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FMW Newsletter - January 2021

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MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP ~ ALL ARE WELCOME

- **Sundays: 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.**
- **Tuesdays: 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.**

- **Fridays: 12:00 noon**
- **Monthly Meeting for Business: 12:15 p.m. Sunday, January 10 (2nd Sunday)**

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

1st Month Query: Meetings for Worship

Are meetings for worship held in expectant waiting for Divine guidance? Are Friends encouraged to share spiritual insights? Are special gifts of ministry recognized and encouraged?

Do you come to meeting with heart and mind prepared? Are you careful not to disturb the spirit of the meeting by late arrival or in other ways? (See: [Meeting for Worship; Vocal Ministry](#))

Source: [BYM Faith & Practice, Part II The Queries](#)

News

FMW Members: “We Declare: Black Lives Matter”

The following letter to the editor appeared in the Washington Post on December 21, 2020:

We appreciated the Rev. William H. Lamar IV’s call to action after white supremacists burned his congregation’s Black Lives Matter banner [“Will America finally abandon its racist myth?” op-ed, Dec. 16]. Like many faith communities in D.C., our Quaker meeting also displays a Black Lives Matter sign. Ours asks, “How does your life help end racial injustice?” It has been pulled, graffitied, stabbed and otherwise desecrated; we’ve had to replace it a number of times.

All of the faith congregations we know with similar signs have experienced such attacks — not by outsiders coming to D.C. to support their cause, but by local folks. None of the other banners we’ve hung on our fence has suffered such a fate. Racism is alive and active in our city. We stand with Metropolitan AME in declaring that Black Lives do Matter.

Debby Churchman, Barbara Briggs, and Elaine Wilson, Washington
The writers are members of the Friends Meeting of Washington.

Four Women Share Journeys of Trauma and Empowerment

Grimaldi-Francesca Sanchez overcame homelessness and discrimination, as a gay Black man, and as a trans woman. Now she advocates for equality for women and trans people of color as founder/director of Helping Every Rose Bloom. **J’Mia Edwards** watched her daughter restrained, misdiagnosed and overmedicated--and learned how to navigate the system to fight for herself and her children. Now she helps others with HIV/AIDs to win housing, healthcare and mental health assistance for themselves and their families. **Rebecca Hamilton** lived through sexual abuse, homelessness, domestic violence, prostitution, sex trafficking and incarceration. She believes that our traumas should not dictate our futures, and is working to open a nonprofit business for returning citizens. **Kader Gümüş** a proud mother of two, channeled her own experience of isolation and severe abuse to help others as immigrant community representative on Fairfax County’s Council to End Domestic Violence (CEDV)

On December 20 these four brave women shared their stories with FMW friends in a virtual event initiated and moderated by Joe D’Antonio and sponsored by FMW’s Committee on Peace & Social Concerns. The women are part of an extraordinary program organized by **Community Family Life Services (CFLS)** that trains women directly impacted by trauma to speak publicly about

their experiences in order to drive positive change. Their presentations were fresh, powerful, incredibly moving, and their final step to becoming full members of CFLS's Speakers Bureau. FMW Committee on Peace and Social Concerns members hope that this will be the beginning for a growing relationship with CFLS and its new speaker-leaders. For more information on CFLS and its Speakers Bureau, contact **Joe D'Antonio**, jdantonio@cflsdc.org.

Shoebox Project Overcomes Obstacles, Delivers 1,000 Awesome Gifts to Homeless Men, Women and Kids in DC Shelters

This year, instead of 1,000 shoeboxes, it was 1,000 useful, colorful knapsacks, stuffed with warm hats, gloves, socks, books and toys for the children (as always)--plus this year's most needed items: washable face masks and hand sanitizer. The Shoebox Team's organization and creativity overcame all odds--with boxes containing everything needed to assemble gifts at home or in socially distanced pods in FMW's Assembly Room.

[PHOTO of Lucia, Oliver and Jorge Sanchez Norman assembled 24 kids gifts]

Action & Giving Opportunities

Please support our DC neighbors in need!

