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## FMW Newsletter, January 2017

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### Friends Meeting of Washington

#### Minutes

#### Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

December 2016

#### Queries

Are you concerned for responsible use of natural resources and their nurture for future generations? Do you try to avoid wasteful consumption and pollution? Do you seek to preserve the beauty and balance of God's world?

## **Advices**

Population growth and technological abuses are threatening the planet. Millions of people are malnourished or starving, unable to obtain food, homeless. Our faith that there is that of God in every person calls us to concern over this tragic situation. Friends are advised to set the example in living simply so that others may have the wherewithal to live. We are called also to work for public policy aimed toward conserving the world's resources on one hand and sharing them fairly among all God's children on the other. - Baltimore Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice*

If it is right that we should show love and compassion for people, surely it is right that we should extend our love and compassion to animals, who can feel fear and experience pain in much the same way as humans. They may not be able to speak, but we can certainly see fear in their eyes and demeanour. I feel that being a vegetarian is a natural progression from being a pacifist and a Quaker. - Vera Haley, 1988

## **Voices**

The love of God, unutterable and perfect, flows into a pure soul the way light rushes into a transparent object. The more love we receive, the more love we shine forth; so that, as we grow clear and open, the more complete the joy of loving is. And the more souls who resonate together, the greater the intensity of their love, for, mirror-like, each soul reflects the other.

- Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*

**2016/12-1 Welcome of Visitors** Meeting for Business opened at 12:15 pm with 28 Friends present. Friends welcomed Valerie Graff and Eleanor Graff, Jean Davidson, Natilie Wowk, George Schmidt, Candy Miller, and Victoria Wellborn as a first time attenders to our Meeting for Business.

## **2016/12-2 Clerk's Report**

- The Shoebox Project came off very well this year with no major hiccups. The approximately 50 people on Saturday and 100 people on Sunday (with overlap) all had a good time. We prepared, wrapped and distributed 1,008 gift boxes this year, 600 men's, 204 women's and 204 children's boxes.

The boxes were distributed at 11 shelters across DC. The smallest is Dorothy Day Catholic Worker's House which received 20 men's boxes. The largest was the 801 East shelter on the campus of St. Elizabeths which received 380 men's boxes.

The Hunger and Homeless Taskforce will be requesting feedback from the shelters on how the recipients like the items that we're including and whether we might make adjustments for next year.

At 1,008 boxes, we're at about half of our peak of a number of years ago. This is mainly due to changes in how our main source of funding, the staff at the World Bank, can be solicited. We would be able to increase the number of boxes if alternative fundraising possibilities were identified. April 30<sup>th</sup> we will have a fundraising lunch. Come with a full wallet and empty belly. Leave with a full belly and empty wallet.

- For many, the holiday season is a reminder of loved ones lost. It can be an unbearably lonely few months. Please join Liz Pomerleau and other members with hospice training for a Blue Christmas meeting for worship this evening in the parlor to honor grief in this holy season. Light refreshments to follow.
- Plans for our Christmas Eve potluck and worship are proceeding apace but help is still needed in the kitchen; please notify office if you can pitch in. Doors open at 5:00, dinner at 6:00, worship at 7:00.
- Plans for the Women's March are also proceeding nicely. We have a couple of dozen people signed up to come already and another two dozen in the wings. Four extremely wonderful Friends have volunteered to stay overnight. We need cooks and kitchen help, as well as people to gather information and help with the planning. Contact Steve Coleman or Elaine Wilson if you'd like to help.
- There is a private Facebook page called Quaker Uprising. They are holding the Electoral College in the Light, and discussing other ways to support peace and social justice. To join the Facebook page contact Meg Greene at [margaretegreene@gmail.com](mailto:margaretegreene@gmail.com).
- In late November, FMW answered a late call to convene a meeting with folks from the Standing Rock reservation to tell us about their efforts to protect their water from the Dakota Access Pipeline. The talk was quite meaningful and well-received—we literally ran out of chairs trying to seat everyone in the Assembly Room—and those gathered included Friends from DC and Maryland Meetings, our neighbors from the Dupont Circle Civic Association, and others who read our Facebook event page. We were able to read our Minute in support of the water protectors and present a copy of it to Royce Gay of the Oglala Sioux. Five days later, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers put a temporary stop to the permit and recommended finding another route for this pipeline. The water protectors are still monitoring the situation to be sure that the pipeline company obeys the order. The struggle continues.
- The Religious Education committee is looking for a few more people to serve in First Day School. Contact either Michael Beer or Anita Drever.

