

FMW Newsletter, June 2017

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

May 14, 2017

Query for Worship Sharing: How are we mothering and nurturing our Meeting? How are we being mothered?

- *Friends reflected that community means tapping into a Whole that is greater than ourselves and having responsibility to each other. Community also contains service to each other, helping each other, and showing up in times of need. One Friend reflected on the generosity of Friends he didn't even know well that volunteered to care for him and his wife when she had cancer.*
- *A Friend shared reflections on [Psalm 91](#), drawing us to the metaphor of being covered by God's feathers:*

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High

will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.[a]

I will say of the Lord, “S/he is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.”

Surely s/he will save you

from the fowler’s snare

and from the deadly pestilence.

S/he will cover you with their feathers,

and under their wings you will find refuge;

- *Friends dwelled on how mothers, “take care of business,” and queried about how mother was such a gendered term - one that evokes many different social roles and responsibilities. What is the meaning of this term for Friends raised in the 1950s versus Friends being raised today?*

Welcome of Visitors

Meeting for Business opened at 12:30 pm with 29 Friends present. Friends welcomed first time business meeting attender, Igor Chasim, Rebecca Harris (to speak about sanctuary cities), and Marci Bernbaum, Janet Sharp, and John McDermott with the public restroom initiative.

Clerk’s Report

1. Upcoming

1. **June Business Meeting Date Change to 6/18 (Father’s Day):** The June Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business will be held on the **third Sunday** instead of the second. The second Sunday is the Pride Parade, in which the Clerk and Alternate Clerk will be participating.
2. **May 19-21 FMW Catoctin Quaker Camp Weekend-** FMW has once again reserved the camp for our spring retreat in May. All are welcome. Contact Anita Drever at anita.drever@gmail.com to sign up.
3. **May 18 training on Supporting Immigrants in ICE Interviews:** FMW will be hosting a training session for those who are willing to **accompany immigrants** to their ICE interviews. Knowledge of another language is helpful but is not required. The training will be on May 18, 6:00 to 8:00 pm.
4. **May 21 Taize meal and sendoff for Racial Reconciliation:** This Memorial Day weekend, the Taize community in France is hosting a [large gathering in St. Louis](#) about racial reconciliation following Ferguson. The Taize community is in a program called Pilgrimage of Trust aimed at bringing together communities that don’t often talk to each other. A group of 12 people are taking the idea of pilgrimage a literally by running, walking,

and biking in a relay from DC to St. Louis, which they have called [The Find a Way Relay](#). They will use the week as an opportunity for intense prayer and reflection around white supremacy and anti-racism. **Join us for a sendoff Taize prayer and potluck at FMW on Sunday, May 21 at 6:30 pm.** Contact Mark at mkharas@trinitychurchboston.org for more information.

2. Announcements and Accolades

- FMW was featured twice in the latest edition of *Friends Journal*. The first is a splendid letter written by our teens to President Donald Trump. The second is on the letters page explaining the gender-inclusive signage on our bathroom doors.
- Many thanks to all those who helped with the **Climate March hospitality**. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the number of marchers we housed for one of the two nights went up from 15 to 70. Our volunteers managed to take the increased numbers in stride and feed everyone.

3. Renovation Updates

- We are about halfway through renovating the **Decatur Place Room**. Rumors about a possible crypt have turned out, sadly, to be false — the space behind the vault appears to have been constructed to act as a stabilizer for the Meeting Room; if it includes any voids, they are behind massive retaining walls. We hope to have the room available for use in June.
- As for the much-anticipated **major renovation**, the civil engineers have started uploading our Storm Water Management Plan to the DC database. The mortgage application is moving along. The last step was a visit by a surveyor last Tuesday, so we should close on the mortgage this month. The mortgage required a professional appraisal of the property. The appraiser has valued our property at \$8.4 million, but will be worth \$12.4 million after the renovation.

