

December 2011 Newsletter

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FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

MONTHLY MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH A CONCERN FOR BUSINESS

November 13, 2011

11/11.1 Opening The Meeting opened at 12:10 pm with a period of silent worship. David Etheridge served as Clerk, Meg Greene as Alternate Clerk and Debby Churchman as Recording Clerk. The clerks read Advices, Queries and Voices concerning Children which have been proposed by the Faith and Practice Revision Committee of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Advices

Rejoice in the presence of children and young people in meeting. Recognize and affirm the gifts that they bring to the life of the meeting community.

Children and young people need their peer groups. They also need opportunities to join with the whole group as an integral part of the meeting, sharing experiences that deepen relationships. Part of sharing is learning to know of our past as Quakers. Even more important is sharing what we as Quakers understand to be the Truth today and expressing the ways in which it shapes our lives.

Parents are the children's first teachers; they and the meeting need to help children understand what it means to attend Meeting for Worship. Children need specific expectations placed upon them.

All Friends need to be mentors to the children in their meeting.

Queries

How do we provide young people with explicit guidelines in Quaker faith and practice?

How do we get to know and care for our children and young people as individuals?

What have we learned from the wisdom expressed by our children?

How do we share our deepest beliefs with children, while leaving them free to develop as the spirit of God may lead them?

Voices

A care hath lived in my mind, that more time might be employed by parents at home, and by tutors at school, in weightily attending to the spirit and inclinations of children, and that we may so lead, instruct and govern them, in this tender part of life, that nothing may be omitted in our power, to help them on their way to become the children of our Father who art in heaven." --John Woolman, 1758

We seek to affirm in each child at school, each member of the meeting, each person we meet in our daily lives, the person that he or she may with God's help grow to be. We are all the merest infants in God's world, struggling to stand upright and walk unaided, trying in vain to articulate our halting thoughts and feelings. We stumble and fall. We give way to self-pity and shame. God hauls us to our feet again and makes sense of our childish babble, never ceasing to believe in what we may ultimately become. Do we do the same for our children and one another? Barbara Windle, 1988

It makes me sad when I hear discussions about not introducing children to God until they are old enough to understand. I grew into the Lord's Prayer, and I am still growing into it. All religious language, all devotional books, and particularly the Bible, provide growing room for young minds and spirits. - Elise Boulding 1975

11/11.2 Welcome of Visitors Approximately 42 Friends were present. FMW welcomed Kevin Zeese of Baltimore, MD, Elizabeth Kendall, Sasan Sabet, Patrick Marchman, Catherine Vanderwaart, and Micah Bales, all of Washington DC.

11/11.3 Clerks' Report David Etheridge, Clerk, made the following report.

- The Capital Improvement Task Force is still waiting to hear from the architect.
- Our former attender David Hogan Markham died on Nov. 3, 2001, at age 74, in San Francisco.
- Marriage and Family Relations is sponsoring a workshop on Forgiveness on Nov. 18 and 19. See Susan Griffin for more details.
- There will be a Meeting for Worship at noon on Thanksgiving Day.
- The Mary Walcott Lucy Foster Education Fund is accepting requests through November for financial assistance for children of members and active attenders of Washington area Meetings to attend a Friend's school pre-K to 12th grade. See Bruce Kellogg for more details.

11/11.4 Marriage of Elizabeth Kendall and Sasan Sabet Susan Griffin, Clerk of Marriage & Family Relations, presented a request for the marriage of Elizabeth Kendall and Sasan Sabet.

Elizabeth grew up in this Meeting. The request lies over for a month, as is our custom.

MAJOR ITEMS

11/11.5 Creation of an Ad Hoc Support Committee for the Occupy Movement Debby Churchman presented a request for the formation of an Ad Hoc Support Committee for the Occupy Movement. Kevin Zeese from the October 2011 Movement and Micah Bales from Occupy DC made remarks and answered questions.

