Zoom Meetings, and BLM Meetings. Debby Churchman responded that there is a concern for siloing within the Meeting but these are strange times. A Friend suggested continuing Zoom Meetings indefinitely and asked about connecting Zoom Meetings to the garden Meetings. Debby responded that the Zoom Meeting could be connected to an indoor Meeting, due to the sound system. A Friend shared that we can wonder what is going on in other Meetings, but there are Meetings going on throughout the world that we can wonder about. They also mentioned the power of worshipping in a smaller group. A Friend suggested bringing a laptop to a garden Meeting to try an integrated format. A Friend asked if we should "make room for Elijah" and shared the concern of elitism by signing up in advance. A Friend asked about ensuring compliance. Debby responded that we would be meeting DC legal standards and have lower attendance than the maximum. A Friend suggested hanging a sign at the door with policies. A Friend shared that they would love to attend but would leave for Elijah waiting at the door. A Friend shared that they felt reopening was dangerous, especially for older members of our community. They also suggested using the percentage of positive tests as a metric for reopening. Friends shared that outdoor spaces with masks and social distancing is not as high of a risk. A

Friend asked about legal liability if an attender becomes ill. Debby responded that they have checked with our insurance and as long as we follow DC guidelines, we should be okay. A Friend suggested a poll to gauge interest. A Friend asked about when this would begin, and Debby responded that it would be when the percentage of tests that are positive are at or below 1%. A Friend shared that it would be useful to look at data from DC, Virginia, and Maryland since members and attenders do not all live within D.C.

Child Safety Committee Annual Report (Virginia Avanesyan)

See report [here](#), and below

Virginia Avanesyan thanked the Meeting community and the Religious Education Committee for their work on the RE curriculum, especially keeping things consistent during a renovation and pandemic. The ex-officio members reviewed and approved the report. The mission of the Child Safety Committee was to meet the guidelines set out by our insurer. The Child Safety Committee worked on practices for safe spaces, volunteered in classrooms, and updated procedures. Children of all ages should always be with more than one adult to minimize risk. There was much dialog during this process. The Child Safety Committee is encouraged by the robust programming from the RE Committee and looks forward to our physical reopening.

P&SC - Task Force for Alternatives to Violence Project, DC (Elaine Wilson, CJ Lewis)

Alternatives to Violence Project was founded in 1975 by imprisoned people and Quakers and has been used throughout the world. Currently, the closest AVP location is in Jessup, Maryland. A donation has been made to fund this work. ([AVP Taskforce-in-formation Governing Documents](#))

A Friend shared that AVP has a definite curriculum and methodology, and that there are many valuable resources within BYM that have completed and used AVP training. Gene Throwe (Library and Records Committee) asked for book donations about AVP, and suggested highlighting the material we have. A Friend asked if the library would have enough space, and Gene responded that it depended on the amount of materials and that the library would make room. A Friend shared that this was a great initiative and consistent with the peace testimony, and asked for the task force to offer the training to the DC police department.

Friends approved the task force.

Membership (Judy Hubbard)

- First presentation of Allison Rasko

Judy Hubbard gave the first presentation of Allison Rasko for membership and shared a portion of her membership letter. Judy shared that Allison had a strong leading to move to DC in October 2018 and has been attending FMW.

This will be laid over until our next Meeting for Business in September, as is our custom.

Search Committee (Rebecca Nelson)

Nominations to Nominating Committee, starting January 1, 2021

- Joe Izzo
- Jim Bell

Friends accepted these nominations with gratitude.

Nominating Committee (Martha Solt)

Nomination of Sabrina McCarthy for FUM Representative

- Friends approved this nomination.
- Looking for reps for:
 - AFSC
 - FCNL
 - Right Sharing of World Resources

- School for Friends
- Neighborhood Advisory Committee (2D)

Martha shared that members and attendees can join Committees and Task Forces without being asked first. Martha also asked that Task Forces with a limited life be laid down when their purpose is filled. Jim Bell asked for more information about becoming a FCNL and/or AFSC representative. A Friend suggested changing our policies on email communications to permit action alert emails with targeted and specific requests when they arise. The representative for the Neighborhood Advisory Committee may be a resident of the neighborhood or not.