As the pandemic winds on, the number of DC residents who can't feed themselves and their families is on the rise. Your donations of funds, shelf-stable foods--and volunteer time--can provide meals for families who would otherwise go hungry. Here are 3 DC organizations that need our support:

- **AsylumWorks housed at FMW** needs groceries and gift cards to support their clients. <https://asylumworks.org/donate/>. For more info, contact: community@asylumworks.org
- **Martha's Table:** <https://marthastable.org/give/in-kind-donations/> (click the Food tab at the top)
- **Capital Area Food Bank:** <https://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/how-to-help/donate-food/>

Kewesa: Kenyan Crafts and Clean Water Access

Friend S. Jean Smith's Kenyan Crafts sale has been a holiday institution at FMW--until this pandemic year. Jean Smith and her organization, **Kuwesa** (which means "can do" or "Si, se puede!"), continue the important work of helping Kenyan AIDS widows support their families, and providing villages with locally produced water filtration systems that save women hours every day and save the lives of young children. Right now, Jean is on her annual visit to the U.S., mostly confined to her daughter's apartment in New York. Last Sunday she joined FMW's 10:30 worship and--by luck--one of our small group breakout sessions. No crafts sale in FMW's Assembly room this year, but **friends can still buy crafts and donate to support Jean Smith's work here!** Letter from Jean:

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. I first visited Kenya in 2002 and was appalled by the attitude toward HIV infection and sex (not a word to be uttered). In a country with heterosexual spread of HIV, the failure to provide sex education in the home or schools was downright scary. From that observation, I came to have a concern for the victims who struggled with severe stigma as well as the illness.

When I moved to Kenya in 2007, my first outreach was to HIV widows support groups from which came a community based organization to produce and sell handmade crafts. By 2010, I started to give bio-sand water filters to women known to be HIV positive. The Samaritan's Purse in Canada had been distributing the filters for some period of time and it was estimated that having access to a filter increased the life expectancy of an HIV person by 7 years. For the mothers, this gave them more time to raise their children, a major concern.

*The first community where everyone had access to a bio-sand filter was a 615 section of Maganda. **We have now had 4 calendar years with no deaths in the 2-5 year olds** with safe water. The usual causes of death in this age groups are Malaria and diarrhea.*

Originally, I was completely self funded. However, funding the bio-sand water filters for whole communities is beyond my income. I need help.

Kuwesa is a "community based organization" in Kenya and a 503(c)(3) in the USA.

Personally, I have lived in Kenya for 13 1/2 years and I am very happy with the work. I also recognize that I will not live forever and I am trying to get funding to build very simple hostels for the many students at the relatively new university. This will provide funding when I am gone to continue the crafts work and the bio-sand filter/safe water project. Our bio-sand filters are made by a men's HIV support group. They perform this heavy work as an income producing activity.

I will send photos of a bio-sand filter being set up and a series on the building of a spring protection. Thank you for your assistance.

*Peace,
S. Jean Smith*

Events

FMW Community "Zinner", Wednesday, January 13, 7:00 p.m.

A community gathering to welcome each other in the New Year. [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
To join by phone, dial (301)715-8592. Enter Meeting ID 889 452 05226# on prompt.

Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples workshop, January 31, 12:30 pm via Zoom

Workshop with Quaker scholar Paula Palmer, sponsored by Peace & Social Concerns Committee. [Join by Zoom](#) (Same as 10:30 Meeting for Worship).

By phone, dial **(301) 715-8592** and enter meeting ID **979505413#** on prompt. For more information contact Steve Chase, email: SteveChase338@gmail.com

Ignatian Prayer workshop, January 31, 3pm to 4:30pm via Zoom.

Part I of Ministry & Worship's "Prayer Series," this workshop will give you an experience of Ignatian prayer. Please [pre-register here](#). Workshop materials will be e-mailed to you. Presenter: Sabrina McCarthy, sabrina.mccarthy@verizon.net, cell 240.778.5234

FMW Adult Spiritual Development Programs during the month of January 2021:

See full schedule of programs sponsored by FMW's Ministry & Worship Committee [HERE](#).

