

FMW Newsletter, June 2015

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

May 2015

Queries

Do you live in accordance with your spiritual convictions? Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs and in service to society? Do you practice simplicity in speech, dress and manner of living, avoiding wasteful consumption? Are you watchful that your possessions do not rule you? Do you strive to be truthful at all times, avoiding judicial oaths?

Do you strive to develop your physical, emotional and mental capacities toward reaching your Divinely given potential? Do you cultivate healthful and moderate habits, avoiding the hazards of drugs, intoxicants, and over-indulgence generally? Do you try to direct such emotions as anger and fear in creative ways?

Advices

The individual Friend should lead a life rooted in an awareness of God's presence in all times and places. Although special times and locations may provide helpful reminders of the need for spiritual communion, they cannot take the place of turning daily to God for guidance. The foundation for all our personal life and social relations should be the consciousness of the Holy Spirit.

Sincerity, simplicity and moderation are vital to all the dealings of life. We advise the observance of care in speech and the use of only such statements as convey truth without exaggeration or omission of

essential fact. Taking legal oaths implies a double standard of truthfulness and is contrary to the teaching of Jesus.

Self-indulgent habits and luxurious living dull our awareness and make us insensitive to the needs of others and the leading of the Spirit. Ostentation and extravagant expenditure should not be a part of Friends' lives. Friends should be particularly aware of this in planning marriages, funerals, social gatherings or public occasions. True simplicity does not consist of particular forms or the absence of grace, symmetry and beauty, but of avoiding over-indulgence, maintaining humility of spirit, and keeping material surroundings in proportion to human needs.

- BYM Faith and Practice, "Personal Life"

Voices

I ask for daily bread, but not for wealth, lest I forget the poor.

I ask for strength, but not for power, lest I despise the meek.

I ask for wisdom, but not for learning, lest I scorn the simple.

I ask for a clean name, but not for fame, lest I condemn the lowly.

I ask for peace of mind, but not for idle hours, lest I fail to hearken to the call of duty.

- Inazo Nitobe, 1909

2015/5-1 Welcome of Visitors

Meeting for Business opened at 12:20 pm with 20 persons present.

2015/5-2 Clerk's Report

- *The intergenerational spring festival organized by the First Day School was a huge success and blessed by beautiful weather.*
- *Greyson Acquaviva was inducted as an Eagle Scout in a ceremony here at FMW yesterday.*
- *Thanks were received from the BYM Unity With Nature committee for our sustainability discussions. These discussions are continuing—updates forthcoming from Peace and Social Concerns*
- *Ken Orvis' mother Shirley Hastings died. We will hold Ken and his family in the Light.*
- *Interim meeting will be June 13th at Patuxent Friends Meeting. If you attend please consider volunteering to report back for the Meeting.*
- *Sunday May 31 is the fifth Sunday of the Month and there will be a meeting of the Committee of Clerks on that date.*

Major items

2015/5-2 Safety and Welcoming Guidelines and process.

Dan Dozier was convener of a joint meeting of the Small Group and the Support Group which was open to all, to discern the next steps in this process as directed by the Meeting for Business in February. This joint group came to clearness over a tentative agreement: when an issue arises the Committee of Clerks will create an ad hoc Discernment Committee to move forward with the individual involved. Dan is accepting suggested inputs into draft guidelines until Friday, May 15th.

Dan Dozier felt the concern was less about the substance and more about the process coming to clearness on the discernment for an individual. The draft guidelines will be sent to committees with a particular interest including the Child Safety Committee, Religious Education Committee, Healing and Reconciliation, and others as the way opens.

A visitor asked how outside organizations get involved with our child safety issues. It was pointed out that the Meeting has many outside activities but this is an internal process.

A Friend asked the role of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee may advise but will not be responsible to populate the ad hoc Discernment Committees. The Child Safety Committee is a standing committee of the Meeting and, therefore, Nominating Committee will be nominating members to that committee.