Major Items:

Friends accepted the Spiritual State of the Meeting Report, following the second presentation by Ministry and Worship Committee Clerk, Greg Robb

Budget, first presentation – Jim Bell

- Jim introduced our trusty bookkeeper, Laurie Wilner, who was available to answer any questions.
- Two [FY18 budgets](#) have been provided, one presented with construction, one without. This is because the construction may or may not start before the end of the fiscal year, June 30th. Construction will naturally limit our event rental income. Note that the budget with construction will mean a shortfall of \$190,000, which will be paid by withdrawals from our reserves, held in an account with the Friends Corporation.
- A friend suggested that we share a balance sheet with the Meeting; Laurie will provide it.

- The biannual appeal letter is coming out soon, but this year it will be done by email (those without email will receive by mail).

Approval of the Property Committee Request for Expenditures from the Capital Reserve Fund FY2017

- Friends approved the use of the Capital Reserve Fund for two key property requests that were made in 2015: (1) repairs to the fence outside and (2) to replace the furnace. The fence has been repaired, and we are now following up on the furnace. property committee has considered it at different points in the past. The furnace we are replacing only heats the Main Meeting Room, which is only used a few hours a week. Due to limited use and the overall cost, we do not think geothermal heating is viable to replace this existing unit.

Approval of Request from Hunger & Homelessness Taskforce to support the Public Restroom Initiative – Presented Steve Brooks and special guests

- Steve introduced representatives from the “People for Fairness Coalition,” which advocates for the homeless and for people with housing instability.
- Public restrooms did exist in the U.S. in the 1950s, but they became controversial because they were perceived by some as being “dens of sexual perversion.” The Initiative is working for clean, safe, accessible restrooms that anyone can use at any time.
- The Coalition has done comprehensive research on the need for and the feasibility and standards for clean, safe public restrooms that are open full time. This research confirmed that there is a need in DC for public restrooms in areas that meet some key criteria, (1) high rates of housing instability/homeless, (2) public pedestrian foot traffic and tourism, and (3) existing water and sewage connections. Dupont Circle is the first area they are focused on for establishing public restrooms. Once restrooms are established there, the Coalition will extend their actions to others areas of DC.
- Why is this important?
 - Access to clean, safe restrooms are critical to personal and public health. Most European capitals, and some U.S. cities such as Portland, San Francisco, have them.
 - Everyone should have the right to use the restroom. Restrooms available to all save money by avoiding arrests for public defecation, with attendant police, court, and jail expenses.
- Who Benefits?
 - Tourists, elderly people, people with babies or young children, pregnant and menstruating women, bikers/joggers/runners, people with medical problems, taxi drivers, homeless people (DC law is \$500 fine or 90 days in jail for public urination!).
- What do we do?
 - Right now, businesses can open their businesses to people. Some cities use a special sign posted outside the business indicating their restroom is available. London in the UK has such a program that provides payments to businesses that allow non-customers to use their restrooms.

- Advocacy
 - Coalition building - invite other organizations to join the online petition
 - Testify to the DC Council
 - Advocate - Council Member Vincent Gray chairs the Committee on Homelessness in DC
 - There is an Act sponsored by the Coalition www.pffcdc.org/what-we-do/public-restrooms
 - Contact Marcia Bernbaum at mbern362@aol.com for more information.
- Questions from the Meeting
 - Why are we focused on the NW quadrant of the city? The group is starting downtown because of the high density of homeless persons and tourists. After restrooms are established in this area, the Coalition will move forward to make them available elsewhere in the city.
 - What about “porta-potties”? The Coalition has done a cost analysis of this. It is extremely costly because of the maintenance they require daily and because of aesthetic considerations.
 - What about churches? Can they open their doors? How can they be involved? Yes, FMW does open its doors to homeless people, though it isn’t advertised.
 - A friend noted that this is a gender justice issue. The Coalition has partnered with “Gender Justice for Safe Spaces” to collaborate on public restroom design that is safe and accessible for all people.
- Friends approved supporting this initiative.
 - We will endorse this initiative, putting ourselves on the public list of supporters on their website.
 - We will send a letter to DC government (drafted by Hunger and Homelessness Task Force), signed by the Clerk.