Friends Committee on National Legislation's "Thursdays with Friends" Jan 7, Jan 21, 4-4:30 pm

On Jan 7—Public Health and Healthcare. On Jan 21—The Administrations First 100 Days. FCNL's "Thursdays With Friends" series is held every 2nd Thursday. Learn more and register [HERE](#).

Friends General Conference Worship and Worship Sharing Opportunities
FGC's **updated list** offers a plethora of opportunities to worship and connect with Friends.

Thinking about Race, January 2021

A Justice Testimony

In his recent Pendle Hill Pamphlet (#465), **Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice: An African-American Quaker Scholar-Activist Challenges Conventional Narratives**, Harold D. Weaver, Jr., makes the case for “a more robust, active justice testimony.” Starting in 2008, through his ministry, the BlackQuaker Project, an Ad Hoc Working Group within New England Yearly Meeting took up this concern. They formulated these queries, which appear in the pamphlet (pp. 29-30):

- Do we need a Justice testimony in the Religious Society of Friends? Why and how might a Justice testimony help Friends in our spiritual and temporal practices?
- What does “justice” mean to Friends? How does our meeting respond to the need for justice?
- If we disregard justice, what impact does it have on our spiritual lives and on our connection with the Divine?
- What is the relationship between love and justice? Between living in the Spirit and seeking justice? If compassion is love in action, what is justice in action?
- How does oppression dehumanize and dim the Light, both in oppressor and oppressed?

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, currently via Zoom. If you would like to attend, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

FMW Meeting for Business Minutes & Attachments December 2020

Friends Meeting of Washington Meeting Minutes
Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
December 13, 2020

Rebecca Nelson and Debby Churchman are clerking this Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. Amanda Mayer is recording minutes.

Query for Worship Sharing: What anchors us in gratitude during difficult times?

Clerk's Report, December 2020

Upcoming Events

BLUE CHRISTMAS Meeting for Worship, Wednesday, December 16, 7:00-8:00 pm
For many people, this can be a tough time of the year. We will make space to join together, share empathy and support. **Join Zoom Meeting.** By phone dial: **(301) 715-8592**. Enter Meeting ID **843 871 20784#** on prompt.FMW. Contact: Jean Capps jean_capps@hotmail.com.

Trauma and Empowerment: Four Women's Journeys, Sunday, December 20, 12:30 p.m.

Community Family Life Services (CFLS) Speakers Bureau is an extraordinary program that trains women impacted by trauma (including domestic violence, homelessness and incarceration) to speak publicly about their experiences in order to effect positive change in their communities. Peace and Social Concerns has invited four women to share their stories. This will be the final step in their training. CFLS Speakers Bureau Coach, Joe D'Antonio, will act as a moderator for this very special event. **Join by Zoom.** By phone, dial: **(301) 715-8592**. Enter Meeting ID **979 505 413#** on prompt. For more information, contact Joe D'Antonio, jdantoniode@gmail.com.

Young Adult Friends Quakemas Celebration December 22nd 6:30pm

Christmas Eve celebration, Dec. 24 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. to include gathering, carol singing, and worship

FMW Community Highlights & Kudos

- **Shoebox Project:** Assembly of over holiday gifts in knapsacks for over 1,000 homeless men, women and children is nearly complete--thanks to the generosity of FMW families and the extraordinary ingenuity of the Shoebox team, who organized the gift assembly work to be done over time, with safe social distancing, or from home.
- FMW now has two young **American chestnuts** planted in our garden, a bequest from Joe Johnson's family in his honor.
- On Thursday, 2 new **bike racks** were finally installed in front FMW's entrance.
- The **Change Committee** continues to offer its series of workshops around Dr. Harold Weaver's Pendle Hill Pamphlet, "Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice. The next workshop will focus on reparations. All are welcome.
- First Day School kids, teachers and parents visited the **Underground Railroad Trail** in Sandy Spring and have been hiking and wildlife spotting on Kingman Island and Rock Creek Park. In the coming weeks they plan: more hikes, making holiday cards for DC neighbors who are in jail, a movie club, and more...
- **Reclaim Our Vote's DMV team**, which included many members and attenders of FMW, sent over **1.25 million** non-partisan postcards sharing voting information to primarily voters of color in eight states with high levels of over suppression.

