

# May 2012 Newsletter

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## FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON MONTHLY MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH A CONCERN FOR BUSINESS April 8, 2012

**4/12.1 Opening** The Meeting opened at 12:16 pm with a period of silent worship. David Etheridge served as Clerk, Meg Greene as Alternate Clerk and Debby Churchman as Recording Clerk. The clerks read Advices, Queries and Voices concerning Peace which have been proposed by the Faith and Practice Revision Committee of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

### Advices

Since its founding over 350 years ago, the Society of Friends has testified to the worth of every individual by refusing to participate in war. We repudiate war because it violates the primacy of love, destroys lives that God has given, and tears the fabric of society. Members of our Society have traditionally refused to serve in the armed forces. The Peace Testimony is, however, more than a mere refusal to participate in war.

Fox's assertion that he "lived in that light and power that takes away the occasion for war" and Woolman's advice that we "examine our lives to see that the seeds of war are not contained therein" firmly establish connections between this and other testimonies. As we work for peace in the world, we search out the seeds of war in ourselves and in our way of life. We work to create the conditions of peace, such as freedom, justice, cooperation, and the right sharing of the world's resources.

Our faith calls for us to be fully present to the person before us. History has shown that when a future outcome, however noble, seems of greater worth than the human being before us, any means, any atrocity, is possible. We need to bring into God's light those emotions, attitudes and prejudices in ourselves which lie at the root of destructive conflict, acknowledging our need for forgiveness and grace.

Peace is the state in which we are in accord with God, the earth, others, and ourselves. We know that true, lasting peace among us flows from unity in the life of the spirit.

## **Queries**

What does it mean to live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all war?

Where there are hatred, division, and strife, how are we instruments of reconciliation and love?

How do we communicate to others an understanding of the basis of our peace testimony?

As we work for peace in the world, are we nourished by peace within and among ourselves?

How do we think of those we believe have harmed us or others? How does our way of thinking about them affect our spiritual lives?

## **Voices**

Why are we here? If I understand the message of God, his response to that question is that we are to take part in the creation of the Peaceable Realm of God. Again, if I understand the message of God, how we take part in the creation of this realm is to love God with all our heart, our mind and our strength and to love our neighbors and enemies as we love God and ourselves. In its essential form, different aspects of love bring about the creation of the realm. *—Tom Fox*

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.

*—Martin Luther King, Jr.*

George Fox did not say that he believed war to be wrong, or that in his opinion brute force never settled anything; he went straight to the heart of the matter and said that he "lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars." To uphold such a testimony involved a dedicated life. The Quaker peace testimony is more than a repudiation of war, and more than a denial of the use of force; it is a way of life to which we must be faithful in small things as well as in great, in our human relationships, our business and social activities, and in the life and witness of our meetings. *—Elfrida Vipont Foulds*

If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner. *—Nelson Mandela*

There have been a number of times that I have been in some real or potential danger - at peace actions, working in the ghetto, or confronting irrational or violent people. In those times I have not been without fear, but I have never since felt the fear I felt when I first made the commitment to give up reliance on violence to protect me. I believe that when I became convinced of the peace testimony, I was given a leading which, in effect, immersed me in terror and the stuff of violence so that I could know my condition and work with it. I was tested and strengthened in conditions of safety before I was ever tested in real conflict. *—Paul Lacey*

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,

When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins;

To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nation,  
To bring peace among brothers and sisters,  
To make music in the heart.

—Howard Thurman

**4/12.2 Welcome of Visitors** – Approximately 40 friends were present. FMW welcomed Liz Paxton from Washington and Mike Gilbert from Arch Street Meeting in Philadelphia.

**4/12.3 Clerks' Report**— The Social Forum workshops of the National Occupation of DC will continue at FMW from 4/10/12 through 4/13/12. All Friends are invited to participate.

Healing and Reconciliation invites Friends to a listening session on Saturday, April 14 from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm in the Meeting Room concerning the events in early 2012 when a convicted sex offender sought to worship at FMW. Former FMW Presiding Clerk Carlotta Joyner will facilitate. Child care will be provided, and lunch will be provided to the children.

Friends are invited to attend a presentation by teenagers from Olney Friends School in Ohio on “Youth, Peace and the Environment” on Sunday, April 15 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm in the Assembly Room. There will be a potluck dinner afterwards.

At 6:30 pm that same day, William Penn House will host a potluck dinner and presentation by Michael Long concerning his new book, *I Must Resist: Bayard Rustin's Life in Letters*.

Brett McBride and Victor Malychev will be married on Saturday, April 21 at 10:00 am in the Meetingroom. There will be a cake and cookie reception the next day at rise of Meeting.

Also at 10:00 am on Saturday, April 21, the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism invites Friends to a workshop entitled, “What Is This Thing Called Privilege?” in the Quaker House Living Room.

A Friend reported that she will not be able to participate in this meeting because of the use of microphones, which are physically painful to her.

A Friend advised us to hold the microphone about a foot away from their mouth so that the volume isn't painfully loud.

Friends asked us to consider holding Meeting for Business in the Assembly Room or the North Room, or turning all benches to face the high rise facing bench, for better acoustics. Friends are urged to share their concerns and ideas with the Property Committee.

## **MAJOR ITEMS**

**4/12.4 Report of the Child Safety Committee**— Tracy Hart of the Child Safety Committee presented an update regarding the activities of the committee (see attached Child Safety Committee Report Outline, Policy to Reduce the Risk of Child Abuse, and Baltimore Yearly Meeting Religious Education Committee's Recommendations Concerning Members and Attenders who are Alleged Sex Offenders.)

The Child Safety policy originated in 2005, and was approved by Meeting for Business in 2006. The Child Safety Committee first convened in 2007, under the care of Religious Education. Its mandate was to implement a policy which would put us in compliance with insurance guideline rules, which required us to conduct reference checks on all who work with children and teens—both those who are hired to do so, and volunteers.

Recently, the committee's membership has increased from three to six members. They are developing a framework which the Meeting as a whole can use to decide how to provide support and safety for children and families, for survivors of sexual abuse, and for individuals who are sex offenders. The committee is gathering background materials and policies from the wider Quaker world; many of these have been placed in our library for all to review. The committee is also working with Healing & Reconciliation, Personal Aid, and Religious Education Committees.