Approval of the request for FMW to formally join the DMV Sanctuary Congregation Network presented by Rebecca Harris

- A dedicated FMW group has met monthly for many months to discern how FMW can be a part of the Sanctuary Congregation movement. The group has decided that we will join it and have, through the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, formed a task force.
- Sanctuary doesn’t mean we will host families at risk; it means engaging in whole spectrum of educational and advocacy leadership in our city.
- A Friend commented that FMW has strongly considered hosting and have not yet made a decision on the matter, which could be considered more fully at a another time.

Other Business:

Minutes presented from the Committee of Clerks meeting - Grant Thompson noted that the minutes of the Committee of Clerks meeting held on April 30, 2017 were included with the materials available at this meeting and are attached to these minutes.

Nominating Committee- Grant Thompson (for Todd Harvey, clerk of the Committee)

- Friends approved the resignation of F.T. Clark from Finance & Stewardship
- Friends expressed gratitude for his service.

Assessing Racial Inclusion and Justice at FMW – Debby Churchman & Marcia Reecer

- A year ago, a reading group for the book *Waking Up White* began at FMW.
- FMW surveyed the racial makeup of our Meeting, revealing that we are 92% white.
- A small group has met to focus on how our community can be more welcoming to people of color.
- Friends noted that this concern was documented as an action item in our Spiritual State of the Meeting Report.
- The task force has developed an assessment tool that each committee and reading group should work through to understand any implicit bias they may have.
- A friend commented that not understanding the problem is not enough; action and change are required. The committee is planning on supporting FMW as it considers remedies and actions for next steps.

Capital Campaign Update – Susan Griffin

- We are up to \$858,000, VERY close to our \$900,000 goal set by FMW October 2016.
- Gratitude was expressed to donors and to those working on the Campaign, including the record keeping involved.

Friends APPROVED the minutes.

The Meeting closed at 1:51 PM with approximately 14 persons in attendance to reconvene as Way opens on June 18, 2017 (Father's Day).

Spiritual State of the Meeting Report

Friends Meeting of Washington

May 2017

It is hard to ignore the impact of the presidential election on our meeting. It has at once raised hopes FMW can be a true Shining Light that will attract new members while reviving worries we may not be up to the task of being such a Light. Some are more engaged in political activities while Republicans wonder if there is a place for them at FMW.

We used this year's Spiritual State of the Meeting to get a sense from members, attenders and sojourners about what brought them to Quakerism, their hopes for the meeting and the barriers they face in getting more involved.

Here are a few observations from this year's survey:

Of course everyone's path to Quakerism and FMW was unique. One fact stood out. Many said they decided to investigate the Quaker faith after seeing or meeting a Quaker in action. That leads to a natural question: Are we at FMW being "seen" enough? Are we active in our community?

Many members hope FMW can find a better balance between silence and vocal ministry.

Some believe we should try to find a better way to balance messages of social activism and the needs of the spirit.

There was agreement we must commit to working "consistently and persistently" work to remove barriers that keep many people of color away.

There was hope we would improve adult religious education to make sure everyone's spiritual needs are being addressed.

There was hope of additional volunteers to go help in the First Day school so that parents can attend meeting.

There was hope the meeting could become more welcoming.

There were indications that some unduly aggressive messages have dissuaded newcomers from joining the Meeting.

The work ahead for Ministry and Worship is to share the findings with our fellow committees and go through some joint assessments. We must be open to try new approaches while holding onto what has worked in the past. We must find ways to unify our meeting. The way ahead is not clear. But as one attender said: “Quakers get to the right place in the end.”

A recurrent concern is that the unprogrammed nature of the Meeting is put at risk by misbehaviors of some who insist on speaking every week. We doubt that weekly messages really come from the Spirit. We remind Members and Attenders that preparing messages is against Quaker practice. We are also concerned about the offensive nature of some of these messages. It is disrespectful to the Meeting to behave in such a way and the question becomes: to protect the special needs of a few but essentially one person, are we not putting the Meeting in crisis and sacrificing the spiritual needs of many others who long to have an unprogrammed Meeting and take refuge in the “smaller” Meetings or simply leave?