Harry Massey, clerk of the Nominating Committee, noted that it has been very difficult to find committee members, especially for the Child Safety Committee, and asks the Meeting for help.

2015/5-3 Membership Committee

Marcia Reecer, co-clerk of Membership Committee presented a request for membership by Bertrand Rossert. Bertrand Rossert is already a member of ministry and worship committee and played an important role in the spiritual state of the meeting report. He first attended FMW in 2014. His study of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice gave him a sense of relief that he no longer was accountable to pastors and priests with rules and admonitions. He worked in the European Union civil service for peace. He noted that "Peace is evolution towards freedom. . . Peace is not a negative concept."

This request for membership will be held over a month as is our custom.

2015/5-4 Finance and Stewardship Committee

Jim Bell presented the [draft 2016 Fiscal Year Budget](#) with the help of our bookkeeper Laurie Wilner. The Finance & Stewardship Committee is to support the committees of the Meeting to do their work, keep accurate and up to date records, and to be responsible to all of the Meeting. The budget represents the shoe box project, tenants, BYM camps, the MaryJane Simpson scholarship and to many other programs of the meeting. The contributions are still not where we would wish. Forty-six per cent of those who responded to the Spiritual State of the Meeting survey stated that they do not contribute financially.

With construction we anticipate that our income will go down next year by \$63,000.

Thanks were offered from the committee to Ed Husted and Laurie Wilner for putting the budget together. A more detailed budget will be available on the webpage for Friends to review.

A Friend suggested that there be a revolving fund for our involvement in DC Pride Day. This would mean that the Peace and Social Concerns Committee would not have to request every year that the Meeting put forward the money and then get reimbursed by its very reliable partners.

A Friend noted the increase of usage of the buildings both for the income and the welcoming nature of the building. Thank you to the administrative secretary and the property manager and the property committee for making that happen. But he noted that rent is not meant to replace our donations.

Dan Dozier, alternate clerk, suggested that at the next meeting for business that we go through the budget in some detail. He noted that we rely on rents and on investments because we do not have enough contributions. Friends should look carefully at the budget and consider the weakness of that situation. The committee should ask in the listserv for questions about the budget. Margaret Greene, clerk, suggested that analytic observations should be included in the budget posting to provide a narrative introduction to it.

A Friend noted that there are incomes and expenses. Personnel is the key expense. Good pay tends to make for good personnel.

Several Friends noted that we are very reliant on investments, which seems risky. Laurie Wilner noted that Friends Fiduciary Corporation with which we invest is very stable. A bigger concern should be selling shares to pay for a mortgage.

The FY2015 budget will be held over to the next month as is our custom.

2015/5-5 Nominating Committee

Harry Massey clerk of Nominating Committee presented the following names for approval:

Ann Herzog (Attender) - Capital Campaign Committee for the duration of the committee

Bill Strein (Attender) - Membership Committee for the 2015 vacancy

Blair Forlaw (Member) - BYM Pastoral Care Committee for the 2015 vacancy

Gray Handley (Member) – Membership Committee for the 2015 vacancy

Carl Johnson (Attender) – Religious Education for the 2015 vacancy

A Friend asked if the attenders have been asked to become members. The nominating committee does this.

A Friend noted that there was more than irony for the appointment of an attender to determine who could become a member of the Meeting. Marcia Reecer noted that the membership committee had talked with the nominated individual about this and is hopeful.

The appointments of

Ann Herzog (Attender) - Capital Campaign Committee for the duration of the committee

Blair Forlaw (Member) - BYM Pastoral Care Committee until 2016

Gray Handley (Member) – Membership Committee until 2017

Carl Johnson (Attender) – Religious Education until 2017 pending child safety screening.

were **APPROVED**.

Harry Massey clerk of Nominating Committee presented the following resignation.

Resignations:

Greg Robb – Library Committee

The resignation was accepted.

Friends were encouraged to wear name tags so we know who everyone is.