Kevin Zeese thanked members of the Meeting for the support they have given. He described the core organizers having been inspired by events in the Middle East, Wisconsin and elsewhere. Their Occupy effort in DC has in turn helped to inspire the movement around the country, starting with New York with Occupy Wall Street. By occupying public space, he says, we are having an effect on political dialogue. We stand for ending corporate rule and shifting power to the people, with implications for many social justice issues. Kevin laid out some of the issues that guide their focus. The “Occupy Supercommittee” met and were covered by Cspan, and will be issuing a report on their observations. They are currently preparing for the winter and working toward the spring, when on March 30th, the National Occupy Washington movement hopes to bring tens of thousands of people to occupy the city, likely on the National Mall. Please look at www.occupywashingtondc.org website and also their Amazon.com site for making donations to the movement.

Micah Bales is a member of Capitol Hill Friends, a new Meeting that meets at William Penn House. His involvement with Occupy DC is deeply linked to his faith as a Friend. In September he began to hear about the protest in New York, a protest he did not initially take so seriously. He felt convinced that God's hand was guiding him to get involved in this movement, a first experience of this kind for him, especially around political demonstrations. A visit to Occupy Wall Street left him with an inspired sense that this form of action could be very powerful indeed. So he participated in early discussions about how to develop Occupy DC, and things have built since that time at McPherson Square. The Park Police have not posed any challenges to the movement. His experience clerking has been very relevant to the movement. Micah described some of the challenges in the camp. The prayer tent there has played an important role for addressing the physical, mental and spiritual needs of a very diverse group.

Micah feels continually inspired and refreshed by a quote from Luke 4, where Jesus is handed a scroll of Isaiah to read and interpret, which Micah experiences as a directive to participate in Occupy DC. The quote is:

Luke 16-19: Then he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up and, according to his custom, went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read the scriptures and the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. He opened the book and found the place where these words are written—“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord’.

“The acceptable year of the Lord,” Micah points out, refers to the Jubilee Year—a practice established in the book of Leviticus whereby every 50 years all captives are released, all debts are forgiven, and the sick are healed. It is time for jubilee, the net effect of which is to redistribute power from the elites to the common people. That is what Micah feels the Occupy movement is calling for.

A Friend clarified that one can serve on this ad hoc committee without regard to other committee memberships.

A Friend asked for clarification on whether there is room for people who are spiritual or religious to participate. Both Kevin and Micah affirmed that there are specific spaces and opportunities to worship and affirm the spiritual basis for participating, regardless of one's faith and also room for those who are not religious.

A Friend asked why there are two Occupy sites: Kevin Zeese said it is a coincidence, arising from how each arose, very close in time. Another Friend wished for clarity on the relation between the two groups: They are coordinating with one another, but each group has its own autonomy and there are occasional conflicts.

A Friend asked about any coordination with AFSC. The movement and AFSC have been in communication, but AFSC has not been able to offer much concrete help due to staffing and budget cutbacks.

A Friend asked about the extent to which the movement can regulate its members and ensure their adherence to non-violence and other issues that are of core interest to the movement. Recently there was a demonstration of 500 people at the Americans for Prosperity meeting at the Convention Center. Ultimately, a small number of people used more aggressive tactics, and the event deteriorated, leading to accusations of violence by the police. Four people from Occupy DC were hit by a motorist; they are asking police to follow through on this and hold the motorist accountable. There are challenges to preventing this kind of problem fully, because the movement is open, and not everyone who participates fully owns the commitment to non-violence. We have to be ready to respond to such incidents, says Micah. Occupy DC held a training for about 50 trainers this week in the practice of non-violence, and are creating peacekeeping and peacemaking teams. They are also insisting on the use of peaceful language and decision-making.

Micah clarified that the movement is whoever shows up, and that we are welcome to join their numbers at any time, for any amount of time, and with any kind of support.

A Friend pointed out that the point of this discussion is not to obtain approval from the entire Meeting for the Occupy Movement, but rather to approve the creation of the ad hoc support committee for the Occupy Movement.

