

# FMW Newsletter, Sept. 2014

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### UPCOMING EVENTS, Sept. 2014

The **Grate Patrol** will prepare sandwiches and soups to take out to the city's vulnerable people on **Wednesday, Sept. 3** starting at 5:30. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at [sbrooks@uab.edu](mailto:sbrooks@uab.edu)

**Shiloh and Opequon Reunion**, Shiloh Quaker Camp, **Sept. 5-7**. For more information, contact the Camp Reunion Committee at [shilohreunion@bym-rsf.org](mailto:shilohreunion@bym-rsf.org)

**Spiritual Formation Retreat**, Priestfield Retreat Center, **Sept. 5-7**. The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Spiritual Formation Program invites its participants into a deeper experience of God's presence through retreats, devotional readings, spiritual community and individual spiritual practices. Spiritual Formation provides a practical way for people in our busy culture to turn to God with their minds through spiritual reading, with their hearts through daily spiritual practices and with their human relationships through local friendship groups. Contact Marilyn Rothstein, [marilynrothstein@comcast.net](mailto:marilynrothstein@comcast.net)

Come to **So Others Might Eat** on **Saturday, Sept. 6** from 6:15 to 8:15 and help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. For more information, contact Betsy Bramon at [betsy.bramon@gmail.com](mailto:betsy.bramon@gmail.com)

Join us for the **First Day School open house** on Sunday, **September 7**, 10:30. Meet the teachers and families, and learn about the program. All youth ages 4-18 are welcome.

On **Sunday, Sept. 7** at noon, Friends Meeting of Washington is sponsoring a free showing of the **documentary film “God Loves Uganda”** and a panel discussion of what faith-based communities can do to **support LGBT in Africa**. The film explores the role of American Evangelicals in Uganda in promoting homophobia, which contributed to the passing of that country's Anti-Homosexuality Law. Although this Law has been struck down on a technicality by the Ugandan Courts, the social forces that brought it about in the first place still exist. The panel discussion will focus on the current conditions facing LGBT in a number of countries in Africa, and how faith-based communities can work to communicate a message of love and inclusion for LGBT in Africa.



On **Sunday, Sept. 7** at 6:30 pm, the William Penn House will host its monthly potluck and lecture. Their program on this First Day is presented by an attendee at the Friends meeting of Washington who will reflect on his experience as a returned citizen on life within our failed U.S. prison system and his spiritual journey with Quakers. William Penn House is located at 515 East Capitol St. SE in D.C. For more information, contact [info@WilliamPennHouse.org](mailto:info@WilliamPennHouse.org)

**EQAT** On **Monday, Sept 8** in Washington, D.C., EQAT, Climate First!, and Appalachian allies will transform PNC bank into a classroom, complete with a teacher and blackboard. Through interactive lessons, we'll remind PNC of the formula that leads to poisoned water in Appalachia. And how easy, or Elementary, it is for them to help stop mountaintop removal. **Meet at 11:30am at the Friends Meeting of Washington.** For planning purposes, RSVP to [hannah.h.jeffrey@gmail.com](mailto:hannah.h.jeffrey@gmail.com). Hope to see you there!.

On **Saturday, Sept. 13** please come to the Meeting House for a **Work Day**. We will be working on projects from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, with a delicious lunch served midday. All skill sets welcome. This is a fun way to get to know other F/friends and give back to your Meeting.

**FMW's Catoctin Fall Retreat, Sept. 19-21.** Join us for an unprogrammed weekend, when we share meals and fellowship in the lodge; we enjoy canoeing and hiking; we toast s'mores on Saturday night; and we worship on Sunday morning at the fire circle. Cabins are available, or bring your tent; come for one day or stay for all three. Cost is \$20 per adult staying overnight, \$10 for adult day-trippers, and free for all children, payable to FMW. And we ask that you contribute groceries for group meals. Please RSVP using our online sign up sheet: <http://tinyurl.com/catoctinfall>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