- If you plan to donate this year to Friends Meeting of Washington and have not already done so, please get your check or online donation in during the next week to be sure that it counts as a December donation. You can donate by credit card, online at our donation page, or via check.
- A Friend announced that our member Charmaine Gilbreath is recovering from cancer surgery. We are holding her in the Light.

### **2016/12-3 Capital Campaign update**

Mark Haskell, member of the Capital Campaign Committee, said the committee wants more voices in the discussion. So they will be reaching out to everyone in the community before the end of the year and before they finalize the construction. We will need to go to banks and therefore we need to show that the entire community supports this project without taking from the Meeting needs in general.

### **Major items**

#### **2016/12-4 Young Adult Friends Annual Report**

Kate Oberg, convener of Young Adult Friends, presented their annual report, a copy of which it attached. The report reflects her observations of the community as it stands today. There are 258 members on the listserve but many of them are not active. Many YAF are active in Meeting committees. Most of these persons are men because they are the people most active in the Meeting. There were a number of challenges in the last year including the vestiges of the individual who had harassed women. Regardless of our challenges the future is bright. Adversity can bring communities together and she is hopeful that this is the case with Young Adult Friends.

A Friend wants to express his gratitude with how YAF's have stepped up to leadership in the meeting.

A Friend expressed gratitude to Kate's leadership in a difficult time.

Friends ACCEPTED the report.

#### **2016/12-5 Annual Report from AFSC**

Jean Meyer-Capps, meeting liaison to AFSC, presented her annual report. She noted that 2017 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASFC which the Meeting should consider ways to celebrate. AFSC donated their records on how Friends helped Jews escape in WWII to the Holocaust Museum. She hopes we can have a display and talk about these papers. AFSC sent a delegation to Standing

Rock, Black Lives Matter, and so many of the activities that are on the forefront at this time. She recommends their Webpage.

She noted that they consist of regional and national offices.

Friends support her idea of bringing a person from the Holocaust Museum so she will take it to the Peace and Social Concerns Committee to work out logistics.

Friends ACCEPTED her report.

### **2016/12-6 Annual Report from FCNL**

Elaine Wilson, Meeting liaison with FCNL, presented her annual report, a copy of which is attached. The national lobby day this year was on mass incarceration. The first issue in the New Year is the Affordable Care Act. We need to oppose religious registry. For these and other issues, go to their website.

We look to FCNL for leadership in these trying times and they provide it. We must work with them and make sure others know about them.

A Friend noted that the house that FCNL is working on was given to them from Betty Morris, a longtime member of the meeting and that she doesn't seem to get credit for it. The clerk will write a letter to enquire about it.

Friends ACCEPTED the report.

### **2016/12-7 Peace and Social Concerns Committee**

Elaine Wilson, member of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, asked about rotating banners. We now have "Black Lives Matter Banner." They proposed FCNL's banner: "#Lovethyneighbor No Exceptions" until February 1<sup>st</sup>.

Friends APPROVED placing the banner.

The committee reported it was working with Quaker Uprising to do trainings and provide support for the January 21 weekend.

### **2016/12-8 Membership Committee**

Janet Dinsmore, clerk of Membership Committee, presented the application of Chris Wickham for membership for its first reading. Joe Izzo, member of the committee, read the letter: Chris was a student at Swarthmore and worked at the Friends Historical Library. Exposure to the actions inspired him to “give Quakerism a try.” After attending FMW meeting he felt that he had always been a Quaker, feeling at home in the silence of the Meeting. He now works with prison reentry organizations in DC. He has already served on a committee. At times he has felt frustrated by Friends’ slowness and lack of communication between the different age groups. But he wished to join to be one of the voices.

The application for membership will be held over for one month as is our custom.

The following people were recommended for removal from membership.

Amy Marie Babcock

Timothy Felton

Brian Fifield

Karen Garlick

Barbara Gates

Mary Goepfert

Marjorie Grace

Philip Hazelton

Sarah Hoadly

Christopher and Timothy Hopkins

Juana Jenkins

Sarah Johnston

E. Oliver Jones

Kimble Kokich

Ellen Kraus

Jason, Norman & William Lee

Eric Lynn

Joan McCandlish

Winthrop Morgan

Lawrence Newcomb

Celia Louise Newcomb

Charlotte Oldham-Moore

Robert Rouse

Donna Shor

Barbara Smith

Friends asked membership to make additional queries about Dana Harrison and Mary Huggens Napier who were also recommended for removal.