A Friend asked about their time line, and we learned that the movement is ready to stay as long as need be. Another Friend noted the observation by Marshall Sutton that When it comes, we will know it.

A Friend called our attention to a concern from Finance and Stewardship that requesting donations would endanger FMW's nonprofit status, as it would be seen as political advocacy.

A Friend noted the broad support for the Occupy DC movement includes the Network of Spiritual Progressives. The 501(c)(3) status merely prevent us from donating to direct political candidates and parties—it does not prevent us from donating money or material goods to causes.

A Friend noted that one solution is to donate to the movement without bringing the money through FMW, which is what raises the doubts. Loie Clark, clerk of F&S, agreed that money should not go through FMW's books.

A Friend suggested that the ad hoc committee could exist also to provide FMW with information about the movement. Let us view it as a liaison group and avoid the word 'committee.'

Another Friend suggested that the support should be to the members who are led to support the Occupy movement, rather than directly supporting them. Could we find unity in approving a group to

support our Friends?

A Friend pointed out the problem with “Occupy DC” versus the Occupy Movement in DC. He feels that Washington DC has been occupied for more than 200 years by a federal government which keeps us in the status of a colony, and that all occupations cause stress to those being occupied. He wants us to be careful to refer to this committee as supporting the Occupy Movement in DC.

Debby brought the discussion to a close by observing that this is the beginning of a new social movement, perhaps as important as the civil rights movement. These activists are trying to address systemic violence with non-violence. How can we draw on our experience as a non-violent community? This ad hoc committee would be a focus and a conduit for such work.

A Friend spoke about our broader Meeting discussion about peace and social justice causes and the role that Peace and Social Concerns can play in supporting groups of committed Meeting members as they pursue their leadings, leadings we do not all need to share. In response, another Friend suggested that perhaps we could agree that we commit to supporting non-violence in the Occupy movement.

A Friend suggested calling it a Task Force to support the non-violent effort going on in the Occupy Movement in DC.

A Friend asked, Why does Meeting for Business need to approve the initiative taken by Members?

David Etheridge attempted to formulate the request in a way that everyone could agree upon, with these changes to the original proposal. The new proposal will read:

Taskforce to Support the Occupy Movement in DC

The taskforce is formed for the purpose of supporting the Occupy DC and October 2011 Movements that originated in Washington, DC. The taskforce seeks to:

- Discern current needs of these two groups
- Regularly communicate those needs to FMW
- Gather individual donations and be responsible for delivering them to the groups
- Support the groups' efforts to practice nonviolence
- Interface with other FMW committees, such as Property, Hunger and Homelessness, and Hospitality, as appropriate
- Work with outside groups, such as the Interfaith Occupy Support Group, as appropriate

Friends APPROVED this request.

11/11.6 Creation of a Property Manager position Steve Coleman of the Property Committee presented a proposal for the creation of a new Property Manager position. For two years, MfB has authorized FMW to be able to contract for a property manager. We have worked hard not to spend that money in taking advantage of volunteer work, he says. However, we now feel that we need a property manager. We have consulted with Finance and Stewardship and Personnel on this, and they agree. For example, we have about 100 issues to address, according to a recent building inspection. We would like to proceed with hiring a full-time manager through the end of this fiscal year. As we have improved the property, we have seen an increased income flow to FMW. We expect that, as the building is improved, that income flow will increase as well. We propose that the Property Committee

begin interviewing potential candidates. There is funding to cover the costs in the existent budget in three unfilled staff and contract positions.

A Friend on the Property Committee spoke in support of this proposal. The level of work is truly staggering, and will need the work of a full-time person.

A Friend suggests that the property manager be urged to show up on Sunday as well work days to gain a deeper understanding of how this place works.

A Friend asked about a time line for the Capital Improvement Taskforce. There is no deadline. He also praised the Property Committee for all their work.

A Friend asked for clarification for the scope of work. Steve Coleman says they want someone who can do the work, either him/herself or by setting up volunteers and contractors. It's more than a full-time handyman, but someone who can manage the overall scope of work.