Property Committee Renovation & Maintenance Capital Budget

for FY 2017

Property Committee requested and Finance & Stewardship Committee approved two capital spending items back in November 2015, but these items were never formally approved by Meeting for Business. Belatedly, here they are for Meeting consideration. The work on the first item is still pending, but imminent, while the second item has been completed. There are sufficient funds in the Capital Reserve to cover both items.

- **Replacement of the Meeting Room AC compressor and furnaces.**

The Meeting Room is served by twin gas furnaces, paired with a 10-Ton AC compressor. The furnaces, which are lightly used, are still fine after 29 years of service, but the 17-year-old compressor is nearing the end of its life, is showing signs of age, and uses R-22 refrigerant, a kind of Freon that depletes the ozone layer and contributes to global warming. R-22 is banned in Europe and is being phased out in the US, making it increasingly costly. Our HVAC contractors advise us to replace the compressor the next time it needs significant servicing and say the furnaces need to be replaced at the same time because they are incompatible with new AC equipment. We also want to upgrade both the furnaces and compressors to more energy-efficient and quieter systems to reduce humidity-related problems in the furnace/storage room. The capital renovation plan calls for moving compressor farm to a location further north and it

makes sense to do the replacement prior to renovation construction. We request spending authorization up to \$25K.

- **Restoration of East Garden fences and railings.**

The extensive iron fences and railings are long overdue for extensive maintenance and continue to deteriorate. Further delay will increase the ultimate costs. The required work, at this point, involves removing the fences, gates, and railings and taking them to a shop for sand blasting, powder-painting, and reinstallation all fence sections and gates. We request spending authorization up to \$20K.

PUBLIC RESTROOMS INITIATIVE

PEOPLE FOR FAIRNESS COALITION

People living in, working in, and visiting European and Asian capitals take it for granted that, when they need to go, they will find a clean, safe, available public restroom nearby.

This, unfortunately, is not the case in Washington, DC, our nation's Capital. If you are in downtown DC and urgently have to go, you will have a hard time finding a public restroom nearby. Even if there is one, the hours are limited and there are no signs to tell you where it is located. Some private restaurants and food chains might let you in. However, increasingly they are limiting access to patrons. And, if you are walking in Washington DC late at night and urgently have to go, you may be in big trouble. Chances are you will have to walk a half-mile to a mile to find a clean, safe, restroom that is open; that is, if you know where the few restrooms in DC open 24/7 are located.

The People for Fairness Coalition (PFC) — established in April 2008 with the objective of finding housing for everyone in Washington DC through advocacy, outreach and peer mentoring — has taken up the challenge of ensuring that clean, safe public restrooms are available to everyone 24/7 in downtown areas of Washington DC.

Our overall strategy is to raise consciousness, educate on the problem, and build support through advocacy. To this end, our approach over the coming months is three pronged: (1) obtain support and buy in from two areas where we believe there is an immediate need for a public restroom — the Dupont Circle area and along the K Street corridor between Farragut and Franklin Squares (this includes obtaining support from local ANCs, resident associations, churches, businessmen and business organizations) ; (2) obtain support from DC Council members; and (3) obtain the support of important associations representing businesses, consumers, and associations that represent the homeless, senior, and individuals with disabilities.

DMV Sanctuary Congregation Network

We are a network of congregations in the DC/MD/VA region providing support and solidarity to neighbors, friends, and family who fear being detained, deported or profiled. Our faith will not allow us to permit the criminalization and scapegoating of immigrants and people of color. In the face of hate and discrimination, we are committed to showing love, compassion and hospitality.

Ways Congregations Can Stand with Those Targeted:

- [Accompanying people to ICE check-ins and legal hearings](#)
- Holding [Know Your Rights](#) and/or Defend Your Rights trainings
- Setting up Rapid Response networks to show up during ICE raids
- Hosting families at-risk of deportation and/or supporting those doing so
- [Advocating for your local, city, and state government officials](#) to get ICE out of schools, jails and courts, and end all policies that racially-profile and over-incarcerate people of color.

