

February 2013 Newsletter

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

Sunday, 13 January 2013

2013 1-1 Opening– The meeting opened with silent worship at 12 noon with 34 Friends and visitors present. David Etheridge, Presiding Clerk, read a query from Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s draft Faith and Practice about Integrity and appropriate advices and other readings. Meg Green served as Recording Clerk, replaced by Hayden Wetzel upon his approval by Friends.

2013 1-2 Welcome of Visitors– The Clerk welcomed attender Gerald Fitzgerald of Washington, DC.

2013 1-3 Personal Concerns– The Clerk asked Friends to hold in Divine Light Friends Helen Horton (who has recently lost her son), Connie Boyd (sister of our member Maurice Boyd, who is ill), and Joan Gildemeister (whose apartment has suffered severe water damage) and is in temporary housing.

2013 1-4 Committee Resignations– Beth Cogswell, clerk of Nominating Committee, presented the following resignations from or committees:

Eddy Ameen – Peace and Social Concerns

Julian Forth -- Peace and Social Concerns

Jean Harman – Marriage and Family

Patrick Lynam – Religious Education

Lynsey Wood Jeffries – Religious Education

Chris Klemek – Religious Education

Dan Dozier – Membership

Margot Greenlee – Marriage and Family Relations

Friends **accepted** these resignations.

2013 1-5 Committee and Other Nominations– Beth Cogswell, clerk of the Nominating Committee, presented a list of nominations to the Meeting’s committees and other positions ([attached](#)) as a supplement to the list of Meeting Officers and committee clerks approved at the December meeting. Friends **approved** these

nominations. A waiver was **approved** for Barbara Monahan, a member of another meeting, to serve on the Records and Handbook Committee, this having been presented at our last meeting. A similar waiver was also requested for attender Frank Whitelock to serve on the Personnel. These requests will lie over one month.

The committee recommends continuing the Ad Hoc Committee for Special Events, with members Charmaine Gilbreath and Tracy Hart. Friends **approved**.

The committee stated its gratitude to our member Margaret Green for her assistance with the nominating process, and particularly in helping to rebuild the Peace and Social Concerns Committee.

Milestones

Membership Matters– Gerri Williams, co-clerk of the Membership Committee, presented the following membership concerns:

2013 1-6 Transfer Out of Emma Churchman– Friends **approved** the transfer of Emma Churchman to Swannanoa Valley (North Carolina) Friends Meeting.

2013 1-7 Transfer Out of Bronwyn and Allison Hughes– Friends **approved** the transfer of Bronwyn Hughes and daughter Allison Hughes (aged 10) to Richmond (Virginia) Friends Meeting.

2013 1-8 Membership Request of Kiflu Kidanne– The committee recommends Friends approval of the membership application of Kiflu Kidanne. The request lies over one month, as is our custom.

Annual Reports

2013 1-9 Membership Committee– Gerri Williams, co-clerk of the Membership Committee, presented that committee's annual report ([attached](#)). The committee commends to Friends the Meeting's stated Responsibilities of Membership. The committee's special projects of the past year have been continued outreach to members who have not been in contact with us for several years, and requests to our associate members over the age of 25 to seek clarity on their membership status. It faces a considerable task to correct and complete the Meeting's membership records. The committee's membership has been at a low level for the year, which has hobbled its work.

2013 1-10 Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund– Anne Kendall, clerk of the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Committee, presented that committee's annual report ([attached](#)). The committee has increasingly worked jointly with Friends of Bethesda Friends Meeting and hopes to take this work to other nearby meetings as well. Scholarships granted have increased from the former \$1,000 for one year to about \$3,500 over four years, and the committee hopes to see this amount increase. The Meeting has been very supportive of the scholarship program; last week's fundraising lunch yielded \$2,541.

2013 1-11 Trustees– Daniel Dozier, interim clerk of Trustees, presented that body's annual report ([attached](#)). Trustees have rejoiced in the recent improvements to our physical plant. Quaker House and the adjoining Carriage House have been refurbished and now produce greater annual income for us. The submitted report gives a comprehensive view of the Meeting's financial condition. Generally speaking our expenses have increased while income (including investments) have declined. The Meeting's financial records have undergone their annual review.

