

FMW Newsletter, 9.2016

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 2-4: Spiritual Formation Program Fall Retreat, Priest Field Pastoral Center (Kearneysville, WV) Do you yearn for spiritual deepening? Are you longing for growth in a community of seekers who support one another on our individual journeys? Have you felt a nudge to greater intentionality in your spiritual practice? If so, the Spiritual Formation Program is for you. Join us for our Fall Retreat at the beautiful Priest Field center. Enjoy comfortable accommodations, good fellowship with Friends from your own and other Meetings, time for individual reflection and deep listening, and beautiful walks along the many nature trails. Registration for the retreat will open soon. For full information, go to <https://bym-rsf1-org.presencehost.net/events/spiritform/>

Sept. 3: Come to **So Others Might Eat** at 6:15 a.m. and make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. 70 “O” St. NW. For more information, contact Betsy.Bramon@gmail.com

Sept. 7: Grate Patrol Help prepare sandwiches to take out on the Salvation Army truck to feed our vulnerable neighbors. Come to the Meeting House at 5:30 pm. For more information, contact sbrooks@uab.edu

Sept. 10: Clerks of Committees Workshop, Frederick Friends Meeting. The Yearly Meeting will host a workshop for Clerks of Committees, beginning at 10am to 3pm. This will provide an opportunity to learn about the ways in which BYM office can help you, but also to talk together about the ways in which committee life can be spiritually nourishing – and get work done!



Sept. 11: First Day School begins! For more information and to sign up, contact Michael Beer at fmwyouthprogram@gmail.com

Sept. 11: William Penn House Potluck & Dialogue – F(f)riends are invited to a potluck and Quaker dialogue at William Penn House, starting at 6:30 pm. Bob Schultz will talk about the Human Rights Seminars for university students he first organized more than 30 years ago. We will also meet this year's students and hear about their research projects. Bring a dish to share. 515 East Capitol St. SE, www.williampennhouse.org, 202.543.5560.

Sept. 17: On Saturday, September 17, [Jenn Fredette](#) will be giving a **workshop** to Friends on **setting boundaries**. Jenn has a Masters of Pastoral Counseling from Marymount University and a Masters of Divinity from Wake Forest University. The workshop runs from 10 am to 2:30 p.m.; lunch will be served.

Sept. 18: A White Historian Confronts American Slavery – Susan Strasser, a retired history professor at the University of Delaware, has presented her perspectives as a White Historian Confronting American Slavery to several audiences in the area. The response has been enthusiastic. She will be speaking at FMW at 1:00 pm. For details, David Etheridge at david.etheridge@verizon.net

Sept. 23 – 25: Family Camp Weekend, Shiloh Quaker Camp (Hood, VA) Family Camp Weekends at Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camp Properties offer us all a chance to come and enjoy our beautiful camp properties at a special time of year. Individuals and families are invited to come and enjoy the camps for a day or for the weekend. This fall, we will have a program coordinator at each weekend who will plan camp-type activities for Saturday and Sunday mornings, as well as Saturday afternoon and evening. These may include things like playing in the creek, a crafts project or hiking around one of the most precious places on earth. There will also be plenty of work projects to do! Work projects offer people with all kinds of skills the opportunity to enjoy some meaningful and satisfying work! We will enjoy meals together, have time to explore and even spend some time around a camp

fire in the evening. Come and enjoy a camp experience, give the gift of your time, participate with children in activities and find yourself rejuvenated.

Oct. 7 to 10: Silent Retreat for Friends Is your spirit in need of nourishment and refreshment? Join members of Annapolis Friends Meeting for a Silent Retreat. This retreat has never been full, so please join us. We will keep the silence from Friday evening until after worship on Monday, enjoying the beauty of God's creation in meadows and woods, reading, walking, resting, praying, finding our own rhythms, and listening for the "still, small voice" at Dayspring Retreat Center in Germantown, MD. The cost of the retreat is \$300, and the deadline for registrations is Sept. 30. For details, contact facilitator Jean Christianson (jschristianson@gmail.com, 410.544.1912). The Dayspring website is here: www.dayspringretreat.org



Oct. 8: William Penn House Birthday Celebration Open House, 9 am to 3 pm. Join us for food, fun, and fellowship to celebrate 50 years of service and activism. Engage in a hands-on service project to honor the light in others, enjoy a free lunch and meet William Penn and Lucretia Mott in person! Families, individuals, and groups of all ages are welcome. Register by Sept. 26 [at this link](#) or at williampennhouse.org. If you have questions or would like to volunteer at this event, contact jessica@williampennhouse.org or call (814)769-6906.