Committee of Clerks, 4.30.2017

Annual Evaluation of the Administrative Secretary- Bill Stein, clerk of the Personnel Committee summarized the feedback the Committee had received from other Committees. After full discussion, the Committee of Clerks were in unity in renewing the Administrative Secretary's contract for the coming year. Salary will be determined by discussion between Personnel Committee and Finance & Stewardship Committee and will be included in the budget to be presented to Meeting for Business later this year.

Ministry & Worship Committee - Greg Robb, clerk of Ministry & Worship Committee, and Liz Pomerleau, member of the committee, shared the plans the Committee has been making to deepen the worship experience at Friends Meeting of Washington. That report was received with gratitude and appreciation for the work of the Committee and support for their efforts.

Race Questionnaire- Debby Churchman shared that the reading group, "Waking Up White" brought FMW to create a task force on how to make our meeting more racially inclusive and reflective of the diversity of our city. We adapted a survey to have racial needs assessed in our meeting, which is 92% White.

- Next Step: Each committee will set aside 15-20 minutes to present the survey to work through it together.
- POCs: Debby Churchman, Marcia Reecer, David Etheridge, Jim Steen

FMW Service corps/mentoring- There is a new intergenerational service opportunity whose purpose is to bring adults and youth together to mentor youth and also serve our FMW community. Committees should consider service ideas for how we can support you! Also, we are looking for a small, motivated group to help convene our new pilot project! Please contact betsy.bramon@gmail.com if interested.

Property- FMW is prepping for the schedule of the upcoming renovation disruptions, which are coming up. Contact Neil Froemming with questions.

Assessing Racial Inclusion and Justice

Friends Meeting of Washington, 2017

The leading to undertake this Meeting-wide assessment started with a growing concern over the lack of diversity among our membership. This Meeting in no way reflects the make-up of people within our city or even our zip code. Instead, our membership is predominantly of white European descent.

Although we do not know all the reasons for this, we can safely assume that we are doing something—perhaps a lot of somethings—which creates barriers and stumbling blocks to participation by people of color. The goal of this assessment is both to identify these stumbling blocks, and to discern a way to remove them. To do so, we will rely on the wisdom, reflection, humility, knowledge and creativity of both existing Meeting committees and the Meeting as a whole. Identifying and removing these barriers, we believe, is a necessary and overdue act of restorative justice. .

We recognize race is not the only area in which FMW falls short. The meeting needs to address the concerns of all who feel excluded or poorly served by society. However, we feel that we need to focus on race because of:

- The longstanding lack of participation in FMW by people of color
- The growing urgency that many Friends feel, energized by the Black Lives and Sanctuary Movements, to address racial power and privilege in FMW and other Quaker organizations
- The role institutional racism continues to play in aspects of the Religious Society of Friends despite our notable accomplishments over the years.

An assessment was authorized in the fall when the Meeting for Business established a Task Force on Race to look at the FMW's policies and practices affecting racial inclusion and justice. The Task Force began by leaning on an anti-racism audit developed in 2004 by the United Church of Christ, for which we are grateful. We later decided to develop our own assessment process focusing on broad questions that reflect the experience of our Meeting. We also decided that the process should be a self-assessment that represents the views of the various FMW committees, task forces, worship groups, and other groups. The role of the Task Force is to facilitate the initiation of this self-assessment and pull together the responses of the various groups.

We ask that your group consider the questions provided with an open heart, and seek truthful answers to each. Awareness is the first step, and is often the most uncomfortable one—so much so, that we often seek ways to avoid it, or to diminish the extent of the problem. We seek as clear-minded an evaluation as you can make of our current practices. Later, when we are fully clear about these practices, we can together consider the ways they may be serving as stumbling blocks, and work to create practices and skills that are inclusive and barrier free.