Major Business

Nominating Committee-Nomination slate - Martha Solt

- Ministry and Worship - Amit Pandya and Viticia (Tish) Thames, second presentation of Sabrina McCarthy (co-clerk)
 - Friends approved Amit's nomination.
 - Friends approved Sabrina as co-clerk.
 - Tish's nomination will lay over for one month as is our custom.
- Property - Co-clerks: Todd Harvey and Ken Forsberg (plus Merry Pearlstein as co-clerk for 6 months); Elise Storck as a member of Property

- Friends approved these nominations.
- Personnel - Aaron Johnson
 - This nomination is held over for a month as is our custom.
- Recording Clerk - Matt Higgins
 - Friends approved this nomination.
- Peace & Social Concerns - Guy Martorano
 - Friends approved this nomination.
- Membership - Rob Farr (clerk), Beth Cogswell, Kathy Lipp-Farr, Gray Handley, Judy Hubbard, Zoe Plaughter, Marsha Holliday
 - Friends approved these nominations.
- Information will be updated on the FMW website in 2021.

Membership - Kathy Lipp-Farr, Rob Farr

- First Presentation, Tom Yonker
 - Kathy Lipp-Farr gave the first presentation of Tom Yonker for membership. She shared information about Tom's spiritual background and his decade of involvement with the meeting, including serving on committees and volunteering regularly with So Others Might Eat. This will be held over for a month as is our custom.
- Report on meeting with Personal Aid re: joining the two committees

Rob Farr gave a report on the potential merger of Personal Aid and Membership committees. There were only three members of Personal Aid on the call, but a few members of Personal Aid are not tech-savvy. The Membership committee has been responsible for shepherding future members, while the Personal Aid committee focuses on helping those within the Meeting. Before formally changing the committee structure, the Membership Committee asks that the committees work together for the next year to see if merging will work for both committees.

The Library & Handbook Committee asked that these committees prepare any changes to the handbook in advance. One recommendation was including Personal Aid requests during joys and concerns at the close of Meeting for Worship.

A Friend shared that the spiritual deepening of becoming a member is not a strong overlap with Personal Aid and had concerns over combining only for efficiency's sake. Several Friends shared their agreement.

Other Friends felt that the overlap between both committees was the care and keeping of Friends, both in formally becoming members and in supporting members and attenders. A Friend shared that Friends Meeting of Washington is lacking in Pastoral Care, and that joining these two committees could cover that point. The Pastoral Care working group sees their mission as helping to change the culture of the Meeting so that we all care for each other. A Friend shared that historically an Overseers Committee was used as a combination of Membership and Personal Aid.

There are a limited number of Personal Aid requests each year, but those that are submitted require special concern. The merger was initially proposed due to overburdening on the Personal Aid Committee. Mary Melchoir, clerk of Personal Aid, shared that it has been difficult to gain committee members. One result of this year could be redefining Personal Aid's role in supporting members and our community. A Friend requests that the committees develop several queries to discern their process over the next year.

Friends approved the Membership and Personal Aid Committees entering this period of discernment.

FCNL report - Susan Griffin

Over 800 people virtually gathered for the Friends Committee on National Legislation annual meeting. Lobbying was focused on supporting the George Floyd- Justice in Policing Act and was led by our member José Santos Woss. The FCNL priorities are listed in the document below, as well as information on FCNL's Thursdays with Friends.

Friends accepted this report.

Finance & Stewardship presentation on current budget numbers - Dan Dozier (as requested last month)

Finance & Stewardship shared updated financial information. We currently have a projected loss of \$331,000 in Fiscal Year 2021.

A Friend asked how long we can sustain losses like the past quarter. Dan responded that we have at least three years with our current reserves. A Friend shared that our shift to QuickBooks means that the budget and actual expenses are not in alignment yet. A Friend shared that donations are especially important during this time, and that the Meeting is sending out year-end letters.