Oct. 16: Dupont Circle House Tour, <http://www.dupont-circle.org/tickets>, noon to 5:00. Friends Meeting of Washington is one of the stops—and the site of their end-of-tour tea. Come meet the neighbors!

Nov. 5: Sing-along Concert with Peter Blood and Annie Patterson, co-authors of Rise Up Singing and Rise Again, 7:00 pm in the Meeting Room. \$15/suggested donation. All are welcome, on this Saturday before the election—sing out!

Thinking About Race (September 2016) – White Delusion

Originally displayed

Photo from "[A History of White Delusion](#)" by Nicholas Kristof, **The New York Times**, July 14, 2016

"My hunch is that we will ... look back and conclude that today's calls for racial justice, if anything, understated the problem — and that white America, however well meaning, is astonishingly oblivious to pervasive inequity.

"As it happens, the trauma surgeon running the Dallas emergency room last Thursday when seven police officers were brought in with gunshot wounds is a black man, Brian Williams. He fought to save the lives of those officers and wept for those he couldn't help. But in other contexts he dreads the police: [He told](#) The Associated Press that after one traffic stop he was stretched out spread-eagle on the hood of a police car.

“Williams shows his admiration for police officers by sometimes picking up their tabs at restaurants, but he also expressed his feelings for the police this way to [The Washington Post](#): ‘I support you. I defend you. I will care for you. That doesn’t mean I will not fear you.’ ”

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.

ANNUAL SESSIONS



In August, many Friends from FMW had a chance to attend part/all of Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s Annual Sessions, held in a new location in nearby Frederick, MD. Here are some report-backs:

I hadn't been to annual session in a long time, but I will definitely go back next year. Hood College in Frederick, MD is only an hour away. The campus is beautiful and the accommodations were very good. The Program Committee did an excellent job providing interesting speakers and topical workshops. The age range of attendees was 4 months to 92 years! I was able to spend quality time with current friends and make new friends from nearby meetings. - Judy Hubbard

Annual sessions are a place to take your own Quaker practice to a whole new level, interacting with Friends who are serious about their faith (but still full of fun) from many different Meetings. I’m always wowed by the skills displayed by Quaker clerks and conveners at these meetings. This year, I was particularly thrilled to be able to hang out with the Quaker activist George Lakey, whose infectious laughter helped us all look at the despair and trouble of the world and somehow refill with hope. Many spontaneous things can happen as well—ask Michael Beer about the new Quakers in Arlington Facebook page, or the triplets about the Meeting for Pokemon. Frederick is full of wonderful restaurants; start your adventure with a yummy lunch in town. – Debby Churchman

Kian, Skye and Michael enjoyed Annual Sessions. Friends are so wonderful, and talented (one can't miss the talent show...this year we had an 8 year old spectacular magician). For a miniscule budget, Friends do all kinds of service. Our Committee on Indian Affairs was started in 1795 and has to be one of the oldest solidarity committees in the history of the world. Hood College is conveniently located near DC and we were able to go up Thursday morning and attend the day's events. BYM focused a lot

on improving racial diversity. Kids had a splendid time interacting with other Quaker kids. - Michael Beer

My favorite things: The campus, with its beautiful trees and lovely pergola, the great hymn singing, the worship groups, and George Lakey's charming and inspirational discussions about nonviolent action. Issues: There was no place on campus to sit around with friends and have coffee in between meals, although there were soda machines in the dorms, and a Starbucks 3 blocks away. – Faith Williams

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

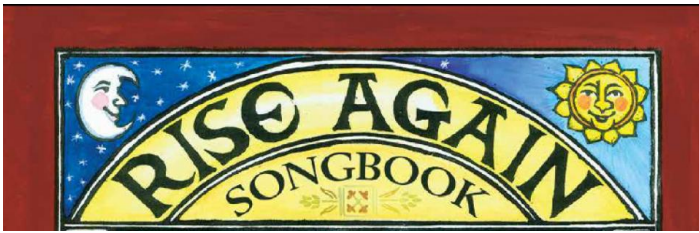
This Fall, FMW will be going inward and outward, by both honing our pastoral skills (the better to serve F(f)riends) and by welcoming our neighbors to several events.