There are a number of meetings already scheduled to help the Meeting as a whole to work through the challenges of welcoming sex offenders. Healing and Reconciliation is calling a meeting on April 14 for members and attenders to speak with and listen to one another around our shared recent experience of being asked to welcome a convicted child sex offender. William Penn House has scheduled a workshop at FMW around how Quakers minister to the incarcerated and those released from the prison system. Other meetings may be called to help discern a policy for FMW regarding sex offenders at the Meeting.

We are renewing our background checks on all individuals who teach or provide child care, and are in the process of revising the child safety policy and considering the development of a policy toward sex offenders based on the policy of BYM.

Elise Stork of Child Safety asks that Friends listen to each other, not second guess each other, and give each other respect for different points of view. She appreciates the work of Tracy and Anita in welcoming all of the very different opinions expressed on the committee. She asks that we be tender with one another as we develop policies.

A Friend points out that the draft policies are clear about how to respond to alleged sex offenders, but don't address how to identify these people. Tracy responded that the policy holds that those who volunteer with our children be a member or attender for at least six months, and that the volunteers provide the names of at least two people (one in Meeting and one outside of Meeting) who can speak to the question of this person and child abuse. Some Non-Quaker congregations typically ask members to self-identify if they have been convicted of sexual offenses; if they fail to do so, they can be asked to leave when their past is discovered.

A Friend spoke to the tension of the Meeting. He is concerned that we adhere to very strict confidentiality as we research the background of other people. He finds it difficult to deal with the dissonance of holding each other in the Light and working to see that of God in them while investigating their criminal background. He hopes that committee members will have skills and experience to be able to deal with these very sensitive issues.

A Friend expressed concern over the effort to identify and develop a chaperone policy. He believes such a practice would give us a false sense of security. With that kind of policy, he believes, we won't feel secure unless we run a background check on each person who walks through the Meetinghouse doors, a practice which he thinks would not adhere to our faith.

Another Friend expressed concern over a policy of requiring chaperones or requiring that the offender attend a separate meeting for worship. She believes such policies will encourage secrecy and drive sex offenders underground. Also, if the sex offender discloses to anyone, it will put that person in a difficult position. An offender recently disclosed his offense to us before coming to the Meeting; this differs from other offenders who may be in denial or unwilling to disclose. She quotes Trespass and Trust, a British

Quaker pamphlet about dealing with sex offenders at a Quaker meeting (available in FMW's library), which urges a more flexible approach than rigid requirements.

A Friend spoke regarding the chaperone question. He asked a Presbyterian minister if he'd had similar experience, and learned much from this conversation. This Friend spoke in favor of the buddy system--a chaperone to shadow the sex offender, at least until everyone is comfortable with the situation.

A Friend said she would be comfortable if as many people as possible were willing to have their records searched, to serve as role models. She undergoes a police check yearly as part of her job.

A Friend asked us to pay attention to George Fox's advice about hiring ministers. We should not get so focused on certified experts, paperwork and the helping professions as opposed to following the Quaker way. She asks that we don't worship the credentials, but look to our faith for an answer.

A Friend asked if there was a decision being made at this meeting. Tracy said that this presentation was to bring Friends up to date on the current work of the committee. She invites Friends to subscribe to an update list. The Meeting is not being asked to make a decision now.

A Friend asked if the buddy system is necessary to be in compliance with the law or insurance. If so, she says, then we would have to decide as a Meeting if we choose to comply with such a law. If not, we should grapple with the treatment of the sex offender solely as a question of faith.

Tracy spoke regarding the chaperone system. Neither DC nor Virginia requires such a policy; but some states do require or highly recommend this for all multi-generational events. There are training programs for chaperones. Most places of worship which include known sex offenders do have some kind of chaperone system, which varies depending on the level of offense, and whether or not the offender is on probation or parole or are on a sex offender registry. The chaperone system is less the norm at Quaker meetings. The Quaker norm is to provide the offender with a support group; that group typically provides support, advocacy, and an escort system. These support committees do not replace a strong child safety system that works to protect both the children and the offender.

A Friend believes that what makes a Meeting for Business different is that we have a period of worshipful reflection. He is convinced that such a period would enhance this discussion.

A period of worshipful silence followed.

**4/12.5 Draft Spiritual State of the Meeting report**– Debby Churchman, Clerk of Ministry & Worship, made the second presentation of this report (see attached). It includes one small revision from last month's presentation. Friends APPROVED this draft.

**4/12.6 Nominating Committee**– Beth Cogswell, Clerk of Nominating, presented the committee's recommendation concerning membership requirements for certain committee service (see attached). If it is necessary for the committee to request a waiver for a nomination, the committee recommends that such waivers be held over for one month so that any concerns may be brought privately to the Nominating Committee.

A Friend spoke in favor of that recommendation. She also requests that the Nominating Committee tell the Meeting the reason that a candidate is considered outstanding.

A Friend spoke about the importance of valuing the work of committees. He said our policy as reflected in the Handbook and requested today is a reminder of that value.

Friends APPROVED having requested waivers lie over for one month.

## MILESTONES

**4/12.7 Membership Committee** –Jean Meyer Capps, Co-Clerk of Membership, made the following requests.

1. Request for Membership of Patrick Marchman (second presentation). David Etheridge made the second presentation of membership for this friend. Friends APPROVED.
2. Request for Membership of Elizabeth (Liz) Paxton (first presentation). Jean Meyer Capps made this presentation. This request will lie over for a month, as is our custom.
3. Request for Transfer of Marsha Holliday from Langley Hill Friends Meeting to Friends Meeting of Washington (first presentation). Jean Meyer Capps offered a Welcome Home to Marsha, who was a member here before moving to Langley Hill. This request will lie over for one month, as is our custom.
4. Transfer of Shannon Garvey Hughes from Friends Meeting of Washington to Williamsburg (Virginia) Friends Meeting. Shannon is in graduate school in Williamsburg. Friends APPROVED the transfer.
5. Recommendation to drop Associate Members from Membership (second presentation). Friends APPROVED this request.
  - Hanna McDade
  - Jesse McDade
  - Robert Mays
  - Melissa Jones

Jean Meyer Capps also asks any members who are willing to be a welcome new members to let the committee know of their availability.

## REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

**4/12.8 Library Committee annual report** – Michael North, Clerk of the Library Committee, presented the committee's annual report (see attached). The committee continues to add books to the library and update the catalog; we have nearly 2000 books (5% more than last year). However, the median publishing date is 1968, and only 30% of the authors are female. We are carefully and judiciously culling the collection, and setting out duplicates in the parlor; suggested donation is \$1. If you wish to donate books to the library, please notify the committee and let them know the titles.