A Friend asked if we ask why people leave? A member of the committee said that they tried to reach out to the members and for associate members reach out to their parents. But few responded. This is a transient community.

A Friend noted long as people who stay on the rolls, memberships are part of our apportionment for BYM. A Friend clarified that the apportionment is based only on contributing families.

A Friend noted that we keep people on for years after they have left and we should not be so delicate. We should celebrate the committee's work.

Friends APPROVED the removal of the Friends.

### **2016/12-9 Finance and Stewardship**

Jim Bell, clerk of Finance and Stewardship, made the Fifth month financial review presentation. He noted that we are currently not meeting our goals for this year of \$190,000 but are closer to \$180,000. This may result in our no longer being able to support outside organizations fully and this will impact the 2018 budget. He urged Friends to look into their hearts to see where they could contribute. Thanks to those who have contributed.

A Friend asked when the committee requests for budgets are due. The process is starting in January.

### **2016/12-10 Search Committee nominations**

Meg Greene, clerk of the Search Committee made the following nominations to the Nominating Committee.

Martha Solt, member, until 2019

Byron Sandford, member, until 2019

Friends APPROVED the nominations.

### **2016/12-11 Nominating Committee annual report**

Todd Harvey, clerk of Nominating Committee set forth the nominations for the Meeting for the next year a copy of which is attached.

He noted these 57 slots will join 170 slots but only with approximately 100 people. We need to bring more people into the system. In the next year we will have a committee fair in February, spotlight committees on the list serve and a physical presence in the assembly room. We still need to identify two communities that are underrepresented in committees: YAF and the young families.

Finally they will be looking at the size and number and function of committees to look for a better balance and focus and a deeper commitment to the Meeting. Others are encouraged to be part of this discussion.

A Friend noted that the committee structure is more complicated than most Meetings including the Taskforces. She also reminded the Membership Committee must make clear at the process of joining the Meeting that membership includes participating in committees.

A Friend noted that having the committee fair in the fall could be a better time for people to meet committees for a January to December position. She also noted that YAF are well represented on the committees. She recommended sending out a call for specific needs.

Friends APPROVED the nominations except Greg Robb (a) for member and clerk of Ministry and Worship and Bill Strein (a) for clerk of Personnel Committee and Mark Kawar (a) for Records and Handbook which were held over.

### **Other business**

#### **2016/12-12**

#### **Property Committee –**

Merry Pearlstein and Brian Lutenegger, co-clerks of Property Committee, reported on the first period of the implementation of the trial alcohol policy, a copy of which is attached.

There has been only one event where alcohol was served and it went well. Meantime, we have provided space for Al-Anon for a nominal fee with the rest being paid for with the rental fees from



those who serve alcohol.

A Friend noted that apparently some alcohol was left behind. The policy should make clear that all alcohol must be removed from the premises at the end of the event.

It is already part of the policy. There needs to be follow-up to ensure compliance.

Friends wish to express their gratitude for the clerks and recording clerk for their service for the past few years.

Friends APPROVED the minutes as improved.

The Meeting closed at 2:15 PM with approximately 17 persons in attendance to reconvene as Way opens on January 8, 2017.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

FCNL report December 18, 2016

FCNL continues to be very active. They are fully staffed: so much so that finding space for volunteers to do any work is a challenge as every desk is filled!

They are continuing with business as usual lobbying congress on a range of issues.

December 10, Lobby Day, Friends around the country lobbied their Congress people in their states on the issue of Mass Incarceration. FCNL is still calling for Friends to write or call their congress people on this.

The Affordable Care Act: Amelia Kegan is urging Friends to contact their senators and congress people right away, as this is the first issue that will be brought before Congress in the New Year. Urge members to oppose repeal without simultaneously enacting a responsible and comprehensive replacement. Oppose Creation of a Religious Registry: Yasmine Taeb urges us to write to congress people opposing the creation of such a registry.

Standing Rock: On November 30 and Dec 1 Royce Gay of the Oglala Lakota Sioux travelled to DC and spoke to a packed house at Friends Meeting of Washington and Langley Hill Virginia Meeting respectively.