Guidance for all gatherings inside the FMW building during a time of Covid - Gene Throwe (Attached)

Friends have been meeting each week in the Meetinghouse garden. As the weather gets colder, guidance has been developed for worship in the Meeting room. Currently, DC regulations are limiting gatherings to no more than 10 people except for houses of worship. There have been two indoor worships up to this point. Gene Throwe printed signs to ensure attenders were seated 10 feet apart. Gene is also considering incorporating a widescreen camera to better capture the meeting room and so a laptop does not need to be passed for messages. A Friend had some mask issues, but has been advised about proper mask wearing.

A Friend shared concerns about gathering in person with higher numbers of positive cases and a vaccine coming so soon. Bathrooms are a particular concern with small spaces and virus potentially remaining in the air. A Friend shared their concern about mask removal during and after giving a message. A Friend asked about the sign-up form containing the rules and that they

are attending in-person at their own risk. Gene Throwe, Barbara Briggs, and Dan Dozier will ensure that is added appropriately.

Merry Pearlstein, Property Committee, shared that other groups meet in person in the Meetinghouse, and she volunteered to adapt the policy for those situations.

The Meeting expressed their gratitude to Amanda Mayer for her work as Recording Clerk.

ADDENDA: ATTACHED COMMITTEE REPORTS

Guidelines for Indoor Worship at FMW

Our first concern is the safety of all attending the worship. However, anyone attending the in-person service does so at their own risk. While these guidelines are a conservative approach to the risks of exposure, they do not eliminate all such risks. People who are in high risk categories – those with compromised immune systems, underlying health conditions, and the elderly -- can avoid the increased risks by attending our virtual meeting for worship online at [Register Here](#). (Required for each week).

The following are the standards we use to move the Worship in the Garden indoors to the Meeting Room due to colder weather and precipitation. Cold weather is defined as under 50 degrees Fahrenheit so if the weather is pleasant enough, we will continue to worship in the West Garden.

- FMW Safety Protocols
- Always wear masks indoors or out
- Maintain 10 feet apart from each other
- FMW will cap the number of people allowed to worship in the Meeting Room on Sunday mornings from 10:30-11:30 am at 25
- We will join the Zoom worship using the new sound system and tv
- Everyone is required to register by Saturday night at 9 pm
- Everyone is required to sign in with email and cell number for potential contact tracing
- Everyone is required to leave soon after worship ends at 11:30 am
- To control the number of people, we will only open the main entrance door and have one person there to check people in
- Attendees must arrive no later than 10:30 am so the doors can be left locked and unattended
- No childcare will be provided
- Those with underlying risk factors are encouraged to continue to join via ZOOM
- Anyone in attendance who uses a restroom is asked to wipe down all contact surfaces after use
- Seating will be marked so people can space 10 feet apart.

FCNL Report

Friends Committee on National Legislation leads bipartisan lobbying efforts “to be prophetic witness and to take action in the world.”

FCNL staff work with Congressional office throughout the year, culminating with the FCNL Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute each November.

This year 883 people attended the virtual Annual Meeting, doubling last year's attendance.

- Participants in the Quaker Public Policy Institute went on 223 virtual lobby visits, (including 600 people) representing 44 states and the District of Columbia.
- José Santos Woss, Legislative Manager, Criminal Justice and Election Integrity and part of our FMW community, prepared lobbying teams for their visits to support the George Floyd-Justice in Policing Act (H.R.7120/S.3912), explaining that “we need a strong, united national response to the ongoing crisis of police brutality. We cannot afford to wait for the more than 18,000 police jurisdictions in this country to implement changes.”

These state teams urged Congressional Offices to make these bills a priority for the 117th Congress. Annual Meeting also adopted the FCNL Priorities for the 117th Congress—FMW members and attenders were part of the review process with monthly meetings and Quaker churches around the country. That document follows this report.

To keep abreast of policy issues regularly, Friends are invited to join FCNL's Thursdays with Friends 4:00 –4:30 pm. Upcoming topics are:

- December 17, 2021—A Season of Peace 4:00
- January 7, 2021—Public Health and Healthcare
- January 21, 2021—The Administrations First 100 Days

FCNL Welcomes Friends to participate in their critical work, vitally important in the year ahead.