Friends APPROVED the creation of this position.

MILESTONE

11/11.7 Memorial Minute for Carolyn Andrews – Meg Greene read the minute for this Friend (see attached). This was followed by a period of silence. Friends APPROVED the Minute.

11/11.8 Membership Committee – Harry Massey, Clerk of Membership, made the following requests on behalf of the Membership committee:

1. Transfer of Olivia James from Raleigh [North Carolina] Friends Meeting to Friends Meeting of Washington Friends APPROVED the transfer.
2. Transfer of Evelyn Jadin from Friends Meeting of Washington to Jamestown Friends Meeting in Greensboro, North Carolina Friends APPROVED the transfer.
3. Associate memberships of Anna Maher (age 4) and Liam Parkinson (age 2), daughter and son of Glenn Parkinson. Friends APPROVED these associate memberships.
4. Associate membership of Alexander Moss Avanesyan (age 7), son of Virginia and Suren Avanesyan. Friends APPROVED this associate memberships.

11/11.9 Nominating Committee Marcia Reecer, Interim Clerk of Nominating, made the following nominations:

1. Steve Coleman as Co-clerk of the Property Committee for 2012
2. Jim Steen as Co-clerk of the Personal Aid Committee for 2012

Friends APPROVED these nominations.

Update

11/11.10 Finance and Stewardship Committee – Loie Clark, Clerk of Finance and Stewardship, gave an update. We've ended the first third of our fiscal year, and contributions have fallen off significantly. Despite the fiscal year being 33% over, we have donated less than 22% of our contributions. An appeal letter will be going out around Thanksgiving. The District has assessed a tax on us for the property. The decision on whether to appeal this tax lies with Trustees.

A Friend pointed to the example of Johns Hopkins, which gives a voluntary contribution to Baltimore for the benefit the organization receives from the city. She believes that we should follow this Quaker example.

A Friend told us that we may be taxable because the organizations that are using our property are doing international, rather than local, work.

11/11.11 Efforts to Help the Hard of Hearing Faith Williams, Clerk of Ministry and Worship notes that nearly a year ago Maurice Boyd asked us to consider the needs of the hard of hearing. M&W would like to do some gentle experimentation, in conjunction with the Property Committee, with rearranging the seating in the Meetingroom to make it easier for people to hear.

A Friend says that Clem Swisher has already made a study of this, and suggests we check with him. Neil Froemming of the Property Committee says that about 20% of us are hearing impaired. He says it does not help to simply speak louder. The Meetingroom is acoustically challenging; he suggests we rope off benches so that we sit on only one side.

A Friend asked if we would be roping off doors. We would not. It would be more like what we currently do at a wedding or funeral, where you mark off certain rows.

A Friend spoke about the new Sidwell Friends meeting room, and suggested that we consult with them about acoustics.

A Friend suggests that we trust M&W to conduct the experiment and gather data.

A Friend on Property said the committee has discussed other ideas and will be experimenting as well. They will bring their discoveries here as well.

Friends APPROVED M&W conducting their experiment.

11/11.12 Adjournment With approximately 23 Friends present, the meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m. to reconvene as way opens on Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 11:45 a.m.

Attachments:

Update on Property Management

Memorial Minute for Carolyn Andrews

Update on Property Management

For two years in a row, the Friends Meeting of Washington, has budgeted funds for part time property management staff and contracting. The Meeting has not used any of these funds, as the Property Committee has sought to keep costs down with massive volunteer support. During this time, as reported in September, the Meeting has made significant progress in addressing deferred maintenance and making our spaces more safe and welcoming for broad Meeting and community use. In so doing, the Meeting has begun to enhance the mission value of the entire campus, and we have begun to generate more of the funds needed to cover the carrying costs of our facilities.