Other Business

Proposed changes to Handbook (Debby Churchman, Martha Solt)

Delete William Penn House section

Friends approved removing this from the handbook.

Lay down and delete the Walcott/Foster Scholarship Fund, and put the remaining funds into the Simpson Scholarship Fund. *The current balance in the W-F scholarship fund is \$135.33. The last award was done 12/1/2013. Since then (in 2013 and 2014) there were some sales of holly boughs that went into the fund - for a total of \$54 over the two years. Nothing has happened in the fund since 12/16/2014 when the last \$25 was deposited into it.*

A Friend shared that members with children in Quaker schools may not know about this fund, and leave this fund for another leading. Debby shared that this fund has not had contributions for some time due to lack of leading within the Meeting. A Friend shared that they wanted to know more about the terms that started the fund and to maintain it. A Friend shared that there may be difficulty laying down the fund because it is named after a person and that there is a lack of leading to run the fund. Martha Solt (Nominating) shared that difficulty laying down unused committees leads to hesitancy in opening new task forces.

The Clerks suggested laying down the fund and donating the remaining money to School for Friends. The Meeting could not come to unity, and will share more information about the fund until the next Business Meeting.

Put Adult Education under Ministry & Worship rather than Religious Education - move this sentence: *It organizes classes and events that provide religious education for adults.* from the Religious Education Committee's description to the Ministry & Worship Committee's description.

Friends approved this change.

Report back from Friends General Conference Gathering (David Etheridge)

This year FGC was pay-as-led, which was effective. David shared [this report](#) and the [Epistle](#) below, including the important perspectives of Friends of Color.

Friends accepted this report.

Reports from Friends Non-Profit Housing, (attached) - (Dan Dozier)

Dan shared that they are working to double the number of units through new construction in Montgomery County. Please contact him if you are interested in volunteering.

Friends accepted this report.

Report from Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) (Susan Griffin)

Susan reminded us that FCNL has a Wednesday Meeting that is very informational and is only 30 minutes.

Friends accepted this report.

Report from Peace Tax Fund (Malachy Kilbride, Michael Beer)

Michael shared his sorrow of Rep. John Lewis's passing and his work towards Peace Tax fund legislation.