FCNL is still calling for Friends to oppose militarized policing at Standing Rock despite the success in persuading the Government to reroute the proposed pipeline.

At this difficult time when we are all wondering what we can do to effect change or prevent rollbacks of important policies we can turn to FCNL as a place to guide our effort. They make lobbying our congress people accessible to the regular person. Spread the word to your friends and family.

The capital campaign is in its public phase and events are happening around the country to further this effort: In January, Diane is travelling to Tampa FL and Austin TX. In February, she is in San Francisco and in March Albuquerque NM. Enough money has already been raised to begin the work of renovating the building at 205 C Street that will enlarge the FCNL campus. Development Staff report to me that although the final goal has not been reached that the campaign is doing well.

## **Annual Report of**

### **Young Adult Friends**

**by its convener, Kate Oberg**

#### **Leadership and Communication**

At the beginning of last fiscal year, Michael Huffington and Kate Oberg were conveners of YAF. Michael Huffington resigned in late summer 2016, leaving Kate Oberg as the sole convener of YAF.

In terms of outreach YAFS have maintained the Meetup.com site. Kate Oberg thinks it is a worthwhile endeavor to have as those interested in Quakerism can easily find the YAFS and the meeting as a whole. Many people have found YAFS this way, and it lets all know about Friends Meeting of Washington, not just people who identify as “young.”

The YAF listserv has continued to provide a forum for YAFs to convene outside of the meeting. The listserv has been used to disseminate information and coordinate in-person gatherings. There are currently 258 members of the YAF listserv. This is only 10 more than the previous year, partly because of Kate Oberg’s efforts to be responsive to removal requests and also contact members who may not be active or consider themselves YAFs still. Debby Churchman has offered to take over this task, and this offer may be taken up by Kate! Kate Oberg is also open to exploring new listserv providers as this one is not easily used by many university students.

#### **Young Adult Friends and the wider meeting**

Many YAFs have been active in Meeting wide events and serving on committees. Of Young Adult Friends that identify with the YAF group (rather than people that do not attend Young Adult Friends events even if they are in the typical age group) these have include: Lydia Pecker (Personal Aid), Brian Lutenege & Justin Kwong, (Property), Chris Wickham (Records & Handbook), Carl Johnson (Religious Education), David Beavers (Capital Campaign Committee), Matt Cooper (Information Technology Committee) as well as others not named. Kate Oberg is on the Scholarship committee for Langley Hill Friends Meeting, and Josh Wilson is a staff member at William Penn House. Of YAFS active during July 2015-June 2016 Kate Oberg and Lydia Pecker are possibly the only women to be on a committee, reflecting the gender ratio of Young Adult Friends at this time, rather than any bias on the part of nominating committee.

#### **Social and Spiritual Activities**

The Young Adult Friends continue to meet at least monthly basis for a shared meal. Friends in Petworth, Lydia Pecker and Carl Johnson, shared their home on a regular basis for a continued series of YAF social events, the Saucy Pasta Social, until their move in summer 2016. Rebecca Nelson Jacobs has stepped into the gap, so the sauce pasta social night is continuing.

Social events have included a visit to the Renaissance fair, ice skating, watching the DC high heel race, game nights, a backyard fire with s'mores, a criminal justice discussion, caroling, zoo lights, and tubing.

Each YAF event attracts 4-10 Friends although it is very varied who shows up. Many young Friends attend Meeting for Worship on a regular basis and in that, Kate Oberg thinks YAF has a very strong representation especially when including the different times and locations.

Gene Throwe continues to act as chaplain at American University.

### **Budget Use**

The Young Adult Friends spent only \$873 this year out of \$1075 this year. YAFS spent money on outreach and awareness building of Young Adult Friends (~\$180 - \$5 over budget) through meetup.com. YAFS spent \$394 (\$6 under budget) on scholarships for members (no conveners were among this number) to go to Quaker conferences and events, and in one case a prisons workshop. Instead of spending money on a camping trip this year, YAFS spent money on partial or full subsidies for YAFs to engage in two recreational events – one going ice skating, and the other going tubing (For a total of \$278.50 - \$28.50 over budget). Additionally, in the recreation category, YAFS spent \$21.10 on extra financial help for simple meals that was originally not factored into the approved budget. YAFS had thought to spend the remainder on a scholarship but got a bit confused. YAFS did not spend the money allocated for literature/pamphlets (\$100) or help for Capital Pride although members did attend in support. With the fall a little disorganized, YAFS also did not bring a speaker as originally planned, so the \$150 allocated for a speaker was also not spent. Of the \$250 in the categories originally planned but not engaged in, approximately \$48 was spent on other categories.