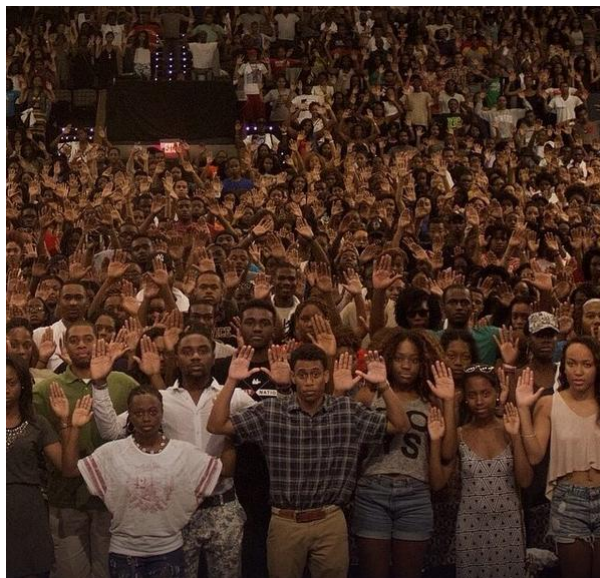
### **Tell Your Spiritual Journey**

Due to popular demand, the Ministry & Worship committee has decided to continue its series of Spiritual Journeys in the months to come. We ask you to consider sharing your own spiritual journey with your community. These meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month from 9:15 to 10:15. Each speaker talks for about 15-20 minutes about what faith community they were born into, where they are now, and what has informed that journey. For more information and to volunteer, contact Anne Harper at [anne.h.harper@gmail.com](mailto:anne.h.harper@gmail.com)

### **New Youth Programs Coordinator**

I'm happy to report that Virginia Avanesyan has accepted our offer of employment for the position of Youth Programs Coordinator. Start date for the position is September 1, 2014. The R.E. Committee is thrilled with the candidate selected! - Kim Acquaviva, Clerk, Religious Education Committee

### **Thinking about Race: Ferguson MO**



At recent Meetings for Worship and on the FMW email lists it has been apparent that many Friends are disturbed and possibly feeling somewhat helpless with respect to the events in Ferguson, Missouri. Few, if any of us, will be directly involved in the events in that town. If we find that we are led to do so, however, there are steps we can take to have a positive effect on the underlying issues.

Some important facts about the shooting are, at this writing, still in dispute. There are, however, underlying issues of racism experienced by many citizens of Ferguson that have led to the demonstrations. Those issues will persist regardless of how, if ever, current factual disputes about the shooting are resolved.

I think the best ways to respond can be grouped into two categories: 1) learning how racism has worked and is working in our country and 2) based on that learning, discern our leading and find others who share that leading with whom to work.

Understanding the working of racism is complex even for those in our congregation who have been the victims of it. Racism affects every aspect of life in one way or another. With respect to the events in Ferguson, the criminal justice system is the focus.

When I attended an all-white elementary school over 60 years ago I was assured that a police officer was my friend and potential helper. The experience of many parents of African-American sons, however, have persuaded them that it would be dangerous if they told their sons that. Those sons can get through life only by spending a crucial period of their lives as persons who many law enforcement officers find threatening and provocative. Often their parents conclude that they must teach their sons very specific ways of behaving during encounters with the police in order to stay safe. An event like the one in Ferguson reminds parents that, even though they provide that training, their child may still be harmed due to events beyond the parents' control.

Even though it focusses on the War on Drugs, which was not directly involved in the events in Ferguson, Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* gives a good introduction of how racism works in the criminal justice system to harm unfairly both African-Americans and Latinos.

Housing discrimination through redlining neighborhoods where home loans would be unavailable and restrictive covenants where home owners agreed never to sell to black people have created segregated neighborhoods resulting in lower wealth for African-Americans compared to white people with the same income level, poorly funded schools because of their dependence on property taxes, and ghetto areas where arrests happen much more frequently. A good source on this topic is *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City* by Antero Pietila focusing on Baltimore.