A friend asked if the committee has an online Wish List. They will take this under consideration.

**4/12.9 Nominating Committee** – Beth Cogswell, Clerk of Nominating, made the following recommendations:

- Nomination of Mark Cannon as Clerk of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee for 2012. He is not a Member. This nomination lies over for a month.
- Nomination of John Pepper as member of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee through 2014. Friends APPROVED.
- Resignation of Roger Burns from the Peace and Social Concerns Committee. Friends ACCEPTED.

- Nomination of Mohamad Olabi to Marriage & Family Relations Committee until 2014. He is not a member, so we need a waiver. This nomination will lie over for a month. A Friend asked if non-members will or will not be allowed to sign a wedding license. Only some committee members have that authority right now. The question will be answered by next month.

**4/12.12** With approximately 22 attenders, the meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m., to reconvene as way opens on May 13 at Noon.

### **Attachments:**

Child Safety Committee Report Outline  
FMW Policy to Reduce the Risk of Child Abuse  
BYM Religious Education Committee Recommendations Concerning Members and Attenders Who are Alleged Sex Offenders  
Draft Spiritual State of the Meeting  
Nominating Committee Report  
Library Committee Report

### **Child Safety Committee Report Outline**

Meeting for Business

April 2012

Current Work Program

### **Completed Items:**

- Creating an email distribution list of those who wish to receive updates on the work of the Child Safety Committee
- Creating a 'living library' of Quaker-based resources on child safety and sex offender policy available in the FMW Library (thanks to Michael North and the Library Committee)

### **Current Action Items:**

1. Implementation of current Child Safety Policy approved at Meeting for Business in 2006, and amended in 2007, including background checks for FMW adults volunteer in Child Care, First Day School and Teen activities.
2. Participation in the April 14th 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. threshing session with Healing and Reconciliation, and follow-up.
3. Participation in the William Penn-hosted "Everyone is Welcome: A Quaker Struggle" session at FMW May 5th 9 a.m. to noon.
4. Research into and possible development of a chaperone/escort policy for sex offenders.
5. Research into and compilation of Quaker and non-Quaker child safety and sex offender child safety, sex offender policies, and survivor of abuse guidance into an annotated bibliography, so as to have many variants to draw from for our own process.
6. Sending out an email to the FMW list-serve every six months asking anyone, including families and survivors of sexual abuse, if they would like to be added to the list of those who wish

to receive updates on the work of the Child Safety Committee.

**In Development:**

7. Adding small print to the monthly newsletter asking anyone, including families and survivors of sexual abuse, if they would like to be added to the list of those who wish to receive updates on the work of the Child Safety Committee
8. Include Child Safety related materials in the binder for Friendly Office Presence (FOP) people.
9. Take a look at having First Day School at start at 10:30, so that children are handed off directly to FDS teachers, and FDS teachers return children directly back to the Meeting Room at 11:10 (with Religious Education and Ministry and Worship)
10. Child Safety Workshops: First to be piloted with new Childcare Workers, then Adults, then FDS Children. (with Childcare Coordinator and Religious Education Committee)
11. Revision of the current 2006/7 Child Safety Policy. (see hand-out) to include provisions for outside the FDS Classroom, i.e. FMW campus-wide, and to include reference to the Sex Offender Annex (see item #12).
12. Drafting of a FMW-Specific Annex to the Child Safety Policy, on Recommendations Concerning Members and Attenders Who Are Alleged Sex Offenders, based on BYM Recommendations (see handout). Additionally, Inclusion of references to the Child Safety Policy and the Sex Offenders Recommendations Annex in the Records and Handbook, where relevant. (with Meeting for Business and Records and Handbook)
13. Revisiting status of the Child Safety Committee, which is currently a Standing Committee under the care of the Religious Education Committee. Bring new Members to be Nominated through Nominating Committee to Meeting for Business. (with Religious Education and Nominating Committees)
14. Ensure that Playground equipment, surfaces, and area continues to be safe (with Property and Garden Committees)

Submitted by current Child Safety Committee Members:

Anita Drever & Tracy Hart

As well as members-in-process:

Marsha Holliday

Carrie Mitchell

Katrina Peterson &

Elise Storck

**Friends Meeting of Washington**

**Policy to Reduce the Risk of Child Abuse**

*Final: November 26, 2006*

*Approved at MWCB on November 12, 2006; Effective March 31, 2007*



## **A. INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been developed to ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that our Meeting environment is a place of safety and security for the children and adults who are part of our ministry to children. We hope that their establishment and application will serve as a source of security and trust for all Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) children and adults who work with the children.

## **B. Who is affected by this policy?**

First Day School teachers and Assistant First Day School Teachers,

Adults providing care of nursery aged children,

Paid employees who work with children,

Adults driving children (other than their own) in vehicles to or from Meeting-sponsored events at the request of FMW event coordinators,

Adult volunteers who supervise meeting sponsored overnight events,

Adults who may provide one on one counseling or mentoring to children, and

Children aged 14 through 17 who are involved with caring for younger children.

## **C. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE POLICY?**

A Child Safety Committee will be established, not to exceed three members, comprised of representatives of the Personnel Committee, the Religious Education Committee, the Child Care Committee, or others as approved by FMW's Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. This Committee may consult with the Clerk of the Meeting, or the Clerk of Trustees as needed.

## **D. DEFINITIONS:**

Child (children): Youth, or Minor – Any person(s) seventeen years of age or younger.

Nursery Age: Children too young to participate in regular First Day School classes.

“Child abuse and neglect is the intentional, physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of any child under the age of eighteen by a person who is responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances which indicate the child's health or welfare is threatened.” (DC Code 16-2307(9)(23))

## **E. Confidentiality:**

All information collected in connection with implementing this policy will be kept in the strictest confidence, to the extent allowed by law.

All papers generated in conjunction with the application process will be kept in the Meeting House vault or other secure storage location. None of these records will be distributed to any entity other than FMW's Child Safety Committee, Administrative Secretary, and Assistant Secretary. Anyone who works with children has the right to inspect his or her own file in the presence of a member of the Child Safety Committee, the Administrative Secretary, or the Assistant Secretary, and has the right to submit written refutation of any material they deem to be inaccurate or misleading.

The Candidate will be provided with a Non-Disclosure STATEMENT (Appendix “C”) signed by a member of the Child Safety Committee.