### **Challenges and the future**

Kate believes that the period from July 2015 to August 2016 has been a rough one for Young Adult Friends. Many members learned for the first time of systematic and extensive harassment of female members of the YAF community by an individual YAF. While the events were described in the previous report, the effects are still being felt. Conversations and opportunities have taken place to facilitate healing and learning, yet with spotty attendance by many, of all genders people have “voted with their feet”. FMW's YAF group has many more male identified members than female-identified cisgender members and the numbers of active members is smaller.

Members are less active in Young Adult Friends, usually drifting away or moving away because of professional opportunities. For professional opportunities, YAFS who have left include Anna Jo and Dave Sydlik, as well as Lydia Pecker and Carl Johnson.

Kate believes that YAFS hope that in the future a YAF core group will re-emerge. Already new friendships are forming, Kate is happy to see. The YAF listserv welcomes many new YAFs, practically every week.

Kate asks that larger meeting at this time to be gentle. She believes that most Young Adult Friends are all trying to be centered, contributing participants in the life of Friends Meeting of Washington. The Friends Meeting of Washington Community is not a small one. Most YAFS will take a while to get to know members and regular attenders. At first, to many, Friends Meeting of Washington is a sea of faces. The smaller YAF community and listserv is an important part of that journey for many Quakers throughout the years. Kate Oberg hopes that the large meeting will interact with YAF understanding that YAF members are adults doing their very best, making rational decisions, and that having this community facilitates Quaker development. Kate Oberg has noticed that for her personally, she is approached often with requests, demands, and approaches that fail to take this into account and induce guilt on the part of the receiver. In other instances, she has noticed insults directed at herself or others, even whole groups, within YAF.

These ungentle approaches have the opposite effect of what is intended and bring out reactions that affect others not acting in this way. She asks for FMW members and attenders to be gentle, to provide opportunities, not chores. Provide guidance with love, not the need to be 'right'. Listen first. Communicate with careful thought and consideration for tone. If a request is refused, it may have a logical reason for being refused. Teach by example.

Regardless of current challenges the future for YAF is bright. Recent events have drawn many to take more direct action with the larger meeting and this is very positive sign. Adversity can bring communities together and Kate Oberg is hopeful this is the case for Friends Meeting of Washington's Young Adult Friends.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Oberg

## **FMW Property Committee**

### **First Report on Implementation of the Revised Alcohol Policy**

Friends may recall that at its July, 2016 Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business the Meeting approved a one-year trial period in which beer and wine could be served in limited circumstances with the prior approval of the Meeting office.

We are pleased to report that the first event at which alcohol was served, a fund raiser for the Snow Leopard Trust, was held in good order in the Quaker House Living Room on November 7, 2016. The Friendly Office Presence reported, "Nice group, nice caterer, no damage, no trouble." The event did underscore the need to enforce closing times as happy guests lingered for some time after the hour the event was scheduled to end.

The Property Committee has been working to update our website and rewrite space use and related agreements to reflect the altered policy. As requested by Friends, the agreement for events involving alcohol includes the following language: *"Please note that, In keeping with our values, FMW will apply a portion of your event rental fee to assist organizations that aim to mitigate the effects of alcohol abuse in our society."*

### **FMW Nominating Committee, 2017 slate of committee nominations**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Term ending</b>
<b>Officers of the Meeting</b>			
Presiding Clerk	Gene Throwe (m)		2017
Alternate Clerk	Grant Thompson (m)		2017
Recording Clerk	Betsy Bramon (a)	Exception requested 11 mo.; membership in	2017

		process	
Financial Coordinator	Edwin Husted (m)		2017
Librarian	Michael North (m)		2017
Historian	Hayden Wetzel (m)		2017
<b>Standing Committees</b>			
Child Safety	Nicole Else-Quest (a)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Child Safety (clerk)	Virginia Avanesyan (m)	Clerk	2017
Finance & Stewardship	F.T. Clark (a)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Finance & Stewardship	Jim Bell (m)	Clerk	2017
Finance & Stewardship	Nate Vernon (a)	resignation	---
Healing & Reconciliation	Kenneth Orvis (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Healing & Reconciliation	Kenneth Orvis (m)	Co-clerk	2017
Healing & Reconciliation	Zoe Plaughner (m)	Co-clerk	2017
Hospitality	Gregory Robb (a)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Hospitality	Margot Greenlee (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Hospitality	Kate Steger (a)	Co-clerk	2017
Hospitality	Susan Griffin (m)	Co-clerk	2017