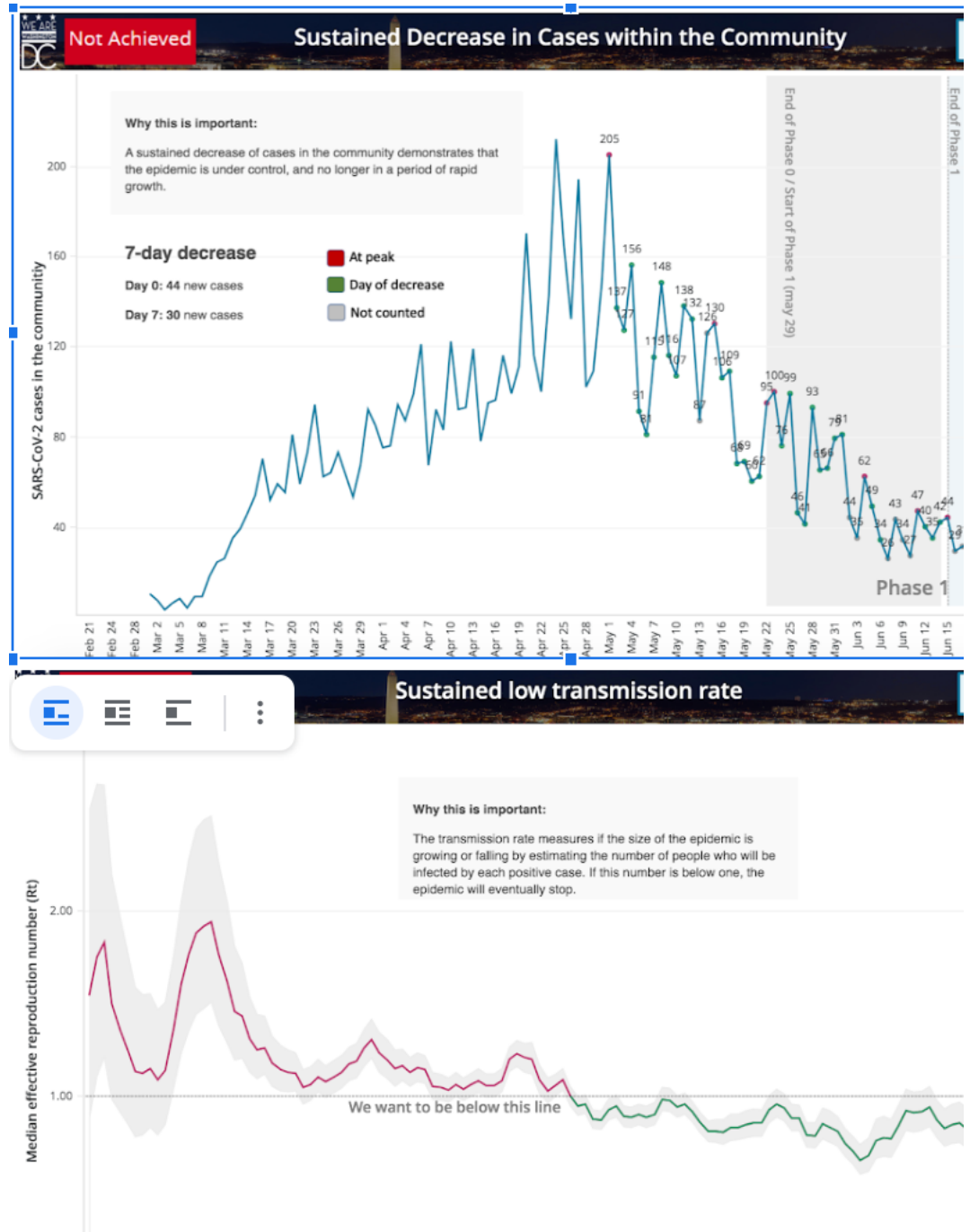
Friends accepted this [report](#).

Meeting for Business closed at 2:00pm, to reopens as way leads on 9/13,2020.

#####

ADDENDA: ATTACHED COMMITTEE REPORTS

COVID-19 Metrics in the District of Columbia



Alternatives to Violence Project-DC

GOVERNING DOCUMENTS, May 17, 2020

MISSION

AVP-DC aims to build a team of trained AVP youth and adult facilitators in Washington, DC who can conduct workshops on creative conflict resolution.

POPULATION

AVP-DC will bring conflict resolution programs to youth in the District of Columbia through schools, community organizations, and halfway houses for incarcerated youth.

ACTIVITIES

- AVP-DC will recruit persons who will be trained to become facilitators through AVP.
- AVP-DC may partner with other programs/organizations to offer workshops for youth on self-expression and community building.
- AVP-DC will work towards developing teams of youth facilitators who can bring anti-violence programs to their peers.

VALUES

AVP-DC is committed to bringing together a diverse group of people who believe in building a peaceful and equitable world.

The board of AVP-DC is committed to these anti-racist queries adopted by Friends Meeting of Washington in 2020:

- How will we provide opportunities for those most likely to be directly affected by the choices we are contemplating to influence the decision-making process?
- How could the choices we are contemplating affect those who have been harmed by systemic, institutional, interpersonal, and/or internal racism?
- To what degree have privilege, class, stereotypes, assumptions, and our ability to include other perspectives affected this decision-making process?
- How will the choices we are contemplating promote equity, diversity, and inclusiveness? Will they enable us to be more friendly and whole, engaging across racial divisions?

VISION

AVP-DC envisions a world where youth and adults can resolve conflict through nonviolent means.