2013 1-12 Records and Handbook– Todd Harvey, clerk of the Records and Handbook Committee, presented that committee's annual report ([attached](#)). The committee has continued to update our Meeting's Handbook to bring it into conformity with our approved practices and has put the full text on-line. The bulk of our historical records have been organized and transferred to Swarthmore College's Friends Historical Library. The committee is concerned that committee and other records since about 2000 are not being kept in our files and urges all committee clerks to send minutes to the Meeting office for filing. In the coming year the committee will work with each meeting committee to update all working documents. The work of the Meeting's Historian was noted with gratitude.

2013 1-13 Recorder– Deborah Churchman, Meeting Recorder, presented this annual report ([attached](#)). The Meeting's membership now stands at 410, down slightly from last year.

Updates

2013 1-14 Capital Improvements Task Force– Neil Froemming of the Capital Improvements Task Force reported that the Task Force continues to review specifics of its planned renovation to our buildings. Soon this planning process will have to go into abeyance until the Meeting’s financial resources for the project can be ascertained.

2013 1-15 Peace and Social Concerns Committee– Mark Cannon, clerk of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, reported on recent projects and activities of the committee, several of which originated with Friends outside the committee. These have included workshops and activities regarding the traditions of the Quaker peace testimony, genetically modified organisms, and gun violence. The committee envisions the meetinghouse seeing increased use for such activities, both Meeting- and community-sponsored.

2013 1-16 Finance and Stewardship Committee– Jim Bell, clerk of Finance and Stewardship Committee, called attention to its report (see [attached](#)) giving trends in contributions to the Meeting, which shows regular decline in amounts received. The committee plans an outreach campaign to Friends, which could be related to our planned Capital Campaign.

2013 1-17 Youth Program Coordinator– Justin Connor, clerk of the Religious Education Committee, introduced Windy Cooler, the new Youth Programs Coordinator of the Meeting. Wendy is an attender of Adelphi Friends Meeting with children in that meeting’s youth program. She will continue to pursue her graduate studies while working with us.

2013 1-18 Spiritual State of the Meeting Report– Gray Handley, of the Ministry and Worship Committee, announced that the committee will soon begin soliciting input for the annual Spiritual State of the Meeting Report.

2013 1-19 Announcement of Events– The Clerk announced various upcoming events of interest to the community.

2013 1-20 Closing– The meeting closed at 1:45 with silent worship, 29 Friends being still present.

**Here end the Minutes and Reports for the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business,
January 13, 2013**

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Upcoming Events

Inquirer’s Class- Starting on **Monday, Jan. 28**, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, Michael Cronin will convene a weekly Inquirers Class for those interested in deepening their understanding of Quaker faith and practice. Contact Michael at mcronin943@gmail.com for more information. You are invited to any and all of the four sessions.

The BYM Camping Program will open for registration on **Feb. 1** at <http://www.bymcamps.org/> FMW offers a few modest scholarships each year to interested families in the Meeting who wish to send their child to camp. To apply, send an email not later 3/1/2013 to the Clerk of RE (Justin Connor, at justinconnor@gmail.com).

Get Equal– You are welcome to attend the bi-weekly meetings of Get Equal, a grassroots LGBT organization working towards full federal equality. Meetings will be held on **Monday, Feb. 4 and 18** from 6:30 to 9:00 PM in the Quaker House Living Room. Contact Steve Brooks at sbrooks@uab.edu for more information.

Diverse Faiths’ Understandings of Tragedy: Comprehending the Incomprehensible A Public Interfaith Dialogue sponsored by the InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington will feature speakers from various faith traditions followed by small group dialogues, **Wednesday, Feb. 6** from 7:30 to 9:00 PM at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, 1313 New York Ave., NW. For more information or to RSVP, contact 202.234.6300 or and@ifcms.org

School for Friends Parenting Classes: School for Friends is sponsoring a five-session course for parents of two to four year olds beginning **Thursday, Feb. 7** from 7:30 to 9:00 PM. The course will be taught by Jim

Clay, director of Sff. The five sessions will run February 7, 21, 28 & March 7, & 14 – there is no class on February 14. All sessions will be held in Quaker House. To enroll, call Jim at 202-328-1789 or email him at jimclay@schoolforfriends.org. The course will cost \$125 for the series; if the cost is a barrier or you are on financial aid at Sff, please let Jim know. Unfortunately there is no child care available.