2015/5-6 Other business

Grant Thompson gave an update of the Capital Campaign. He reported that the total amount raised so far is \$663,943 which represents 33% of our \$2 million goal. This consists of \$446,563 in cash and \$217,380 in outstanding pledges. Only 15% of the members of the meeting have made a contribution. Approximately 40% of our donors are attenders and others. The committee is hopeful that Friends will think of it as not another approach for money, but about the stories such as the neighbor who wanted to attend a meeting in the meeting room for social justice who was in tears of pain climbing the stairs to the meeting room and ultimately unable to participate fully. While we are properly modest about our wealth, this is not the place.

Gray Handley, from Healing and Reconciliation Committee and part of a clearness committee of the Property Committee created at the request of Ministry and Worship, gave an update on the Property Committee clearness process. We are blessed as a Meeting with talented and eager members of the Property Committee. The clearness committee produced a report of what they had heard which it shared with the Committee. The Property Committee felt that they should have a meeting and to try to sort out their own challenges. Some members of the committee met in May and decided to meet with a rotating clerkship going forward. The clearness committee waits in abeyance holding the property committee in the Light.

Mary Campbell of the Interim Property Committee gave an update. They have approved the H-Vac units for the carriage house and Quaker house. The surplus A/C units were donated to Community Forklift. There was asbestos removal work done and will continue. Now that radiators have been removed there is repair needed and roof repair from the H-VAC work. We accepted a low bid custodian group and it is clear that is not working so there will be an increase in the custodian budget in the coming year. Some work is being delayed until after construction so the work is not done twice. We have added new LED lights to great savings. In our future is work on increasing the electrical capacity of the Meeting. There will also be mold abatement in the Decatur Place Room and a glass wall for the children's library.

The Byth-Templeton Academy had shown interest in renting space during the construction. A joint committee met to consider that request and decided that the Meeting would continue to explore the possibility with several conditions. A Friend suggested that as much as the Blyth-Templeton Academy gave May 10, 2015 as an absolute deadline, the potential deal should be considered ended.

The Meeting **APPROVED** the committee of Mary Campbell, Steve Coleman, John Scales, Neil Froemming, Dan Dozier, Ken Orvis, and J. E. McNeil to go forward with negotiations with Blyth-Templeton Academy.

Debby Churchman reported on her attendance at a Pendle Hill five day conference on ending mass incarceration. There are 2.1 million people incarcerated in this country. Eight out of ten persons arrested in DC are people of color. Many of the people in prison provide cheap labor for the industries of the United States. There were many moving moments in the conference with several former inmates in attendance. We are encouraged not to try to find our own solutions, but to support those already working in this area. Debby hopes to bring a presentation to the Meeting at a later date.

Friends **APPROVED** the minutes as improved.

After a period of silence the meeting closed at 12:46 pm with 13 persons in attendance to reconvene on June 14, 2015.

(Here ends the Minutes for the 5.2015 Meeting for Business)

UPCOMING EVENTS – JUNE 2015

June 3, The **Grate Patrol** will prepare sandwiches and soup to take out to the city's vulnerable people starting at 5:30. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at sbrooks@uab.edu

June 6, Come to **SOME** and help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. Starts at 6:15 a.m. For more info, contact Betsy at betsy.bramon@gmail.com

10 to 3: Adelphi Friends Meeting will hold its **2015 Strawberry Festival** from 10:00am to 3:00pm. The Strawberry Festival is a long-standing community event and day of fun for the whole family. The Strawberry Festival is a rain or shine event. For more information see adelphifriends.org/strawberry or email John Stith. john.stith@gmail.com