FMW Child Safety Committee - Annual Report July 2020

In 2019, The Child Safety Committee coordinated the Child Safety Policy at Friends Meeting of Washington by continuing practices that maintain a safe environment for children in accordance with the recommendations of our insurance provider. During the 2019-2020 First Day Program year, the Child Safety Committee stayed in dialogue with FDS teachers, Nursery Lead Teacher, RE clerks, the Office Administrator, and the Trustees about safe spaces and practices for children and volunteers in First Day School classes. We attended Religious Education Committee (RE) meetings when possible, volunteered in classrooms, recruited volunteers for classes, held safety procedure training sessions, we created visual tools to clarify and update procedures for volunteer background checks, and we helped maintain records of Adult Care Givers (volunteer teachers). Throughout the year, we worked with other committees and employees to make sure FMW runs programs for children of all ages in which children are always with more than one adult, and that adults working with children take procedural steps identified by our insurance company to minimize risk of abuse or mishaps.

The second half of 2019 brought not only changes of space for children's programming at Friends Meeting of Washington due to the joyful completion of our renovation, but also brought a change of paid and volunteer personnel, creating a need for more communication about safety

procedures in First Day School. In July 2019, Friends Meeting of Washington moved toward volunteer oversight of the First Day Program curriculum and scheduling, rather than employing a Youth Programs Coordinator, causing a transfer of roles from paid staff to the clerks of committees. Simultaneously, our long time Nursery Coordinator went on maternity leave, a long-time RE volunteer died, we said good-bye not only to the RE Clerk moving overseas, but also to our long-time Youth Programs Coordinator and to our paid RE teacher, causing emotional situations and attrition of institutional memory. The Child Safety Committee stayed in dialogue with the two new clerks of the RE committee, the new Nursery Coordinator, and with the new Office Administrator as what we clarified what was advisable to maintain safe programs for children on First Days. The Child Safety Committee is heartened to see the robust and engaging First Day Programs that the RE Committee and Nursery staff have built up at FMW, and we look forward to working in tandem with First Day volunteers and personnel to resume programming at the FMW building when we reopen after the COVID-19 closures.

FMW Event and Office Rental Report, June 2020

Prepared by Brian Lutenecker, Event and Rental Manager

Financials – FY20 and FY21 Bookings

Here is a breakdown of how where we ended up in FY20 (which ended June 30, 2020) in terms of **booked** events for the current fiscal year as well as to FY21 that began July 1st.

The charts above shows the very sudden drop in booked events that began during March. As of this writing, it is not clear when FMW will be able to fully reopen as an event venue – I hope to book some small weddings and other events yet this summer, but we will see. Our fiscal year runs from July 1 to the following June 30th.

I have gone through FY20 records and corrected a few data entry errors, so the monthly booked and earned totals are slightly different than previous months.

We are in the same boat as the rest of the events industry all around the world.

Financials – FY20 Earned

In general, most of the cancellations this spring actually occurred in the form of an event postponement. This enabled FMW to keep whatever portion of the total cost of the event the space user had already paid us rather than issuing a refund. In fact, we only issued a total of \$2,094.50 in refunds. The deposits kept by FMW will be applied in full to a future event in our spaces, hopefully occurring by the end of FY21 (June 30, 2021). So we count these postponements where a deposit was already paid as **earned** revenue for FY20. So for FY20, we actually *earned* \$103,133.85 – at this point now equivalent to the dollar value of events booked. Some of this, as it turns out, will be a downpayment towards events hopefully occurring in FY21 (assuming gatherings can occur by June 2021).

FY21 Event Bookings

The charts above also shows the nearly \$20,000 worth of events for FY21 that we have now booked, including more than \$16,000 during March. Of course, we cannot definitively say where FMW and our society will be later this summer in terms of the ability to host larger events (an event scheduled for July and a few later in the fall have canceled). Several of these events are later in the fiscal year and we certainly hope these events happen as planned.

Unfortunately, Bet Mishpachah, the LGBTQ Jewish synagogue that celebrated in our spaces last fall, will not return this year for High Holidays due to COVID-19. They expect to hold a small gathering elsewhere with livestreaming for their many members who wouldn't feel comfortable at a live gathering. I do expect that they will return in future years.