As you probably know, the Meeting has been shaken in the past few years by a series of boundary challenges, trying to discern how to be both welcoming and inclusive to all without compromising the safety and well-being of members/attenders. We've learned a few things, mostly by making a lot of mistakes. The pastoral committees at the Meeting (e.g. Personal Aid, Ministry & Worship, and Healing & Reconciliation) have sometimes felt like they were in over their collective heads. They looked around for help, and discovered that we are not alone—many congregations routinely struggle with the same dilemma of being welcoming while setting appropriate boundaries.

After a period of discernment, it was decided that we should hire two sets of experts to walk through how to do this, and how to better provide appropriate pastoral care. The first will be giving a **workshop here on September 17** from 10 am to 2:30 pm. She is **Jenn Fredette**, who holds a masters of Pastoral Counseling from Marymount Univesity and a Masters of Divinity from Wake Forest University. The workshop is open to all, with a special concern for Friends from the DC area meetings who serve on the pastoral committees. (Friends are coming from as far away as Richmond.) There will be a fee (as yet to be determined), and a lunch will be served. For more info and to sign up, contact me at the office.

Meanwhile, FMW is opening its doors to one and all for several different events, which I managed to wrangle for us through the clever marketing technique known as Answering the Phone and Email. Took a call from the **Dupont Circle Civic Association** wanting to know if we would ever consider allowing our building to be on their **annual house tour**. Are you kidding? We would love a chance to meet our neighbors/show off our building! Very nice members of this association visited the office, and later toured the grounds with uber-gardener Mark Haskell and renovation planner Neil Froemming, and are excited about showing us off. We plan to put the video and information about the renovation where tourists can see it, for our part. The group even plans to hold their tea on our terrace,

which is a show-stopper. You can get tickets for this thing at <http://www.dupont-circle.org/tickets> if you like. I can't wait!



Then, I got an email from **Peter Blood**, the co-writer of *Rise Up Singing* and *Rise Again*, which are like the folksong Bibles of FGC Quakers. Peter and his wife, **Annie Patterson**, led the singing at the FGC Gathering this summer, and have been on an extensive concert tour for months, teaching folks how to use the new book (*Rise Again*). They wondered if they could come to Friends Meeting of Washington the weekend before the election, when we'll all be feeling feelings and thinking thoughts. It took Religious Education about 16 seconds to say yes to this, and then I talked the Folklore Society of Greater Washington into co-sponsoring, hooray. We'll need some helpers—let me know if you're willing to work for a couple of hours on November 5 to set up/take down the venue. Peter and Annie are asking for a \$15 donation for this **sing-along concert**. Save the date—Saturday, Nov. 5, 7:00 pm.

Finally, I was approached by a woman named **Joyal Mulheron**, a health policy wonk who lost a young child a few years ago and has worked ever since to help other parents cope with this kind of profound loss. She wanted to hold a city-wide **inter-faith memorial service** where parents could come together to grieve their children. She was particularly interested in reaching the neighborhoods where so many children and young people have been murdered in DC, she said. And she wondered if our Meeting Room might be a good place for this.

Well, of course it would. We talked details, timing, where the pastors and rabbis and imams would sit, whether and what kind of music, etc. I kept thinking, she shouldn't be doing this alone—this is a grief that needs to be borne by the community, not a single individual. So I ran this by the Ministry & Worship and Personal Aid committees to see if they'd be willing to co-sponsor it. Yes, indeed, they would. I told Joyal that there would be no charge for the space, and she burst into tears. She said that morning, Howard University had also agreed to co-sponsor, because they really want to reach out to the neighborhoods where the murders are happening. So it looks like things are coming together for this meeting to happen the weekend after Thanksgiving, a holiday that Joyal says is particularly tough for grieving parents. I'll send out an announcement when details have been settled. Stay tuned.

Ours is a lively and enlivening faith—it's good to see our light shining in the wider community!

Meanwhile, congratulations are in order to **Jane Connor** and her new husband, **Bob McMahan**, and to **Tracy Hart** and her intended, **Ahmad Olabi**. As long as we're distributing congratulations,



let's give some to **Zoe Plaughter**, whose new Masters in Social Work has landed her a job in palliative care in Prince George's county, and to **Nathan Gale**, who has just started as a freshman at Case Western Reserve.

Our hearts go out to **Valerie Graff**, who lost her brother, and to **Faith Williams**, who lost her sister. Holding them, and others who may be grieving, in the Light. Grateful for the healing of **Bob Meehan**, who is out and about after his knee replacement, and **Martha Solt**, who has largely beaten back non-Hodgkins' lymphoma and is slowly regaining her strength.

• Debby