Thank you for your willingness to undertake this assessment. May we all be strengthened by your courage and commitment to creating a fuller, more diverse community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 26-29 - DC Black Pride, May 26 – 29, 2017, <http://dcblackpride.org> To volunteer at the Quaker booth, please contact Michael Cronin, mcronin943@gmail.com

June 3: Help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. Convene at 6:15 am at **So Others Might Eat**. For more information, contact Betsy Bramon at betsy.bramon@gmail.com

June 7: Help make sandwiches for the **Grate Patrol** to take to our vulnerable neighbors, starting at 5:30 pm. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at sbrooks@uab.edu

June 5 – Help Reverse Global Warming, Bethesda Public Library (Bethesda, MD) Looking for hope and actions to help reverse global warming? Come to learn how farmers, engaged humans, and nature are regenerating soils and revitalizing ecosystems to help cool the planet. Your choices can help too. Bethesda Friends Meeting and Biodiversity for a Livable Climate present 5 short films followed by a panel discussion with a carbon farmer, a policy expert, and a soil/ecosystem scientist. The program will begin at 7pm and light refreshments will be available. For more information, email tod@tsw32.us or call 202-322-2267.

June 8-11: Capital Pride parade & festival, <http://capitalpride.org/celebration-2017> To help with the Quaker booth and/or march with Friends, contact Michael Cronin at mcronin943@gmail.com

June 23 – 28 – Quaker Spring: Experiencing the Inward Christ Together, Oakwood Friends School (Poughkeepsie, NY) Are you longing for more quiet opportunities to worship and share with other Friends? Would you enjoy taking part in a radically unprogrammed retreat with Friends from a variety of theological backgrounds for a week or just a few days? The program will be shaped by God's leading as the week unfolds. Each day will include Bible Study, worship, quiet time, evening explorations, and fellowship. Fees by freewill offering (guideline of roughly \$46-60/adult/day for dorm room and meals). Deadline to register for the children's program is June 1. For full information and registration, go to www.quakerspring.org, or contact the planning group at quakerspring@gmail.com.

June 30 – July 2 – Dayspring Silent Retreat for Baltimore Yearly Meeting Friends
Dayspring Retreat Center (Germantown, MD), Take this opportunity to hear the Still Small Voice while walking in the meadow or warming at the hearth. Annapolis Friends will be joined by other Baltimore Yearly Meeting Friends, space allowing. In the past there has been ample room! The warmth of spiritual community in the heart of winter, amid nature's beauty--what a blessing! Love and Light to you as you consider joining in this adventure. The purpose of silent retreat is the deepening of communion with God, with other persons and with oneself. ... (W)e make space for...a time of waiting in silence, in solitude, to hear the voice of the One "Who speaks in everything that is, and who, most of all, speaks in the depths of our own being." (Thomas Merton). Cost is \$220. Registration deadline is June 23 or when full. For more information or to register, contact Jean Christianson. (jschristianson@gmail.com or 410-544-1912)

June 17 – Sixth Month Interim Meeting, Gunpowder Friends Meeting (Sparks, MD) Get to know Yearly Meeting Committees and Friends from other Meetings! Be a part of important decision making. Join Friends for morning committee meetings and the afternoon's Interim Business Meeting. Gunpowder Friends Meeting will host the Sixth Month Interim Meeting. Friends will begin gathering

at 10:00am. Committee meetings will begin at 10:30. [Check the Yearly Meeting website for more information.](#)

Looking forward:

July 2-8: FGC Gathering, Niagara, NY As water collects from the vast North American Great Lakes watershed to flow down the mighty Niagara River, we invite you to join the energy of a thousand Quakers converging from far and wide at Niagara University for a week of worship, socializing, learning, deepening, fun and more. Our proximity to Niagara Falls (4 miles | 6 km) offers numerous sightseeing options as well as the opportunity to reflect on whether your spiritual journey has you in the rapids above the falls, in the midst of great change, downriver from a significant transition or somewhere else on the river. Our theme, **Ripples Start Where Spirit Moves**, invites you to contemplate where spirit is moving in your life and those around you and what ripples you notice as a result. For more information: <http://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering>

July 31 - August 6 – Annual Session 2017, Hood College (Frederick, MD) Some of us come to feel at home with Friends through worship first, some through social activism, and some through community. As we continue on our path with Friends, we inevitably encounter the other two and perhaps integrate all three into our Quaker experience. What has your experience been? Have you discovered how all three of these interact with each other as essential elements of the Quaker way? Join us at Annual Session this year to share in our exploration of this question. This year, the theme of our Annual Session is *Growing Towards Justice – Acting on Faith*. Through a truly exciting variety of plenaries, workshops, interest groups, Junior Yearly Meeting, through fellowship at meals, worship sharing, and other times, and also through our business sessions, we will have an opportunity to live out all three of these core elements of our faith. Registration is now open. Go to <http://www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession/> for all of the information and online registration. Register by June 26 to get the lower rates!