## **F. APPLICATION PROCESS**

1. All individuals who plan to work with children must fill out and sign an Application Form (Appendix A) providing the names of two references.
2. All volunteers who work with children must be known to the Meeting as a member or attender for a minimum of six months prior to assuming their duties.
3. All employees working with children must undergo a national criminal background check.
4. All volunteers who will be attending overnight activities or driving children, other than their own, at the request of FMW event coordinators to or from events sponsored by the Meeting, must undergo national criminal background check prior to having assumed this duty.
5. All applicants for whom a national criminal background check is appropriate will fill out and sign a Background Investigation Consent form. (Appendix B)
6. All individuals who plan to work with children will attend a training session including this policy and its implementation.
7. Any one who has a conviction for child abuse of any kind will not be allowed to participate in religious education or other youth-oriented activities.
8. Any employee or volunteer for whom there is an ongoing investigation of an alleged child abuse incident will not be allowed to participate in religious education or other youth-oriented activities until after the investigation is completed and found to have no basis for concern.

## **G. CONDUCT OF MEETING ACTIVITIES INVOLVING CHILDREN**

1. The principle of “No child left alone with an adult” will prevail. There should always be at least two adults or two children in a First Day School classroom. This principle applies in all secluded places including restrooms.
2. Classes and other activities should be conducted with two adults present.
3. In the event that only one adult is present with a class, the door to the classroom should be left open, unless there is a window in the door or nearby wall. In the case of the Preschool Room of Quaker House, this requirement can be met when all window shades are up and otherwise unobstructed, with interior lights on so that the interior of the room is visible from the Decatur Place sidewalk.
4. Teacher /student ratios should not exceed;  
  
Birth – 3 yrs 1:4  
  
4 yrs – 8 yrs 1:8  
  
9 yrs – 18 yrs 1:10
5. Field trips or day excursions require the supervision of at least two adults who have been approved as a result of the application process outlined above. In the event that children will be

present without their parent(s)/ guardian(s), a parent/guardian will provide the leader of the event with a suitable "CONSENT AND HOLD HARMLESS FORM" (Appendix D).

6. At Other Events, such as family camping weekends, where children with adults are present, it is assumed that the children are under the care of their parents/guardian. In the event that children will be present without their parents/guardians, a parent/guardian will provide the leader of the event with a suitable "CONSENT AND HOLD HARMLESS FORM" (Appendix "D")

7. The Child Safety Committee will conduct a training session at least once a year for anyone wishing to teach or assist with teaching First Day School Classes or other youth activities outlined above. Other adults will be welcome. Training sessions will cover prevention, discovery and reporting of child abuse incidents. Adults needing training in between annual training sessions may be trained with videos or other instructional methods.

8. Children 14-18, caring for younger children will always be supervised by an adult who is present.

**H. PROCEDURE FOR INDIVIDUALS MAKING OR HANDLING A REPORT OF AN ALLEGED CHILD ABUSE INCIDENT**

1. In reporting the incident, make a record of the time, place, the persons involved, the general nature of the incident, and the exact words used. Do not conduct an investigation.

2. Inform the Clerk of the Committee having jurisdiction over the event at which the abuse occurred (e.g. Religious Education) or a member of the Child Safety Committee. In the absence of any of the above, inform the Clerk of the Meeting or Clerk of Trustees. The person receiving the report will follow up as outlined below.

3. A member of the Child Safety Committee should inform our agent at GuideOne Insurance Company (888-748-4326).

4. The Child Safety Committee should seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries.

5. Child Safety Committee should review this policy statement to be sure all procedures are being followed and work with GuideOne or legal counsel as needed concerning the alleged incident.

Appendix "A"

FRIENDS MEETING of WASHINGTON

**APPLICATION FOR THOSE WORKING WITH MINORS**

I hereby apply for the privilege of serving the Friends Meeting of Washington as:

a First Day School Teacher or Assistant or

a Nursery School age Child Care Worker as a volunteer or employee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Maiden

I.D. number \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security or Driver's License Number

Present address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

If less than one year:

Previous Address

\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been arrested for, charged with, under probation for, or convicted of either sexual or physical abuse? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. If yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

Personal References (2)– Note: Institutional references are preferred.

Name

Address

Telephone

Applicants must have been a member or attender of the Friends Meeting of Washington for at least six (6) months prior to the date of this application. Indicate which of the following might help establish this fact. Membership approval or request appears in Monthly Meeting Minutes, \_\_\_\_\_, signature in guest book \_\_\_\_\_, request to be placed on the mailing list \_\_\_\_\_, name appears in a Meeting Directory of sufficient age \_\_\_\_\_, Identifiable contribution made \_\_\_\_\_, well known to \_\_\_\_\_.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Witness Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness's Signature

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Appendix "B"

**FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON  
BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION CONSENT**

(Required only of those for whom a criminal background check is required, see page 2, items 3, 4 & 5 under APPLICATION PROCESS)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (applicant's complete name)

Authorize Friends Meeting of Washington and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, past employment, education, criminal, or police records, including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my application and/or obtaining other information, which may be material to my qualifications as volunteer or for employment now, and if applicable, during the tenure of volunteering or employment with Friends Meeting of Washington, DC.

I release Friends Meeting of Washington, DC and/or its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims, or lawsuits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used.

Signature

Date

Appendix "C"

**NON-DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

To assure the protection and preservation of the confidential information regarding the background records and reference check of current or potential employees and volunteers, the Friends Meeting of Washington, DC, its officers or assigns agree to release any of the obtained information only to those individuals responsible for the hiring, selection, and screening of these individuals and to no one else, to the extent allowed by law.

Friends Meeting of Washington, DC

by

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix "D"

PARENT/GUARDIAN OF A MINOR  
CONSENT AND HOLD HARMLESS FORM

Name of Activity \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Activity \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_, being the parent or legal guardian

of \_\_\_\_\_ have been informed of the above named activity sponsored by the Friends Meeting of Washington, D.C. and hereby give my consent for my minor child to participate in this activity.

I understand that the leaders of this activity will take all reasonable safety precautions, and that the possibility of an unforeseen hazard does exist. I further agree not to hold the Friends Meeting of Washington, DC its leaders, employees and volunteer staff liable for damages, losses, diseases, or injuries incurred by the minor listed on this form.