Hospitality	Malachy Kilbride (m)	resignation	---
Library	Faith Williams (m)	clerk	2017
Library	Tom Yonker (a)	resignation	---
Library	David Shive (a)	resignation	---
Library	Sammi Gaines (a)	resignation	---
Marriage & Family Relations	James Bell (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Marriage & Family Relations	Gray Handley (m)	clerk	2019
Membership	Janet Dinsmore (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Membership	Janet Dinsmore (m)	Clerk	2017
Membership	Marcia Reecer (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Membership	Byron Sanford (m)	resignation	
Ministry & Worship	Gregory Robb (a)	Clerk; requesting exception; membership in process	2017
Ministry & Worship	Gene Throwe (m)	Resignation	
Ministry & Worship	Bill Foskett (m)		2019
Peace & Social Concerns	Michael Duval (a)	Clerk	2017
Peace & Social Concerns	Susan Meehan (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019

Peace & Social Concerns	Elaine Wilson (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Peace & Social Concerns	Victor Freeman (a)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Peace & Social Concerns	Rashid Darden (a)		2019
Personal Aid	Emilie Schmeidler	clerk	2017
Personal Aid	Mary Melchior (m)		2019
Personnel	Bill Strein (a)	Clerk; requesting exception	2017
Property	Brian Lutenegger (a)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Property	Brian Lutenegger (a)	Co-clerk	2017
Property	Merry Pearlstein (m)	Co-clerk	2017
Records & Handbook	Beth Cogswell (m)	2nd term	2019
Records & Handbook	Beth Cogswell (m)	Clerk	2017
Records & Handbook	Mark Kavar (a)	Requesting exception	2019
Religious Education	Michael Beer (m)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Religious Education	Nicole Else-Quest (a)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2019
Religious Education	Anita Drever (m)	Clerk	2017

<b>Special Committees</b>			
Garden	Mark Haskell (m)	Clerk	2017
Mary Jane Simpson fund	Anne Kendall (m)	Clerk	2017
Mary Walcott-Lucy fund	Bruce Kellogg (m)	Clerk	2017
Capital Campaign	Merry Pearlstein (m)		
Capital Campaign	Neil Froemming (m)		
Capital Campaign	Susan Griffin (m)	Clerk	
<b>Representatives to Other Organizations</b>			
FCNL	Elaine Wilson (m)		2017
Right Sharing of World Resources	Karen Grisez (m)		2017
DC Council of Churches	Susan Meehan (m)		2017

(This ends the minutes & reports from the Meeting for Business, 12.2016)

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Jan. 4: Help make sandwiches for our vulnerable neighbors! **Grate Patrol** convenes at 5:00 pm in the Assembly Room. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at [sbrooks@uab.edu](mailto:sbrooks@uab.edu)

Jan. 7: Help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors at **So Others Might Eat**, starting at 6:15 a.m. The kitchen is at 70 “O” St. NW, adjacent to a parking lot. For more information and to sign up, contact Betsy Bramon at [betsy.bramon@gmail.com](mailto:betsy.bramon@gmail.com)



Jan. 9: At 7:00 PM at the Bethesda Library, Bethesda Friends Meeting presents a free **Parenting Workshop: Preventing and Responding to Bullying**. Join us for this interactive, responsive conversation and leave with strategies for having discussions with children and teens. The leaders are Jen Cort and Brooke Carroll – educational consultants, clinicians, former school administrators, and parents of middle and high school students. [www.jencort.com](http://www.jencort.com) and [www.bcarrollconsulting.com](http://www.bcarrollconsulting.com)

January 15 - **BYM Camps Registration Opens for Returning Campers-Catoctin, Opequon, Shiloh, and Teen Adventure Quaker Camps** [For full information about BYM Camps, see their website](#)

Jan. 21: **Women's March on Washington**- FMW will be hosting people who are coming to participate in this march. Please help! We need folks to stay in the Meeting House, or shop, or cook, or get the word out. If you know of individuals/groups coming who need housing, have them contact [admin@quakersdc.org](mailto:admin@quakersdc.org).