Poetry As A Pathway to Place: Honoring Our Connections to the Earth This program led by Board member Hayden Mathews will explore the many dimensions of 'place' and how we can feel connected to the Earth and the Cosmos on **Saturday, Feb. 9**, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Friends Wilderness Center. For more details, check their website at www.friendswilderness.org.

Adult Study Group The discussion of Dietrich Bonhoeffer will continue on **Sunday, Feb. 10** at 9:00 AM in the North Room. Then, on **Sunday, Feb. 24**, the discussion will shift to Quakers and Quaker influences on the Revolution (e.g. Thomas Paine and the views/relationships/influences of Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Adams, etc. on and from Quakers). For more information, contact John Scales at johnkscales@aol.com

William Penn House Monthly Potluck: You are invited to attend a potluck and Quaker dialogue at 6:30 PM on **Sunday, Feb. 10**. Fr. Sean McManus will share reflections on peace and conflict in Ireland and Israel. Potluck begins at 6:30 PM, talk at 7:00 PM. William Penn House, 515 East Capitol Street SE, Washington, DC 20003 Tel: (202) 543-5560 e-mail: info@WilliamPennHouse.org Website: www.WilliamPennHouse.org

Midwinter Gathering of Friends for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgendered and Queer Concerns (Honesdale, PA) Calling Friends (Quakers) and Fellow Spiritual Travelers of all descriptions who hold lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people close to your hearts! You are enthusiastically invited to gather at the Bryn Mawr Mountain Retreat and Conference Center in the Poconos of Pennsylvania, **February 15-18, 2013**. Together we will seek spiritual growth and renewal through unprogrammed worship, learning, fellowship, and play under the care of Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC). We will be blessed by the ministry of Friend Niyonu Spann, founder of Beyond Diversity 101 workshops. For more information and to register, go to flgbtqc.quaker.org/ and click on Midwinter Gathering or contact us at (267-713-8694).

Gun Violence Threshing Session A threshing session to consider gun violence will be held on **Sunday, Feb. 17**, at rise of worship in the North Room. All are welcome. Child care will be provided.

Cultivating Compassion A weekend retreat with meditation teachers Anh-Huong Nguyen and Thu Nguyen will be held from **February 22 to February 24, 2013** in Charles Town, West Virginia. For more information, e-mail the retreat registrar at info@mpcf.org or call **703-938-1377**.

Meeting for Healing Ministry & Worship continues to offer a monthly Meeting for Worship with a concern for Healing. All are invited to come and, if they are so led, name the concern that brings them to this meeting. We will then hold these concerns and each other in the Light. The next meeting is on **Saturday, February 23**, from 10:30 to 11:30 in the Parlor.

February 23, 2013 – Saturday – Leadership and Clerkship Training at Frederick Monthly Meeting (Frederick, MD) Please come to this one-day workshop to learn how to become an effective clerk and to assume leadership positions in local Meetings, on committees, or with the Yearly Meeting. This very popular Leadership Training Seminar will again be led by Arthur Larrabee, General Secretary of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Early registration is highly recommended. Attendance is limited to 40 participants, and there are a limited number of remaining slots. For more information, contact [LauraNell Obaugh](mailto:LauraNellObaugh) or [Wil Stratton](mailto:WilStratton) (540-463-3863) To register and pay for the training online, go to www.bym-rsf.org/event_calendar.html/event/2013/02/23/clerking-and-leadership-training.

Quakers and Social Reform Historian Susan Sachs Goldman will lecture us on Quaker social reform efforts in America on **Sunday, Feb. 24** at noon in the North Room. She writes, "In numbers highly disproportionate to their membership, activists from this small religious minority have participated in and led reform efforts in all of the social controversies of our history: advocating for the respectful treatment of Native Americans, for the equality and civil rights of African Americans and women, for more enlightened and constructive treatment of many of those who are distressed and discriminated against, including the mentally ill, the poor, the imprisoned,

and the immigrant, and those ravaged by natural and manmade catastrophe in America and all around the world.”