Nonprofit versus market rates

Of the \$103,133.85 booked so far this fiscal year, \$16,957 worth of rentals has been at our full market rates (approximately 16.4 percent). The remainder of the booked events have received some type of discount:

- a) A discounted nonprofit or tenant rate
- b) A lower rate due to construction

c) Memorial service and weddings under the care of the meeting where we do not charge for space for the service itself – only for the cost of the event host

d) Some other factor

Our standard nonprofit discount is 20 percent off our market rates.

Thus far, we have been able to accommodate all requests for Meeting- and Quaker-related activities at FMW around outside space rentals. We are making every effort to accommodate Sunday afternoon and evening rentals, while ensuring that all of our internal activities on Sunday mornings are unimpeded by outside events.

What I am Working On

My position has always been a combination of sales, marketing, and customer service with a healthy dose of web design and other miscellaneous tasks thrown in. The slowdown in future bookings and events taking place has reduced the sales and customer services components of my work – and allowed me to focus more on the marketing aspects of this work that I was struggling to get to on a daily basis.

In June, I:

- Fielded several inquiries for weddings to be scheduled later in 2020, 2021, or beyond.
- Continued to tweak the design of our website to keep the content and layout fresh and useful. Not everything I have done will be apparent by simply looking at the site. In June, we had 368 visitors to the event rental site, including 354 new visitors.
- Worked with our wedding planner to create, publish, and refine elopement / micro wedding packages for couples that will take place at FMW
- Continued networking with other event and wedding professionals in the DC area to let them know about our venue.
- Took over our social media accounts from our *pro bono* social media consultant, and I have been publishing multiple times per week, using standard practices.
- Watched lots of online webinars on handling COVID-19 as an event venue and attended virtual happy hours with industry professionals
- Continued to understand the requirements for forgiveness of FMW's Paycheck Protection Program loan through the Small Business Administration and administered by Sandy Spring Bank. This included watching several webinars. During June, legislation signed into law will make it far easier for FMW to qualify for full forgiveness of this \$42,000 loan from the Small Business Administration.
- Submitted application to Craigslist's Charitable Fund requesting funding on the grounds that FMW provides a gathering place for some of their grantees as well as a spiritual home for some of their grantees' staff.
- Attended an Information Technology committee meeting and provided background for a forthcoming RFQ to help FMW make necessary IT decisions.
- Began thinking more about marketing FMW spaces as coworking or shared office spaces during the week where independent and remote workers can come and spread out across the building.
- Marketed our office spaces (more below)
- Had a wedding photographer living in the neighborhood visit to take photos and create a blog post on his website (<https://www.chrisferenzi.com/venue/friends-meeting-of-washington-wedding-information/>)

Office Space Rentals

I have been gradually taking over management of office space rentals to new tenants as well as being the point of contact for existing tenants.

At present, we have the following tenants:

- AsylumWorks (formerly Asylum Seeker Assistance Project) (<https://www.asylumprojectdc.org/>)

- DesignCase Architects (<https://www.designcasellc.com/>)
- Dupont Circle Village (<https://www.dupontcirclevillage.net/>)
- Barbara Sobol, Art Therapist
- Sondra Geller, Art Therapist (<http://sondrageller.com/>)
- National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund (<http://peacetaxfund.org/>)
- Women's Ordination Conference (<https://www.womensordination.org/>) ****Moved in during June****

There are two spaces currently available for rent, as we had turn over as the COVID-19 pandemic was arriving in DC. These include the Carriage Room, which may potentially become office space again plus suite 163 (formerly occupied by psychotherapist Elizabeth Handy).

During June, I completed negotiations with AsylumWorks and Barbara Sobol on increased rent and their specific footprint in our building. These two parties will have their own spaces but also share one of the 3rd floor offices in Quaker House, based on a schedule they establish. I also worked with Dupont Circle Village to increase their electronic rent payment to the previously agreed to amount.

In June, we were contacted by an esthetician who saw one of our other spaces that didn't work for her. But I let her know another space is available (suite 163). She came to see that space and loved it. She also sent detailed responses to my inquiry regarding how she saw herself and her business fitting in with Quaker values. However, she is understandably being extremely cautious and wants to be certain that her business is allowable in our building under DC's zoning code. This has caused me to put my urban planner hat back on to try to understand the history of office rentals at FMW.