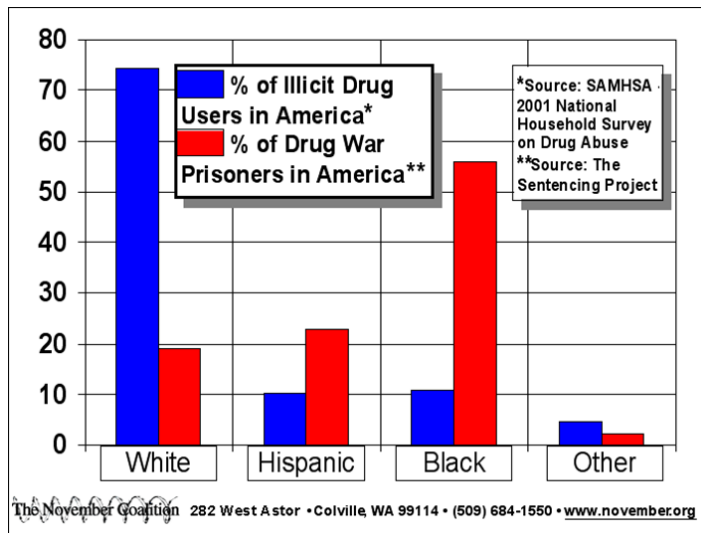
June 14 **Beyond the New Jim Crow – Preventing the Revolving Door, Cedar Lane Unitarian/Universalist Church (Kensington, MD)**

Since the publication of Michelle Alexander's The New Jim Crow, concerned citizens have been inspired to study her recommendations and consider how we can become change-agents. Events across the country and most recently a few miles away in Baltimore, where citizens are expressing

their outrage over years of neglect and heavy-handed police behavior leading to brutality and incarceration of black and brown youth, have led Bethesda Friends Meeting and the Cedar Lane Unitarian/Universalist Church to plan an event on June 14 at **5:00pm**, and we hope you will attend. The program we are planning features Donna Rojas and Alisa Smedley, co-directors of a training program at the Montgomery County Detention center in Boyds that is preparing its residents for release with job skills and education that will help them find employment after their release and become valued members of our society. We also want to hear what you and your community organizations and churches are doing to support those incarcerated.

June 20, 10 to 3: Poetry is food for the soul. Join published poet, Janet Harrison, for a relaxed session in which she skillfully and playfully helps you craft poems and explore the wonderful ways in which words and images can dance with one another. You needn't have ever written a poem before to have a marvelous time doing so as Janet will show you. If you have any questions concerning any of our programs, please email Sheila at snbach@earthlink.net or call 304.728.4820. We ask that you let us know if you are coming to any or all of our events and reservations for a meal are required. Sheila Bach, snbach@earthlink.net. 304-728-4820

Sunday, June 21: Ending Mass Incarceration There are now 2.1 million people incarcerated in the United States, more than any other nation on earth. The vast majority of these people are men of color. An African American man stands a one in three chance of being caught up in the judicial system at some point in his life. This is not an accident, but the result of a series of racist decisions made over the last 50 years. Come learn about where we are and what can be done about it, including a number of local efforts here in D.C. At noon in the North Room. For more information, contact Debby Churchman at dchurchm@yahoo.com



June 27: Work Day There are many other ways than just financial to support the meeting and coming to a workday is one of those ways. We will have indoor and outdoor projects - you can come early or late, leave late or early. We encourage you to come with someone else (that is bring another family member, friend, or other Friend!). Please support the Meeting! Lunch will be served. For more information, contact Jean Harman at ellenjeanharman@hotmail.com

June 28 – July 4: Quaker Workcamps William Penn House (Washington, DC)

Community gardens not only make nutritious foods more readily available, but help provide healthy water filtration to the watershed. In addition, maintaining community gardens is a social event that helps build community relations. Activities will not be limited to gardening, and may include riverbank cleanup, picnics, and fellowship breakfasts. This Workcamp is designed primarily for high school students, although all ages are welcome. Participation can be for the entire time or for portions of the time. It is a great opportunity to see the vibrant DC community that few people see while also celebrating July 4. Cost is \$525 for the week (or \$80/day) and includes lodging. Adults wishing to participate are also welcome and encouraged to consider joining in “chaperone” capacity. In line with gardening, this Workcamp will be a very organic process depending on interest. Financial assistance is available. For complete information, see the Quaker Workcamps website. (williampennhouse.org/2015Workcamps)

Going Forward:

July 5 to 11: Friends General Conference (FGC) Annual Gathering

The FGC Gathering this year will be at the Western Carolina University near Asheville NC. The theme this year is “**Seeking Wholeness.**” The Gathering is a chance to be together with over 1,200 Friends. There are many opportunities to address spirit, mind, and body.