Still, the Meeting continues to face complex property challenges. In addition to basic maintenance, painting, and improvements, here are a few of the most pressing needs:

- Fire code violations, egress, alarm systems, and monitoring

- Environmental hazards and pest control
- Water infiltration in Meetinghouse and Quaker House
- Quaker House/Carriage House structure, plumbing/electrical, and HVAC needs
- Energy efficiency and weatherization
- Enhancing welcome, access, and safety throughout

In discerning how best to sustain property management, reclamation, and improvements, as well as continually expanding program and office use, the Property, Personnel, and Finance and Stewardship Committees, in consultation with the Administrative Secretary, have determined that the Meeting's property management can no longer be handled by volunteers or part time contractors. We see an opportunity to combine the unfilled staff positions in the budget into a single post that will focus entirely on property and space use management. The Property Manager will be hired by the Property Committee in consultation with Personal, and supervised by one person designated by Property.

The contract for the trail phase if this position will terminate at the end on the fiscal year on 6/30/12. Property, Personnel, and Finance and Stewardship will work together to continually evaluate and refine the position as needed, and make recommendations to the meeting for the FY 13 budget.

Memorial Minute for Carolyn Francis Gage Andrews

(5 December 1934-27 August 2008)

Carolyn F. Gage was approved for membership in the Friends Meeting of Washington in March 1959, having resigned her long-standing membership at the First Congregational Church of her hometown, Wareham, Massachusetts. "While in college searching for a foothold, trying various churches, and questioning everything, I became acquainted with a faculty member who was a Friend," she wrote in her letter of application. After attending meetings in Massachusetts and Washington, DC, she could write: "I realize that the Friend's way of life is the beginning of answering my needs."

Working in Washington as a medical secretary from 1957 to 1959, she joined several local organizations (such as the Washington Civic Symphony, where she played violin) and expressed interest in this Meeting's activities, most especially the camping program, which matched her love of the outdoors. Only one year after joining Friends, however, she moved to Duluth, Minnesota, to major in music at the University of Minnesota. In 1964 -- the year after her graduation -- she married Donald H. Andrews of Cleveland, Ohio, who had just accepted a position on the music faculty of the University. She served on the Duluth police force for seven years but left because she found it "increasingly difficult to deal with laws vs. conscience."

Friend Carolyn wrote the Meeting in 1975 that she lived on an 80-acre farm and raised Arabian horses. "The work is sometimes hard, but always joyous." She reported no Friends meeting in Duluth. From that year onward our Meeting's only communications from her were the regularly returned cards

correcting her address as she moved to various towns in Minnesota and then, in 1979, to Cottonwood, Arizona.

In Cottonwood she worked for a hospital until she retired in 1996 and then worked at a Wal-Mart and the Cliff Castle Casino before her death in 2008.

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Winter Events

William Penn House

William Penn House, a Quaker Center on Capitol Hill, hosts monthly potluck dinners the first Sunday of each month at 6:30 p.m. There is a topic, speaker, and open discussion afterwards. All are welcome to come to potlucks- bring a dish to share! In addition to the monthly potlucks, the William Penn House provides low cost accommodations and Quaker centered programs and seminars. On Sunday, **December 4**, at 6:30 p.m. the discussion will be presented by Brad Ogilvie and is about The Lakota Workcamps. Over the past 5-6 years, Washington Quaker Workcamps has developed and grown as a program of William Penn House and in the spiritual depth of its programs. Joining William Penn House is Mike Gray who has led Quaker Workcamps in the Lakota nation, in Mexico, in Texas, Louisiana, Arizona and New Mexico. Working with Brad, Quaker Service, which is core to Quaker beliefs will serve as our guide as we address issues of poverty, injustice and inequality. Mike is a member of Casabel Worship Group on the Arizona-Mexico border. Brad is the program coordinator at William Penn House, is clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting Peace and Social Concerns committee. Brad is a member of Downers Grove MM, in Illinois.

Join the weekly Yoga class at William Penn House on **Tuesdays** at 6:30 p.m. Certified Anusara instructor Elizabeth Goodman welcomes all skill levels and all ages. There is a \$15 fee for each class.