I also would like to briefly highlight one of our office tenants each month in this report, particularly the nonprofits. This will allow Friends a sense of who occupies our spaces throughout the week.

Office Tenant Profile

Dupont Circle Village is one of seventeen villages in the District of Columbia, with many more in Maryland and Virginia. From their website:

Located in the heart of our Nation's capital, Dupont Circle Village (DCV) enables its members to remain actively engaged in community life as they grow older and their needs change over time.

Founded in 2008, DCV has over 250 members—spanning in age from 55 to 102. Villagers participate in a range of social, cultural, educational, and exercise activities.

In addition, DCV provides a robust array of volunteer services to members who need a hand to meet some of the challenges that living longer can bring.

How you can help me and FMW's budget

If you know of (or work for) an organization that may need office space in the coming months – particularly as it becomes clearer what the future office will look like post-COVID19 – please connect me. Or if you know of places where we might market our available office spaces, please let me know that as well.

The same is true of our event spaces, once we are able to host events again. Please think about whether your employer, an organization whose board you sit on – or even yourself for a special event – might be able to make use of our spaces.

If you have ideas for content that we can post on Facebook and Instagram that might be of interest to a wide (not necessarily Quaker) audience, I am happy to consider. I have posted photos of most of the banners we have had on our fence over the past few months. And I generally post a Quaker quote on Sunday mornings with wide appeal – or that directly relates to the current political climate. These have been well received.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fmw.event.venue/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/friendsmeetingofwashington/>

Finally, since we are in the events industry, Friends may be interested to listen to this recording of a conversation on diversity and racism in that industry.

<http://ow.ly/zTc350AoaSP>

Report for Friends Meeting of Washington on the Friends General Conference 2020 Virtual Gathering

Approximately 1,000 Friends participated in the Friends General Conference 2020 Virtual Gathering. Fees for the Gathering were on a “pay as led” basis and I am informed more than covered the FGC’s costs. Although I have not heard how many of those who took part were participating for the first time, I had the impression that number was much higher than in previous years due, in large part, to the absence of travel and lodging expenses.

I counted seven Friends from FMW participating this year and four of them were African American. That demographic was quite different from what attains at FMW Meeting for Worship either online or in person. Attendance was also higher than usual at the Friends of Color and their Families Pre-Gathering retreat. Friends of Color at the Pre-Gathering retreat wrote the attached epistle describing how they enjoyed the “rare opportunity of not being othered in Quaker space” as they routinely are in their home Meetings. The epistle also proposed a series of queries for all Quakers. Those queries asked Friends how the Spirit is leading them to address “the ongoing racial pandemic” and how to remain engaged with their leadings.

Pacific Yearly Meeting had recently joined the FGC, so, for the first time Friends attended from constituent Meetings in Mexico, as well as the U.S. and Canada. Also, for the first time, simultaneous Spanish translation of plenary presentations was available.

The Bible Half Hour offered by California Quaker chaplain Carl Magruder was simultaneously thought-provoking and entertaining. About 300 Friends attended those presentations each day. All five of his presentations are available on YouTube at this [link](#).

About 125 Friends participated in four worship sharing sessions that were offered at different times of the day to accommodate participants from across the continent. The technology used permitted participants to worship share first in small groups and then, if they chose, to share in a large-group format as well.

Friends lamented the loss of physical community occasioned by the pandemic while also appreciating some of the benefits of virtual participation. If conditions permit an in-person gathering at Radford, Virginia in 2021, Gathering organizers will be working to retain some of the benefits associated with a virtual Gathering even as we gather in-person again.

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Epistle of 2020 Annual Pre-Gathering Retreat

The Outgoing Epistle of the 2020 Virtual Pre-Gathering of Friends of Color and their Families Friends General Conference

“We are a harvest of survivors. But then, that's what we've always been.”

Octavia E. Butler, Parable of the Sower

To Friends Everywhere:

We begin by remembering our ancestors who were strong enough to make a way for us. Friends of Color and their families met for Pre-Gathering Retreat on 26 Day through 28 Day Sixth Month 2020. This is the eighth year Friends of Color have met for our Pre-Gathering Retreat. First-timers felt welcomed and validated. This year, we met virtually with our largest attendance yet. There were 47 attendees, ranging in age from 11 months through 77 years from Canada, Mexico, Switzerland and the United States of America.