Look up the program for this year at www.fgcGathering.org You can enjoy lots of activities:

singing, dancing, good food, and good conversation. You really ought to go to a

Gathering at least once. Early registration for the Gathering opens April 2. There are both half-gathering and part-time attender options for adults. Financial aid is available.

Of special note is that there will be a pre-gathering event and five days of Couple

Enrichment Leader Training at the Gathering. To learn more, www.fgcquaker.org/ce-training

or marshaquaker@gmail.com There are also pre-gathering Saturday retreats for Adult Young Friends (18-35); New Meetings; People of Color and Their Families; and Quakers and Business.

August 3 to 9: Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Session

Baltimore Yearly Meeting will gather from August 3 to 9 this year at Frostburg State

University in Frostburg MD. The theme is “**Living into Right Relationship,**” focusing on

the need to live in harmony and balance with ourselves, our community, and the natural

world. You can learn more about workshops and interest groups in the Spring Interchange

which will be coming out very soon or on the Baltimore Yearly Meeting web site:

www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

June is a time of transitions, from Spring and school to Summer and whatever. The **First Day School** held their epic intergenerational party, and planted a **new garden** in the North Garden. **Greyson Acquaviva** became an Eagle Scout, **Jordan Morris** graduated from Bradley University; **Nick Farr** and **Christopher McCarthy** are graduating from high school. The Capital Improvement Task Force started meeting with contractors, and the ever-receding start date for the construction receded again (now they're saying **maybe November**).

A large group of hearty workers, including **Martha Solt, Malachy Kilbride, Charlie and Susan Bien, Steve Brooks, Kate Stegner, Susan Griffin, Carol Phelps, Patty Murphy, Liz Sullivan, Tom Libbert, Virginia Avanesyan, Michael Beer** and **Ken Orvis** pitched in and tackled the spring cleaning at the Meeting House, washing windows, deeply decluttering the rest rooms, kitchen and furnace room, dividing bulbs and prepping the garden.

Meanwhile, we have been approached by a newly formed school called the **Blyth-Templeton Academy**, who are asking that the Meeting House serve as a host site for their **first school year**, scheduled to begin serving students in September. Representatives from the school met with the staff and the interim Property Committee. Their proposal was then discussed with representatives from Property, Finance & Stewardship, Religious Education, Trustees, and the Committee of Clerks. That group agreed to go forward with negotiations, and listed items of concern to be discussed. As of this writing, the negotiating team has met once with the Academy leaders and then sent them a proposed contract.

They propose to start a small high school of about 40 students with an 8:1 student/teacher ratio. They hope to serve a largely middle-class clientele, charging \$15,000/year per student. Similar in many ways to School Without Walls, the school is experiential, and includes multiple field trips. We've made them vividly aware of our upcoming renovation, and they do not seem fazed by it, particularly. This is a for-profit school and is not Quaker, although the head of school is the former principal of the upper school at Sidwell Friends. The board includes Sam Blyth of Blyth Academy in Texas, Dennis Keller of DeVry Education, and Temp Keller of Templeton Learning, a Canadian firm that has started many such schools in the Toronto area of Canada.

We believe that this school is looking at a number of different locations. Should they choose to go forward with negotiations, the final decision will rest with Meeting for Business as to whether or not to host them for the coming year. A number of benefits and concerns have been raised and aired. We continue to look to Spirit for guidance.

- Debby



The Moon Bounce



Jenifer & Jordan Morris

Greyson Acquaviva (below)

At his Eagle Scout Ceremony

Planting the North Garden



Peace Corps Office retreat