FDS Visioning Sessio All of Friends Meeting of Washington are welcomed and urged to attend the visioning session of our First Day School program on **Sunday, Feb. 24** at noon in the Quaker House Living Room. Join the RE committee in celebrating a bright and engaging future for our FDS program, the building of greater unity between FDS and the larger Meeting community, and the eating of much pizza. Childcare provided. Please contact the coordinator of FDS, Windy Cooler, at fmwyouthprogram@gmail.com or at 202 643 0672 for more information or add an agenda item.

Friends of Camp Celso Reunion Celebration takes place **Sunday Feb. 24** from 3-5 p.m. at Sidwell Friends School Wisconsin Avenue Campus, Washington, D.C. (<http://www.sidwell.edu>). Join Celso Friends/friends at a reunion for former Camp Celso campers, parents, and staff, and a welcoming for families, Quakers and friends interested in knowing more about the Quaker summer camp on a farm in the mountains of Western North Carolina. For more information, contact Gib Barrus at gib@campcelo.com, and/or Mary Lane in Washington at (202) 320-6889 and mary8lane@gmail.com. The event is free, and will include snacks and refreshments.

March 2 – Saturday – Friendly Adult Presence (FAP) Training at Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Stony Run (Baltimore, MD) The Youth Programs Committee will be holding their training for adults who are considering being Friendly Adult Presences (FAPs) to work with our middle and/or high school youth. The training will begin at 10:00 am and continue until 4:30 pm. Hospitality may be available either Friday or Saturday night for Friends coming from a distance. For more information, including to inquire about over-night accommodation options, [contact Debbie Feldman Jones](mailto:contactDebbieFeldmanJones). (410-323-3619)

A Gathering of Crones (women over 50) will be held on **Saturday, March 9**, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. “We gather to embrace the wisdom within us and nurture our true natures. We seek to redefine retirement and acknowledge our aging process with fierceness, passion and patience.” Please bring a vegetarian dish or snack to share. Coffee and tea provided. Venue: Eden Valley (Bette’s home), 5085 Green Bridge Rd. Dayton, MD 21036 (western Howard County, near Clarksville). Register at edenvalley@verizon.net

From the Vault

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

3 October 1945

Dear Friends:

While I suggested that it would be desirable to make a re-study of the charges made to others for use of the Meeting House, I do not think it likely that higher charges can be justified. First, there is always the possibility that the hungry tax gatherers may try to assess our property, and I want us at all times to be in a position where we can surely convince any fair-minded person that when we "rent" our hall there is no profit made whatever. And second, we only "rent" the Meeting House to organizations which our Ministry and Oversight feel we are in sympathy with and are rarely in "comfortable circumstances", and are generally hard up. This building was "handed to us on a silver platter", completely mortgage-free, and let us do all we can with it, sharing its use with other organizations deemed to be deserving.

Very truly yours,
Harold B. Stabler, Treasurer

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8 October 1945

Dear Allen J. White:

Our Meeting House is our church home. I do not care to invite into my church home persons or groups who are not interested in Friends or what they stand for, but simply have an ax to grind. In fact, it would be distasteful to me to permit certain groups to use the Meeting property unless the property was subjected to some sort of mental or spiritual fumigation before it was again used for Meeting purposes. I cannot bring myself to the more liberal, and may I say even careless, attitude that the Meeting House should be open to any group which cannot meet elsewhere. Certainly we are not running a Boston Commons or a Hyde Park for public discussion.

Sincerely,
J. Austin Stone

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16 March 1978

Dear Louis Loughin:

It seems to me there must be some sort of line of demarcation between what is acceptable political, or other behavior on which the Meeting can decide whether it wishes to permit a group to use its premises. For decades political groups of various segments of the political Left have sought to employ the Meeting's resources, funds and prestige to advance their own causes, most of which have little in common with Quakerism and a few of which hold to tenants utterly opposed to Quakerism's. You will recall the group which attacked and vilified anyone in the Meeting who suggested Castro might be a Communist?