The importance of this Gathering for Friends of Color worshipping in community together cannot be overstated. To our Friends in the wider Quaker world, we the Friends of Color, can’t breathe. During this weekend, we enjoyed the rare opportunity of not being othered In Quaker space. We

experienced the joy of being seen as we are and the affirmation of a supportive spirit among ourselves in the “Amen corner”. The term “Amen corner” comes from the Black church and is a communal space that validates, affirms and uplifts the spirit. In isolation, due to COVID19, we are being kept apart and away from those we love, trust and need. The pre-gathering retreat brought back the source of community and family that has been missing. We were able to exhale, relax, and breathe together. Many of us did not realize how exhausted we were until we were able to relax with one another. The gifts of the spirit were abundant. We shared in worship, gentle yoga and meditation, meaningful discussions, journaling and self-discovery. We also listened and shared in each other’s joys, triumphs, pains and sorrows. We experienced spiritual renewal that was awakened by moving through pain to hope for the future for ourselves and our children. Attention and space was given for people to play games, dance, talk, grieve, play music, watch videos, and write.

We have much gratitude to the Program Coordinator for the Ministry on Racism; the pioneer who laid the groundwork to make the Pre-Gathering Retreat available to us within FGC gathering and who faithfully makes it happen each year. We are grateful for being able to acknowledge all that makes us human, for finding home and connection. Our inner Light is magnified and our capacity to breathe deeply is nurtured when that of God is acknowledged in each of us. It is our hope that other Friends of Color will know that such a space exists and know that they are desired, needed and will be warmly embraced.

The Pre-Gathering Friends of Color Retreat provides a reprieve. Friends of Color need respite from the systemic racism too often found in our American Quaker community that often goes unseen by many white Friends. Friends of Color need respite from the insidious lie of white supremacy manifested in daily oppressive traumatic stressors (microaggressions) which have the effect of blaming the oppressed for our own oppression. Friends of Color need respite and support which our home meetings have not provided. Friends of Color are fatigued from being asked to teach white folks.

We ask all Quakers to heed a Call to Action. Please sit with these queries:

- 1) What is the Spirit leading me to do about the historic and ongoing racial pandemic across my meeting, my community, my work environment and my country?
- 2) How can we honor the memory of people who have lost their lives to the struggle for a better world?
- 3) How can we construct ways for people to engage and remain engaged *beyond* good intentions in the struggle for true equality in health, education, wealth and against state sanctioned violence?
- 4) How can we encourage the support of Friends of Color in Quaker worship and meetings around the world?
- 5) How can Friends de-center themselves in order to listen to and hear Friends of Color?
- 6) How can I support respite for Friends of Color?

In this time of COVID19, People of Color discovered that a deadly pandemic is secondary to the long-time pandemic of racism in our lives. People of Color are more likely to die from COVID19 due to the effects of racism and oppression. Think about how this pandemic has turned your world upside down, economically, emotionally, psychologically. Now imagine there is no one working on a vaccine, and that if you get sick or die, no one notices or cares. For People of Color, the human-made pandemic of racism is deadlier than COVID19, and we need you to do work so that we can BREATHE.

In Peace, Love and

2020 FGC Virtual Pre-Gathering Retreat for Friends of Color and their Families

Friends Nonprofit Housing, July 2020

Friends Nonprofit Housing (FNPH) operates Friendly Gardens apartments, located in the historic Lyttonsville neighborhood of Silver Spring. The apartments are well located, near the Lyttonsville Station on the Purple Line, projected to open in 2023, and across the street from the Gwendolyn Coffield Community Center and the Rosemary Hills-Lyttonsville Park. The 85 apartments, built in 1971, are in six three-story buildings on about 4.5 acres. In 2016, the Board oversaw a \$2.4 million renovation of all units.