I also understand that my minor child is to be excluded from the following activities:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

***NOTE: The FMW Child Safety Committee is currently amending this so as to become a FMW-specific Annex to our Child Safety Policy***

***Draft 8/12/11***

**THE BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING MEMBERS AND ATTENDERS**

**WHO ARE ALLEGED SEX OFFENDERS**

***Drafted by Marsha D. Holliday***

**Please note: It is extremely important to review any policy you adopt with the legal counsel in your jurisdiction and with your insurance company.**

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Religious Education Committee suggests the following guidelines as a resource in the event that a monthly meeting becomes aware of a member or attender who has been convicted or is currently charged with committing sexual offenses. . Before taking any action, it is of

great importance that a person designated by the meeting check the credibility of such accusations through a search of current records including arrest records.

The Committee welcomes feedback concerning this policy.

In addition to these guidelines, each meeting should adopt its own child safety guidelines, not only incorporating these or similar guidelines but also establishing preventive and protective guidelines for members of the meeting and others who regularly supervise children in First Day School, child care situations, and other meeting events. Comprehensive guidelines should be based on the laws of the meeting's jurisdiction and the requirements of the meeting's insurance company. The "Friends Meeting of Washington Policy to Reduce the Risk of Child Abuse" is included below as an example of a policy prepared by a monthly meeting, which was based upon their situation and suggestions from their insurance company.

The following guidelines are based upon a model for churches by SafeChurch.com entitled "Responding to Registered Sex Offenders Attending Church," and by other sources included below.

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Religious Education Committee suggests the following:

- A designated member or designated members of the meeting should research the jurisdiction's laws, ordinances, privacy issues, and the legal responsibilities and liabilities of both the monthly meeting and of the individuals in the monthly meeting concerning relations with registered sex offenders and report that research to the appropriate committees, such as the Pastoral Care, Ministry and Worship, and Religious Education Committees.
- To ensure that the individual suspected of such a history is of concern under the guidelines, persons designated by the meeting must review arrest and other relevant records of individuals suspected of sexual offenses and report that research in a discreet and focused way to the appropriate clerks and committees, such as the Pastoral Care, Ministry and Worship, and Religious Education Committees.
- After looking through such case records, those clerks and committees should make judgments about the level of risk to children in the meeting who are less than 18 years of age, bearing in mind that some with a history of sex offenses or those currently charged with such offenses may not have been determined guilty by a competent authority or may not be currently dangerous.
- The meeting should create a Support Group for the alleged sex offender. The Support Group might include members from the Pastoral Care, Ministry and Worship, and Religious Education Committees. If a lawyer is not a member of the Support Group, then the Support Group should consult a lawyer. Pedophilia, or adult sexual attraction to children, is a condition that cannot be cured. It, therefore, must be continually monitored. A member of the Support Group or someone appointed by the Support Group should be within sight of the alleged offender at all times when children are present at the meeting or at meeting events.
- If the suspected member or attender is potentially dangerous or is a known sex offender, limit his or her access to all programs or places where children are involved. The Support Group should write a contract or agreement with the alleged offender that forbids any contact with any children at meeting or at meeting events and requires that the alleged offender complies with other conditions, such as appropriate counseling, therapy, and monitored attendance. All relevant laws and ordinances should apply to his or her case. The contract should give the meeting permission to consult the alleged offender's probation or parole officer. The existence of the contract should remain confidential except to those teaching or supervising children in the meeting, or their parents, or those who raise concerns based on knowledge they may have, or those adults known to have been victims of sexual offense.

- The meeting must be mindful that it may have, among its members, Friends who are victims of sexual abuse. Those Friends may need additional support to enable them to feel safe in community with an alleged sex offender.
- The Support Group should report the identity of the alleged offender and the type of his or her offense to all parents of children in the meeting and to all adult members or attenders who are known to be victims of sexual abuse.
- The RE Committee should create and teach on-going child safety training programs for both the children, the adults of the meeting, and First Day School teachers. The meeting should consult its insurance company and the local laws to determine the required amount, type, and frequency of such training.
- If the Support Group becomes aware that the alleged offender is attending another Quaker meeting or another place of worship, the Support Group should report its work with the alleged offender to the leadership of that organization. The alleged offender should be informed that the Support Group will do this.
- The consequence of breaking the terms of the contract is that the alleged offender may no longer attend meeting or enter the vicinity of the meeting or of any meeting activities.
- If the alleged offender chooses to leave the meeting, the Support Committee should give the alleged offender's name and description to the clerks of other local monthly meetings.

See also:

Quaker:

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting: The Youth Safety Policy written by the Youth Safety Policy Committee, 9/16/09. (<http://www.bym-rsf.org/quakers/pubs/youthsafety.shtml>)

Methodist:

[http://www.methodist.org.uk/static/news/papers/church\\_and\\_sex\\_offenders.htm](http://www.methodist.org.uk/static/news/papers/church_and_sex_offenders.htm)

Mennonite:

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/safetycentral/articles/navart67-SexOffenders.htm>

Unitarian:

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/balancingacts/23531.shtml>

Friends Meeting of Washington      SpiritualStateof the Meeting (SSoM) – 2011

**“The movement between community and solitariness is woven into the fabric of who we are...because our faith commitment joins us to other pilgrims on the way, we are challenged to live the new life together...willing to listen to one another”. *Heart Whispers***

During January and February of 2012, 56 members, attenders, sojourners and others (58% of whom were members) provided heartfelt comments on the spiritual state of our Meeting. These comments were made partly in response to queries posed by Baltimore Yearly Meeting. And, they were provided at a time of challenge for FMW, when we had been asked if we could welcome a newcomer with a troubling past into our community for worship. As our meeting has struggled with this request many have seen an opportunity to directly express our faith and delve more deeply into issues that long have needed attention. Thorough our collective response we are learning much about our core spiritual strengths and our weaknesses as we are all still seekers.



**“I felt blessed, lifted, energized by the vitality of the meeting community. Exciting renovation projects were underway, the meeting appeared to be attracting a range of new worshippers, the messages reflected goodwill and a genuine search for the Divine”.**

**“The Meeting [is] a haven and support network for values and spirituality that I rarely find outside.”**

Many Friends and Attenders say FMW allows them to quiet their minds; to see blessings, hear messages, be guided and feel love. Eighty percent of those providing comments noted that Meetings for Worship (including those attentive to business) and personal interactions with one another are our primary supports for spiritual growth. Over half of respondents also found Study Groups, First Day School, Spiritual Growth Groups, Coffee Hour and Committee work spiritually rewarding. Many have a special connection to FMW work days, special service events, Young Adult Friends and Friendly 8s as groupings that nurture the spirit. The Evening Worship Group, having met on First Days for 15 years, customarily “feels the living spirit of our Lord during worship” and in interactions following silent worship.