Healthcare is another arena for racism as demonstrated by studies showing the prevalence of different diagnoses and treatment plans for patients of color compared to white patients with the same symptoms and even the same level of income. A major U.S. government report entitled *Unequal Health Outcomes in the United States: Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care Treatment and Access, The Role of Social and Environmental Determinants of Health and the Responsibility of the State* in 2008 authoritatively documents this problem. A personal history of the struggle to get doctors to address this issue is laid out in Augustus White's book, *Seeing Patients: Unconscious Bias in Health Care*.

The effects of racism are also thoroughly documented for well-educated women of color with advanced degrees in the recent compendium, *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia*, edited by Gabriella Gutierrez y Muhs, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. Gonzalez and Angela P. Harris.

Of course people of color and others must also cope with individual hurtful behavior—sometimes intentional and sometimes not—called “micro-aggressions.” The definitive work on this topic is Derald Wing Sue's, *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*. That book cites studies documenting that the stress associated with dealing with microaggressions shortens lives.

Across the board one can learn the ways in which the effects of overt discrimination in the past are maintained today even though those overt practices are now outlawed in *Reproducing Racism: How Everyday Choices Lock in White Advantage* by Daria Roithmayr. Another good survey of the length and breadth of racism in America is Ta-Nehisi Coates' May 2014 article in *The Atlantic* entitled *The Case for Reparations*, <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>.

As suggested by Jane Woods in her recent blog post, <http://janeewoods.com/2014/08/14/becoming-a-white-ally-to-black-people-in-the-aftermath-of-the-michael-brown-murder/>, subscribing to diverse voices of color online, such as The Root, Colorlines, or This Week in Blackness can also help.

As we move toward action we can find support from organizations that provide training workshops on working in coalition for social justice such as Training for Change, The Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond (FMW hosted an Undoing Racism training by that organization earlier this year), or attending the Facing Race or White Privilege Conference. The next White Privilege Conference will be in Louisville next March. Friends General Conference is hosting that conference in 2016 in Philadelphia and is looking for help now from Quakers to organize it.

Janee Woods' blog makes two recommendations that certainly resonate with Friends. She recommends learning about nonviolent resistance and provides two links for online resources on that topic. She also recommends working with faith leaders. She specifically recommended Sojourners, which has its headquarters on 14<sup>th</sup> Street a few blocks from our Meetinghouse. Clearly AFSC and FCNL are also good resources for us.

Finally, two of her more long-term recommendations also seem important to me:

1. **“Don't be afraid to be unpopular.** Let's be realistic. If you start calling out all the racism you witness (and it will be a lot once you know what you're looking at) some people might not want to hang out with you as much. That's a risk you'll need to accept.”
2. **“Don't give up.** We're 400 years into this racist system and it's going to take a long, long, long time to dismantle these atrocities. The antiracism movement is a struggle for generations, not simply the hot button issue of the moment. Transformation of a broken system doesn't happen quickly or easily.”

David Etheridge

*Note: David originally posted this on FMW's Discussion Forum, and it elicited a thoughtful and wide-ranging response. To join the Forum and see (and perhaps contribute to) the response, send an email request to [admin@quakersdc.org](mailto:admin@quakersdc.org).*

***And now, Grant Thompson offers the following for your edification:***

### **Church Ladies With typewriters**

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**They're Back! Those wonderful Church Bulletins! Thank God for church ladies with typewriters. These sentences (with all the BLOOPERS) actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced in church services:**

**The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.**

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**The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight:  
'Searching for Jesus.'**

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**Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.**

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**Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.**

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**Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.**

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**Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.**

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**For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.**

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**Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.**

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**Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.**

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**A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow..**

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**At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.**

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**Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.**

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**Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.**  
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**Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered..**

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**The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.**  
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**Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.**  
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**The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.**

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**This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.**  
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**Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10 AM . All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B. S. Is done.**

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**The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.**  
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**Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM . Please use the back door.**  
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**The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM . The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.**

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**Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church Please use large double door at the side entrance.**



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**The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I  
Upped My Pledge - Up Yours.'**