The property, under a rent policy adopted about 4 years ago, serves three levels of low-income renters. Half of the apartments are earmarked for households defined under Montgomery County guidelines as “extreme low income.” For a family of four, this would be an annual income of about \$35,000 or less. Thirty percent are earmarked for “very low-income” households earning about \$47,000 per year. And twenty percent are available for “low-income” households earning about \$60,000 per year. The earmarked apartments in each category include a mix of 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom units. Households with incomes above \$70,000 pay a version of “market rate” rents intended to encourage moving to a new apartment complex and this has been happening. We expect to have all 85 apartments rented within this three-tiered arrangement soon.

Friendly Gardens’ finances remain healthy. In FY20-21 the net operating income is anticipated to be about \$1.250 million with a net of about \$550 thousand. This financial condition, along with ownership through an affiliate, of 2.3 acres of undeveloped land contiguous to Friendly Gardens, has put the Board in a position to explore possibilities for new development. The Board is in discussions with the Bethesda-based developer, EYA, about the possibility of a joint development which would combine the two parcels and significantly increase the number of affordable housing units in the FNPB portfolio.

Generally, the project under discussion includes several components and, with each, different ownership and financing arrangements. The project would include market rate, for-sale townhouses; affordable rental apartments; and market-rate rental apartments. FNPB would own the affordable rental apartments and would participate in a structure whereby it would eventually own the market-rate apartments. EYA would sell the market-rate townhouses. Very rough estimates suggest FNPB could end up with about 185 affordable units and 150 market rate units. Ultimately, the number of units of each type will depend on factors such as construction costs, financing, and regulatory approvals.

Currently the following individuals serve as FNPB officers:

President, Richard Mounts
Vice President, Dan Dozier
Secretary, Nony Dutton
Treasurer, Della Stolsworth

The Board has eleven members, three of whom, Annelise Haskell, Willy Wilson and I are members of the Friends Meeting of Washington. Other FMW people who have recently served on the Board included Kate Steger and Laurie Wilner. Several FNPB Board are members of the Bethesda Meeting; and two individuals who are not Quakers. The Board includes people with a useful mix of backgrounds, including architecture, finance, housing development, property management, and law.

Dan Dozier, July 2020

Peace Tax Fund

Friends,

Friends, thanks to the continuing decades-long support of many, including Quakers around the country, the Peace Tax Foundation continues the long term work of passing the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act which would expand the constitutional rights of conscientious objectors to war.

On Capitol Hill and around the country we have experienced great challenges. At the end of 2019 we saw the President Trump impeachment process unfold following the several years of congressional investigations into the administration. The political positions and actions of this administration has engendered great division on Capitol Hill and around the country. It has been difficult for any needed and meaningful legislation to pass into law. In the first few months of 2020 the coronavirus pandemic arrived and spread across the US wreaking destruction on our way of life and economy. We are still dealing with this major public health crisis and needless to say it has impacted the work of our Congress. Sadly, the longtime champion of our bill and faithful sponsor, Representative John Lewis of Georgia, announced he was diagnosed with a serious and advanced cancer. One could easily conclude that there is little hope in times like this.

In my letter to the Friends Meeting of Washington in November I shared "*As a Quaker, I am constantly reminded that the cause of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act, H.R. 4169, is long-term work. We, US Americans, live in a country with the largest military budget in the world. We are militarily engaged in several wars which are now commonly referred to as "Forever Wars". At times these endless wars seem to be hidden in plain sight and anyone under*

the age of 21 has grown up not knowing a time when their country was not at war. With wars hidden in plain sight it is easy for the issue of conscientious objection to go unnoticed by most people. This is where the work of the Peace Tax Foundation comes in as we educate people about the work of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund and the constitutional rights of those who are opposed to participation in war in any form including with their taxes."

I believe those who work for peace through nonviolence are people of hope. We must believe that our long term work is creating the beloved community Martin Luther King Jr. spoke about but also be mindful that our actions today may not bring us individually to that promised land in our lifetime. We simply lay the groundwork for others. The people of conscience who want to let their lives speak to a world without war have been to the mountaintop, looked over, and continue to build the dream. The work continues.

Malachy Kilbride, Director
Peace Tax Foundation/National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund
www.peacetaxfund.org