FCNL Priorities for the 117th Congress

Since the early days of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), God's spirit has led Friends to be a prophetic witness and to take action in the world. Friends are called to promote genuine equality of opportunity and communities in which everyone can safely live, learn, work, worship, and love. The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) brings Friends' spiritual values and testimonies to bear on U.S. public policy decisions, guided by the legislative priorities below.

As we developed these priorities, we recognized that we are living through extraordinary times: a deepening awareness of racial injustice and police brutality; the COVID-19 pandemic; an economic downturn that has escalated unemployment and profound inequalities; unequivocal evidence that the global climate crisis is here; and dire threats to the foundations of our democracy. While these multiple challenges evoke a heightened sense of distress, we also recognize that the threads that run through today's crises originate in historical concerns that have long been the focus of FCNL's advocacy. Our work continues to be understanding and addressing the root causes and long-term consequences of today's crises and our enduring challenges.

We are mindful that our nation has a special responsibility to redress the consequences of our history of slavery and genocide, together with ongoing race-based discrimination and oppression. With each priority below, we will identify, expose and work to eliminate institutional racism, institutional sexism, and other forms of systemic discrimination.

The order of these priorities does not reflect their comparative importance.

- Promote peacebuilding by emphasizing diplomacy and honoring treaties and by working towards peaceful prevention and resolution of violent conflict, especially in the Middle East.

- Confront the paradigm of global militarism, demilitarize space, reduce military spending, limit the spread of conventional weapons, prevent armed interventions, repeal the Authorizations for Use of Military Force (AUMFs), and reassert Congress' oversight role.
- Promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.
- Advocate for a justice system that is just and equitable, eliminates mass incarceration and police brutality, and establishes law-enforcement that is community-oriented and demilitarized.
- Ensure that the U.S. immigration system promotes and respects the rights, safety, humanity, and dignity of all immigrants, refugees and migrants.
- Support equitable access for all to participate in open, secure, and transparent political and electoral processes, protect the integrity of our democratic institutions and processes, and work to ensure honesty and accountability of elected and appointed officials.
- End gun violence by supporting policies that are informed by public health best practices.
- Witness and advocate for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian rights and concerns. Honor the treaties and promises.
- Address structural economic inequality through measures such as a fair and progressive tax system, a living wage for all, and an adequate social safety net.
- Prioritize programs that meet basic needs including universal access to quality affordable healthcare, a necessity magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Strengthen environmental protections and advance environmental justice, while recognizing the finite capacity of the earth and the need to protect human, animal and plant diversity.
- Promote sustainable, science-based solutions to the climate crisis and prioritize international cooperation to achieve global sustainability goals and protect vulnerable populations.

FCNL solicited the views and concerns of Quaker meetings, churches, and organizations around the country to help discern these priorities for our lobbying and public education work during the 117th Congress (2021-2022). The priorities selected by Friends represent new leadings as well as continuity with the issues on which FCNL has previously worked.

FCNL seeks to collaborate across the political spectrum to advance these priorities. Our work will be based on legislative opportunities, specific expertise, leadings, and available resources. In addition, *The World We Seek* (FCNL's Policy Statement) gives FCNL the flexibility to respond to crises and to important legislative opportunities, as Way opens.

Quaker Faith & Practice: Meeting for Worship

Our way of worship is not just an historical accident; it is a corollary from our conviction concerning the universal Light of Christ. Believing that in every worshiper, regardless of age, learning, sex, or any other human label, the promptness of God's spirit are at work, Friends meet together in entirely unprogrammed meetings, worship in silent prayer, opening themselves [to the Spirit]. ... In such corporate worship...we are led into a depth of communion with God and with one another that is deeply meaningful and spiritually refreshing. --L. Hugh Doncaster. (In "Faith & Practice" 1.2.2 Life of the Spirit, Baltimore Yearly Meeting

SPICES' Gregarious Side....