I believe that the good name of the Meeting has suffered among professionals outside the Meeting. I also fear that when the true interests of some of these groups will be some day revealed the Meeting could be gravely embarrassed.

Yrs sincerely,
Harry Sylvester

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- Hayden Wetzel, FMW Historian

Random Happenings

These are some of the things that happened at FMW during January that perhaps slipped your notice:

A group gathered on the first day of the year to consider the **Peace Testimony** and asked, *What is the Peace Testimony's challenge to me?* Here are a few of their answers:

- To ALLOW not control (Light, sense of Christ, things that make me uncomfortable)
- To integrate the spirit of the testimony into the actions of my daily life and to disarm my heart so that this can be done
- To refrain from responding in anger to the people in my life
- To increase the world's well-being by giving more than I take

Friends are welcome to send additional responses to the Peace & Social Concerns Committee at fmwpsc@gmail.com

A member who prefers to remain anonymous donated several beautiful, plain, nearly indestructible **sets of china** to the FMW kitchen. We packed up the old, chipped, worn china, and gave these boxes to Mary Campbell,

who drove them over to the refugee center where she works with people “who come to this country with nothing,” she says. They were gone within an hour, she reports.

After only three (or more?) years of discernment, the IT Committee has decided to **replace the phones** with ones that do not crackle. Staff is so grateful for the promised phones and their spiffy bells and whistles, which include up-to-date things like voicemail boxes for the admin secretary, property manager, and bookkeeper. The phone installation process is still under discernment; stay tuned.

This has been a good month for “**socialist food**,” the kind that appears for one occasion and then gets redistributed. For example, Peace & Social Concerns hosted a dinner given by the Organic Consumers Association, feeding 80 people food that was Monsanto-free and yummy. The leftover pumpkin cakes fed FMW during the next hospitality hour, and were polished off by the IT committee the following day. Thanks, P&SC!

This was also a month for **inter-Meeting cooperation**. The Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Committee, which consists of Friends from both FMW and Bethesda Friends Meeting, put on a fundraising lunch in honor of the late Barbara Nnoka. There, FMW member Faith Williams—who transferred here from Bethesda Friends Meeting—got roped into volunteering to join the committee, tying the two ends together.

Also, FMW Member Malachy Kilbride organized a large demonstration outside the CIA in January for friends from many faiths/non faiths. When the demonstration ended, the participants processed over to Langley Hill Friends Meeting, where Laurie Wilner (otherwise known as the FMW Bookkeeper) had organized a delicious meal. Participants responded with gratitude, singing “Tis a Gift to be Simple.”

This month, the young Friends in First Day School read a very instructive book entitled **Peaceful Piggy Meditation**, which featured peaceful piggies sitting “every day, feeling their breath go in and out until their minds calmed down.” Being peaceful, they said, “makes it easier to accept things that happen and stop wishing for things to be different. When you’re peaceful, you can be truly fearless!...It’s easier to face the truth about yourself, and it’s easier to stand up to others.” A copy of this nicely illustrated book may be found in the Children’s Library.

Special thanks this month to Eileen Hanlon, who gathered F/friends to carry the FMW banner in the March on Washington for Gun Control; to Bob Meehan, who signed more than 260 contribution acknowledgement letters in a single morning; to Pam Callard, who helped to stuff, seal, and stamp said letters—with a sprained wrist; to Marcia Reecer, for transforming an unpromising paragraph into an informative one for the BYM Interchange; to Ken Orvis, for negotiating between freezing occupants and heating experts in Quaker House over the holidays; to Faith Williams, for taking the forlorn, unwanted, and unclaimed items from both the Children’s Library and the Lost and Found to donate to her favorite thrift store; to Ron Washington, for cleaning the dishwasher and microwave to a nearly new shine; to the worshippers at the Meeting for Healing who chose to hold all anonymous sufferers at FMW in the Light; and to the seven truly fabulous FMW women who spent a year planning (and eating untold amounts of Cosi Signature Salad) to bring about the BYM Women’s Retreat in January. They are Mary Campbell, Debby Churchman, Robinne Gray, Jean Harman, Martha Solt, and Faith Williams. The theme of the retreat—Play, Nap, Feast—reflected well and accurately on the sense of spiritual refreshment at FMW.