William Penn House is located at 515 East Capitol Street SE, Washington, DC 20003. William Penn House is an alcohol and tobacco free facility.

FMW's Senior Center

Programs of slides or talks are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month in the Decatur Place Room at 1:30 pm. On Wednesday, **December 14**, the program will be a slide show of Bermuda presented by Clem Swisher. On Wednesday, **December 28**, the Senior Center will not be meeting as the Center is taking a holiday break.

Christmas Celebration at FMW

Please join the community for our annual Christmas Eve potluck dinner, carol sing, and candlelight worship on Christmas Eve, Saturday, **December 24**. Charmaine Gilbreath roasts a turkey, Chris Benz, Kit Benz and Fred Friedman bring guitars and dulcimer for caroling and the meeting

community is invited to bring something to share for the potluck dinner. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and the event wraps up around 8:30 p.m. when everyone goes home to help Santa.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holiday Hours and Information for the Holidays

Christmas this year falls on a Sunday. As a result, the Sunday, **December 25**, worship at 6 p.m. will not be held. The FMW Office will be closed on Friday, **December 23**, Monday, **December 26**, Friday, **December 30** and Monday, **January 2**.

Midwinter Gathering

The next Midwinter gathering for Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC) with the theme: "Meet. Pray. Love." Will take place February 17- February 20, 2012 at the Perlman Conference Center, which is approximately 30 minutes from the Milwaukee Airport (Mitchell Field). Registration information is available at the FGBTQC Quaker web page.

From the Vault

A monthly series of edited extracts from the historical material of the Friends Meeting of Washington.

From: The American Friend, a fortnightly Quaker journal
Richmond Indiana

24 December 1942

Dear Friend Stanton,

You have asked a question that is not easy to answer. But so far as I am concerned I am ready to turn thumbs down on dancing. Several years ago when this problem first came to me I began to inquire about the actual effects of mixed dancing. A member of an orchestra which played regularly for dance parties gave an out and out condemnation of it as a sex evil, causing family troubles, individual sex laxness, etc. Other who have been confidential enough to tell me what effect it had upon their own "desires" indicated to me that it was not conducive to morality.

I think it was in the book To Have and Told Hold that the author stated that the round -- hugging -- dance was invented in Paris by prostitutes as a method to lure men into their circles. Now it may not affect all people in this unfortunate way but it certainly can lend itself to lasciviousness -- so may "necking" for that matter.

For the church and church people to sponsor such "recreation" is more than I can justify. There are other forms of entertainment that may be made attractive and remain wholesome. I think a church basement or special room may well be used for wholesome purposes. There are a number of books which may assist a committee in preparing an evening of "fun".

May the season be good to you -- and you to it.

With very best wishes to all of you, Murray S. Kenworthy

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Although this does not have any obvious connection to our Meeting it is too good to pass up.

File: ISSUES/Correspondence/1940s

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Our entire Herbert Hoover file has been copied and the material sent to the Hoover Presidential Library, which was grateful for the donation.

Hayden Wetzel
FMW Historian

THINKING ABOUT RACE– What is accountability?

“Participating in solidarity work implies that I am not from the community in which I am working, that I have skills or privilege to offer, and that I am constantly and consciously working towards developing others’ leadership and access to resources. This process includes political advocacy, building valuable relationships, reallocating resources, being transparent in my actions, and being strategic and sustainable with my energy. The key word – accountability – means recognizing that this work is about supporting folks and their projects [in that community] in a way that is not about me and my involvement, but is about the people directly affected and the way they wish to express their needs and greatest potential.” From the 2010 book, *Accountability and White Anti-racist Organizing: Stories from Our Work*, chapter one by Jacqui Hermer, “Lessons from Post-Levee-Break New Orleans.”

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, at Bethesda Friends Meeting or Friends Meeting of Washington. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk Elizabeth DuVerlie at eduverlieatjhu.edu.

NOTE: Friends who wish to comment on this or any other “Thinking About Race” items, may do so by emailing the web manager at Baltimore Yearly Meeting.