**“We are engaged as a Meeting in seeking the way. Every option involves change for someone; perhaps by seeking opportunities for the Meeting Community to support each other and embrace change in the spirit of living into our testimony of equality, a Way will open.”**

While FMW has made progress welcoming visitors, “feeling gathered for worship”, and assisting some with physical limitations, many feel our focus has been too internal and our progress toward universal access too halting. Some families with young children feel FMW should provide more support to allow them to be more engaged in the spiritual life of the Meeting and to feel that FMW is more of a spiritual respite. There are many yearnings for more trust, goodwill and kindness toward one another so we can listen and hear with a caring spirit. Concerns remain that vocal ministry is too often not a reflection of Spirit-led revelation. Friends struggle to embrace the testimony of inclusion as it concerns others with physical or mental challenges and sometimes Friends are troubled by accommodations, such as changes in seating, that feel disruptive or behaviors that wound or confuse. Many long for deeper understanding of Quaker ideals and testimonies and a personal and communal commitment to living these testimonies within our Meeting and in the world at large. Questions that continue to press include: “Are we living our faith? and “Are we truly stewards of the faith we profess?”

**FMW is: “A large and affectionate family, often dysfunctional like a family”; “scrappy, a bit disjointed, full of seekers [and} centered Friends”; “struggling to create community in an urban setting in which much of the population is transient”; “eclectic, energetic, needy, with streaks of heaven”; “a wonderful example of community in the company of Friends.”**

While ours is a large and ever-changing meeting where many feel centered and at home, some feel excluded and perceive internal groupings that can feel cliquish. Others deeply appreciate and trust the fellowship and nurturing provided by fellow Members and Attenders. Some are concerned that Friends approach FMW as “consumers” rather than supporters and others feel inadequately supported by the Meeting. Many Members and Attenders feel overburdened by committee service and the pace of Meeting decision-making. There are serious concerns that Meeting seemed unable to trust the recommendations of our Committees and fully utilize Quaker deliberative process in a Spirit-led way to welcome the troubled newcomer seeking a community for worship. And in that situation, others felt inadequately included in the process of discernment. Many noted, however, that this event also revealed how powerfully the Spirit moves among us to help us grow in unexpected directions and to reveal where our community needs to give its attention as it struggles to build and be a truly loving and trustworthy

community. In addressing this and other challenges 60% of our Members and Attenders felt we responded well while 40% felt our response was mixed or poor.

**When people speak at Meeting for Worship, sometimes I feel transported out of myself... it helps me be closer to all life”**

**“I see Spirit manifested in tenderness between Friends; willingness to labor faithfully with people who appear difficult”**

As we consider what we want from our Meeting, Friends and Attenders seek the “reaffirmation of our faith and practice.” We are inspired by what has been accomplished by our community’s commitment to revitalize our buildings and gardens even before we undertake major renovations. We are encouraged by the growing number of young Friends and families drawn to Quaker practice and FMW, and we are invigorated by the re-establishment of our Peace and Social Concerns Committee and by our spirit-led support for the Occupy Movement. In all this and more we see what our faith can deliver as we nurture the Light within and work together in trust and harmony.

And yet, we still aspire to “listen with openness and attention”, to respond to “our need for more unity with urgency”, “to concentrate on spiritual development,” and to speak to one another “with kindness in our hearts.” .In concrete terms, we see the coming year as one of renewal and renovation both spiritually and within our historic campus. With faith that we will be led by the Light within toward more inclusiveness, inter-generational interaction and openness to multiple differences we strive to strengthen our bonds with each other and with the greater world by truly living our faith. There is an abiding sense of love toward our Meeting and a deep sense that it has yet untapped potential.

**“With enough participation and guidance there is nothing we cannot accomplish.”**

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

### REQUIRING MEMBERSHIP FOR SERVING AS COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND CLERKS

#### DISCERNMENT REPORT

April 7, 2012

The Nominating Committee believes that committee membership is an important part of involvement in Friends Meeting of Washington. Not only does Nominating Committee work to involve new and longtime members in committee work but, Nominating Committee believes that committee membership is an important part of the journey towards becoming a member of FMW.

The Nominating Committee is charged with finding clerks and members for twelve Standing Committees, three longstanding special committees, 4 new and important committees, and clerk of an additional committee. In total the Nominating Committee finds persons to fill approximately 160 positions. An informal survey conducted by Nominating Committee of the directory of FMW yielded about 120 names of people who are available for committee work. Already it can be seen that many members and attenders serve on more than one committee.

In staffing any committee the Nominating Committee must maintain a close working relationship with current clerks and committee members to determine the appropriate addition of new members to any committee. In recruiting new members NC looks for a good fit in terms of experience, temperament and interest. Often nonmembers are as qualified as members, and in some cases, particularly drawn or enthusiastic about service on particular committees.

On page 17 in the *Handbook of Practices and Procedures* the requirements for committee membership and clerks are clearly stated. Nominating Committee does not propose to change these requirements.

However, when there is an outstanding nonmember available to serve in a position and no equally qualified and committed member is available, Nominating Committee will request a waiver of requirements for the betterment of the committee and the Meeting as a whole. This is the permitted procedure, again stated in the *Handbook* on page 17.

In light of historical concerns about the ease with which some waivers have been granted, Nominating Committee is proposing that Meeting for Business decisions regarding waivers be held over for one month, in order that any concerns may be brought privately to Nominating Committee.

## Friends Meeting of Washington, Library Committee Annual Report

Submitted April 2012

### I. Introduction

The FMW Library Committee has continued to enhance the collection and make it more accessible and useful to the FMW community. We continue to add books to the library, catalog the collection, clear the cabinets and the shelves of duplicates and old supplies, and have begun examining the shelves to identify out of scope materials.

### II. Finding Books in the Collection and Checking Them Out

A reminder that the books in the Library have been cataloged on <http://www.LibraryThing.com>. The FMW Library catalog is viewable at <http://www.librarything.com/catalog/FMWLibrary> or on mobile devices at <http://www.librarything.com/m/> by entering the collection name FMWLibrary. The Library Committee has also printed out lists of the books in the collection with call numbers arranged alphabetically by author and by title and made these available in the Library.

Anyone wishing to check books out, should write his or her name on the card in the back of the book and leave the card in the gray box on top of the card catalog. Try to return books within three weeks so that others may use them too. FMW Library Committee Members are trying to make themselves available in the Library after 10:30 meeting ends on First Day in order to help people with questions or to find books- please come by and visit, or feel free to send an e-mail to the clerk via the Library's homepage on the FMW website: <http://www.quakersdc.org/library>.