August 18 - 20 - Quaker Religious Education Collaborative Gathering, Quaker Hill (Richmond, IN) Join the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative for their 4th Annual Gathering. There will be a panel discussion on *What is the Role of the Bible in Quaker Religious Education?*, workshops, interest groups, and 2 nights of singing and music with Annie Patterson. For more information, including registration, go to www.quakers4re.org. The Quaker Religious Education Collaborative is a grassroots network of Friends holding a sense of stewardship for life-long Quaker Faith formation.

Thinking About Race – (June 2017) – Spare the Kids by Stacey Patton

From The New York Times, March 12, 2017, “Stop Beating Black Children,” by Stacey Patton, Assistant Professor of multimedia journalism at Morgan State University and author of **Spare the Kids: Why Whupping Children Won’t Save Black America.**”

“Black children are also more at risk of being assaulted, seriously injured or killed by a parent than by a police officer, a neighborhood watchman or an irritated racist who hates rap music. We have to stop hurting our children to protect them. It is not working. And worse, it erodes our children’s humanity and co-signs the slave maser’s logic that you have to hit a black body to make it comply.

....

“The violence that black children experience from trigger-happy cops, in the streets of cities like Baltimore and Chicago, in schools and at home is all inter-connected. It is all strange and bitter fruit from the same tree. I am asking that black parents stop assisting in the devaluation of our children.

“Instead, we must make black children the antidote to centuries of racism.”

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting. The BYM WGR meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Locations vary to allow access to more Friends. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

This column is a big shout out to the many many awake and alert Friends at FMW who have been showing with their hearts and hands what it means to be a Quaker in these crazy times. I’m talking about all of you who stepped up to provide housing for the tired Climate marchers—**Steve Brooks** and his Costco run, **Jiwon Park** (who brought bagels and hard boiled eggs and then worked like crazy), **A.E. Lovett and Susan Bien** (who took on getting breakfast ready for 15 people and instead served 70), **Emilie Schmeidler, Erin Murphy, Mike Duvall** and **Jim Bell** (who stayed overnight to let everyone in) and all those who saw the situation and just pitched in. We hosted a lovely group of students from Warren Wilson College and what was supposed to be a small contingent from the Onadango People in upstate New York—but it turned into 45 extra folks after an 11 pm urgent phone call.

You are all fabulous.

And so were the marchers—**Nicole Else Quest** and her kids, **Anita and Ken** taking **Zy** on his first march, **Charlie and Susan Bien, Zoe Plaughter**, me, and many more out there in the frying weather experiencing climate change.

And have I mentioned the wonderful Sanctuary folks? A large number of FMWers are being gently herded by **Rebecca Harris** who apparently has nothing else to do with her time besides, I don’t know, getting a law degree and a new job. And **Jim Bell** (again!) who opened our doors to the DMV Sanctuary folks so they could train more than 100 people in how to accompany people to their ICE interviews.

And then there are the **Hunger & Homelessness** folks who, in addition to running 4 feeding programs each month, have now decided to help the People for Fairness Coalition in their campaign to get the city to open up public bathrooms. This will directly benefit those who are housing unstable (who can be fined and jailed for public urination, which is what you get when there are no bathrooms available), but anyone who has ever needed to pee. The Meeting for Business has minuted our support for this group, thanks to **Steve Brooks** bringing in their representatives, and we may be asked to show up at a forthcoming city council meeting. Let Steve Brooks know if you'd like to help.

We won't even attempt to list the many ways each of you are letting your lives speak—at home, at work, in the community—on behalf of peace and social justice. Just a big thank you. And a shout. Yay!

- Debby