Jan. 27 to 29: **BYM Women's Retreat** at the Pearlstone Conference Center in Reisterstown MD. The theme is Quaker Wisdom: Echoes in Our Souls. Registration is now open: <https://bym-rsf1-org.presencehost.net/events/ymevents/women17.html> Please register by December 15.

## Thinking About Race

“If whiteness is no longer the default and is to be treated as an identity (even, soon, a ‘minority’), then perhaps it is time white people considered the disadvantages of being a race. The next time a white man bombs an abortion clinic or goes on a shooting rampage on a college campus, white people might have to be lectured on religious tolerance and called upon to denounce the violent extremists in their midst. The opioid epidemic in today’s white communities could be treated the way we once treated the crack epidemic in black ones; not as a failure of the government to take care of its people but as a failure of the race. The fact that this has not happened, nor is it likely to, only serves as evidence that white Americans can still escape race.” - From “The Identity Politics of Whiteness,” by Laila Lalami, author of *The Moor’s Account*, in *The New York Times Magazine*, November 27, 2016.

## What Would God Have Us Do In This Historic Moment?

Friends,

Honesty, integrity, equality, justice, community, diversity, peace, nonviolence, civic and social responsibility, and care for the earth – these are some of the fundamental values that we Friends have discovered together through our direct experience of God. They stem from our collective discovery that there is that of God in all people. They are key elements in our vision of the Peaceable Kingdom.

So, what would Love have us do when the highest political office in the land is occupied by a president who shows so little care for the core values by which we Friends have lived and testified for centuries? What are we called to do in relationship with the millions of people who were attracted to his message and supported him? What would God have us do to heal the deep wounds and bridge the wide chasms that now divide our communities and nation?

It has never been Friends' purpose to impose our values on others through edicts or coercion. Rather, we have sought to change hearts and minds by stirring and awakening the Spirit within. We seek faithfully to listen for and follow God's leading,... to listen for and answer that of God in all people,... to let our lives speak (not just our words) for what we believe,... to behold that we are one in the Spirit,... and to be willing to sacrifice and suffer for what we believe.

Friends have faced seemingly insurmountable challenges many times before. Since the very beginning of Friends' experiment with Truth, we have spoken Truth to power and willingly accepted the consequences. Friends have struggled for religious freedom, to reform prisons, to resist participation in war, to end slavery, and to secure voting rights for women and People of Color. We have resisted and endured violent revolutions, civil wars, world wars, and (thus far) the nuclear arms race. Friends before us endured horrendous, scary, violent times, when the future must have looked incredibly bleak and uncertain.

Is this political moment any different? I believe the perils we face today as a people and as a nation are greater than any we have faced before. The fissures run deep, and we are entering a time when the people taking power and their supporters seem intent to make them even deeper and wider. Our fundamental capacities for self-governance, civil discourse, and collectively discerning the common good have been sorely weakened. Our political system is broken and dysfunctional at a time when national and global crises are mounting. What future do we have as a people if we cannot respect one another, listen to one another, recognize and celebrate our differences, learn from one another, seek truth together, challenge and disagree with one another, trust one another, and then discern our way forward together through mutually agreed upon political institutions and processes?

So, what do we Friends do? God is not partisan. In the Spirit, we are all united. We are called to love our neighbors as ourselves – and, especially, to love our enemies.

We do what we always do...We gather in the Spirit...We faithfully listen for and follow God's leading...We listen for and answer that of God in all people...We let our lives speak (not just our words) for what we believe...We recognize that we are one in the Spirit...We willingly sacrifice and suffer for what we believe...We speak Truth to power...We proceed in the Light with love, faith, and hope.

...And then we do more...We dig deeper into our souls than we ever have before...We support one another...We offer sanctuary and refuge to those in need and fear...We seek out and engage with those with whom we disagree...We show love and kindness for all...We reach out and unite with others in the Spirit as we never have before...We offer our world a more compelling and powerful vision: the Peaceable Kingdom here and now.

- Ned Stowe, General Secretary, Baltimore Yearly Meeting



**How about instead of saying "Happy Holidays" we say**



**"Workers of the world unite"**



*"Can I call you back, Ed? I'm in the moment here."*