### III. Size, Growth and Scope of the Collection

As of March, 2012, the Library held 1,988 books in the collection, about 100 more than last year at this time, or an increase of about 5%. Additions to the collection came from donations, purchases, and books found in the Library's cabinets that had been acquired years ago but never processed. Of the twenty or so Quaker Meeting Libraries on LibraryThing.com, FMW's is still the largest; only Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Library is larger at over 14,000 books, though its mission is to serve as a lending library to other meetings around the country, which is far beyond our scope.

Last year we reported that the median publication year of books in the collection was 1965 and that very little of the collection were newer publications from the past twenty years. Because most of the books added this past year were published relatively recently, the median publication date has moved up to 1968, hopefully making the holdings more timely and relevant to the Community.

Using one of LibraryThing.com's tools, we have also discovered that about 70% of the authors in the FMW Library collection are male and 30% are female, despite the fact that Quaker women have been more prolific than those of many other religions. It is difficult to say exactly why this is the case, but it may be all the more reason for us to add more materials written in the past twenty years to the collection; this may help to balance things out a bit.

The Library is running out of shelving space in certain areas, a problem likely to increase as we add newer, more relevant books to the collection. Because of this, the Library Committee has begun the careful process of examining the library to identify books that might be responsibly deaccessioned and hopefully sent to Wilmington College's Library in Ohio, where the rare book collection went in June, 2010.

### III. Finances

Of the \$300 allotted to the Library Committee for its budget from FMW, we have spent \$245.25, mainly on book purchases, leaving \$54.75 for the rest of the fiscal year.

By last summer, the Library Committee had identified a large number of duplicate books in the cabinets around the room, mostly acquired as donations over the years. We decided to make these available for purchase by setting them out on a table in the Parlor suggesting a donation of \$1 per title on the honor system. Surprisingly, the Library has amassed a fortune of \$103 over the past year. The Committee is hoping to use the funds to purchase more books in the coming months.

### IV. Donations

The Library has received many generous book donations over the past year. However, the Committee feels the need to let the FMW Community know that it is always best to contact someone on the Committee first before bringing books in. This past year, most donations were well within scope, but in past years people have donated books that were far out of scope, sometimes anonymously. If you have Quaker-related books that you would like to share with the community, please contact one of us to find out if the Library could use them.

The Library's scope for collecting includes Quaker history and biography, spirituality, mysticism, social justice, and non-violence.

Members of the Library Committee:

Ray Allard (emeritus)

Virginia Harris

Patrick Lynam

Patrick Marchman (volunteer)

Mark Meinke

Michael North (Clerk)

## **FMW NEWSLETTER**

**May 2012**

**Spring Events**

**William Penn House**

The William Penn House, a Quaker Center on Capitol Hill, hosts monthly potluck dinners on a scheduled Sunday evening at 6:30 p.m. There is a topic, speaker, and open discussion afterwards. The potluck starts at 6:30 p.m. and the presentation will begin at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome to the potlucks-

bring a dish to share! In addition to monthly potlucks, the William Penn House provides low cost accommodations and Quaker center programs and seminars. Join the weekly **Yoga class** at the William Penn House on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. All ages and all skill levels are welcome. There is a \$15 charge per class. Daily at 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. a Meeting for Worship is held. On Sundays, with the exception of the first Sunday of the month, Capitol Hill Friends meet from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

For more information contact The William Penn House. It is located at 515 East Capitol St. SE Washington, DC 20003, (202) 543-5560.

On Saturday, **May 5** from 9 a.m. to noon there will be a special program on “Everyone is welcome: A Quaker Struggle.” George Fox advised us to “walk cheerfully over the earth answering that of God in everyone.” For many Friends this is one reason that they participate in prison ministry. Prison ministry has been an important Quaker leading throughout the history of Quakers. Prison outreach is a ministry for many meetings. They see this as an important witness and an example of how we let our lives speak. Many inmates’ lives have been enriched by these humble and sincere Friends. They do not screen out who is welcome, but welcome all who seek to follow their quest to hear that small voice and to give them hope for a future. But what happens when the former inmate accepts our invitation to worship with us, to be a part of our community, to live a life of integrity and simplicity and to be equal in the eyes of God? How do they transition to freedom; how do we accept them into our lives, which includes our children? How do we witness our faith while we keep our children safe? Join us as we explore the Quaker faith in a country that has the highest incarceration rate on Earth. The program will include:

- “That of God in Everyone” with Betsy Meyer, Sandy Spring & BYM Clerk
- “Quakers and Prison Visitation” with Jim Rose, Patapsco and David Connell, Sidwell Friends
- “Our Kids and How Do We Keep them Safe” with Parents of Friends Meeting of Washington
- “Ad Hoc Committee on Sex Offenders”, with Carlota Joyner, Ian Tasker and Greg Tobin of Frederick
- “Can a Sex Offender Rejoin Society” by Janet Dinsmore, Friends Meeting of Washington
- “Reflections, with Bill Mims, Langley Hill

We will offer child care and snacks. The program will be held at Friends Meeting of Washington. For more information or to register contact Byron Sandford, [Byron@williampennhouse.org](mailto:Byron@williampennhouse.org) or (202) 543-5560.

### **FMW Adult Study Group**

The Adult Study Group will meet on Sunday, **May 13** at 9:15 a.m. in the North Room. The topic will be *Quakers and the Civil War*, including the journal of a Quaker and come writings on Lincoln and the Quakers. It is not mandatory to attend every group session if a F/friend is interested in participating in the Adult Study Group. For more information contact John Scales at [johnkscales@aol.com](mailto:johnkscales@aol.com).

### **Friends Wilderness Center**

Friends Wilderness Center will be having a program on “Writing in the Midst of Nature” with Caroline Pelton on Saturday, **May 5** at 10 a.m. Call Sheila Bach at 304-728-4820 to RSVP and get directions.

### **Inquirers’ Class**

FMW's Spring 2012 Inquirers' Class will meet Monday evenings 7 - 8:30 PM in the Parlor, **April 23** through **May 21**. This is a great way for newcomers and not-so-newcomers to learn more about Quakerism and to meet members and attenders of FMW. All are welcome for any, some, or all Mondays. Questions? Contact Gerri Williams, [northstar02@verizon.net](mailto:northstar02@verizon.net) or Michael Cronin, [mcronin943@gmail.com](mailto:mcronin943@gmail.com) or call the FMW Office at (202) 483-3310.

### **School for Friends Children's Fair**

School for Friends invites you to help celebrate its annual Children's Fair Saturday **May 5** from 10 - 4 at Church of the Pilgrims, 22nd and P St NW. Admission \$5 per person, \$10 per family to see the booths, the Balloon Woman, face painting, a DC Fire Truck, and more. Food for sale for those who want to buy lunch. Sff is designing T Shirts celebrating its thirtieth anniversary.

### **Clearness Committee Workshop**

On Saturday **May 12**, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., a Clearness Committee workshop will be held in Decatur Place Room. This workshop will review the roots of clearness committees in Quakerism, the clearness committee as a process of transformative self-discernment, useful techniques for preparing and running a clearness committee, and some clearness committee writings from the Quaker literature, as well as an annotated bibliography. Please RSVP by contacting Tracy Hart at 202.460.9676, or [thart@worldbank.org](mailto:thart@worldbank.org). This is hosted under the care of Ministry and Worship Committee. Materials will be provided free to all who RSVP.

### **Child Safety Workshops**

There will be two Child Safety Workshops on Sunday, **May 20**, one from 9 am to 10:15 am, and the second from noon to 1:15 p.m. These workshops will go over the elements of the current Child Safety Policy as approved by Meeting for Business in 2006. They will not discuss needed amendments to this policy. These workshops are mandatory for current child care workers and current First Day School teachers, and recommended for any parents with children currently attending child care and/or First Day School as well as any other interested FMW members and/or attenders. Please RSVP to Tracy Hart at [thart@worldbank.org](mailto:thart@worldbank.org).

### **Young Adult Friends Retreat**

Save the date! The Young Adult Friends group (age 18-35) will be going on a camping trip and retreat in Shenandoah National Park from **June 1-3**. Some Friends will drive out on Friday evening and others will join the group on Saturday morning. Details are still being finalized, but cost is expected to be about \$50/person; financial assistance may be available. Contact Catherine Vanderwaart at [cvanderwaart@yahoo.com](mailto:cvanderwaart@yahoo.com) or 215-275-8642 for more information.

### **Memorial Meeting for Dick Bellin**

There will be a memorial Meeting for FMW member Richard "Dick" Bellin on Sunday, **June 3** at 1 p.m. in the Meeting Room.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Friends General Conference

Registration for the 2012 Friends General Conference Gathering of Friends, which will be held on July 1-7 in Kingston, RI, is now open. The theme this year is "All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir." Registration and details about sessions, workshops, fees, and accommodations are available online at [www.fgcquaker.org/gathering](http://www.fgcquaker.org/gathering).

### Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Session

Registration is now open for Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Annual Session, to be held July 31 to August 5 at Frostburg State University in Frostburg, Maryland. This year's theme is "Spirit-Led Social Action." More information and online registration is available at <http://www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession/as12welcome.html>, or call (301) 774-7663.

### Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camping Program

Registration is now open for Baltimore Yearly Meeting's summer camps for children and teens. Brochures are available on the meeting bulletin board and more information is available at [www.bymcamps.org](http://www.bymcamps.org).

### From the Vault

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

In 1950 the Meeting expanded our meetinghouse (along the Decatur Place side). Clerk Charles Preston burned the mortgage in March 1958 at a "Gale Evening" and read his own poem commemorating the event, about half of which is given here:

#### The Mortgage

"Except the Lord build the House,  
They labor in vain that build it,"  
This is a theory Friends espouse;  
It's proclaimed in Holy Writ.

But we have a house they said in '50;  
It's big and sound to the core,  
Let us keep on being thrifty,  
Disdain to add to it more.

A spacious house 'tis true we have

Other Friends agreed and readily,  
But have you noticed this, they asked:  
Room needs cry out and steadily.

The First-Day School is cramped for space,  
The library shelves are bulging,  
Let us meet the problem fact to face  
With purpose more indulging.

But have you considered the magnitude  
Of the cost of a building venture?  
Yes, we have thought of it well and good;  
With our bank we'll arrange an indenture.  
First we must learn what Friends will give  
To the cause of their own free will,  
Then we shall know the exact amount  
To seek from the banker's till.

Quite liberally did the Friends subscribe  
To the projected building addition,  
So with twenty-eight thousand from the bank  
We were in financially strong position.

Just to insure there'd be enough,  
Neighboring Friends received out greeting;  
We borrowed three thousand of the "stuff"  
From Alexandria Monthly Meeting.

Stone on stone the building grew,  
The masons' trowels were flying,  
Blended well the old and new,  
A result most gratifying.

And finally, oh Day of Days!  
The work achieved completion;  
Our gratitude, in friendly ways,  
Was lavish in expression.

Lavish, too, was our concern  
That with this end of strife  
With crowded rooms to come to us  
A deepened spiritual life.

Ten years was the time allowed  
For complete amortization,  
The time would run to '61,  
Our nerves were in vibration.

But faith and works go hand in hand,  
In both there is much sublime,  
This seemingly mountainous debt is paid  
Three years ahead of time;



So, Friends rejoice and gather 'round,  
Young, old -- both men and dames,  
The "mortgage" to our meetinghouse  
I now consign to flames.

### **Thinking About Race- *If you are White what do you like about it?***

Adapted from *A Race is a Nice Thing to Have* by Janet E. Helms, PhD, 1992. Helms is a psychologist who has done groundbreaking work on the topic of racial identity development.

Find a sheet of paper and a writing utensil. Set your timer for two minutes. Without censoring your thoughts, write down as many answers as you can to this question: "What do you like about being White?" For best effect, write your answers before reading further. Now, go through your answers and cross out all of the responses that (1) involve comparing yourself with other racial groups; (2) use variants of the word "racist"; or (3) involve defining yourself according to what you are *not*. Count the number of items remaining. This is your "White identity" score and is an indicator of how you view yourself as a White person. Here is an example of your responses might be scored:

#### ***Answer***

1. I'm not a racist.
2. Whites are the majority.
3. I'm not Black.

#### ***Disposition***

- Cross out this one (see above, # 1, 2, and 3)  
Cross out this one (see #1)  
Cross out this one (see #1)

Thus, this person would receive a score of zero, meaning that he or she could not think of any positive consequences of being White. I have encountered few Whites who score higher than 1 on this exercise, and most score zero. So, if you scored higher than 1, then you are probably more advanced with respect to White identify development than your White counterparts.

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, at Bethesda Friends Meeting or Friends Meeting of Washington. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge.