

Minutes, Meeting for Business, 10.2016

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Minutes

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

October 2016

Queries

Do you endeavor to live "in virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars"? Do you work to make your peace testimony a reality in your life and in your world? Do you weigh your day-to-day activities for their effect on peace-keeping, conflict resolution and the elimination of violence? Are you working toward eliminating aggression at all levels, from the personal to the international?

Advices

We are called as peacemakers to deal with the violence and aggression within ourselves, to find ways of living in harmony with ourselves and neighbors. A simple life style is useful in this connection, since the pursuit of excessive material wealth or power entails competition and exploitation of others. As John Woolman urged, "May we look upon our treasures, the furniture of our houses and our garments and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions." The development of inward peace is part of the process of making outward peace.

Friends need to wage peace boldly and positively. The promotion of peaceful methods of conflict resolution, of international exchanges, of peace education and research, of world law and world-wide standards of human rights all are positive ways.

One important aspect of our peace witness is refusal to serve in the military or in activities contributing to military preparedness. Friends who face the draft or registration for it should consider prayerfully their alternatives. Their Meetings should stand ready to counsel and support them. Friends of all ages may witness by acts ranging from refusal to pay war taxes to non-participation in war-related work to demonstrations and other public witness. All should be aware of the tragic consequences of indifference, timidity and procrastination. - BYM *Faith and Practice*

Voices

Most, if not all, people admit the transcendent excellency of peace. All who adopt the petition, 'Thy kingdom come', pray for its universal establishment. Some people then must begin to fulfil the evangelical promise, and cease to learn war any more. Now, friends, seeing these things cannot be controverted, how do we long that your whole conversation be as becometh the Gospel; and that while any of us are professing to scruple war, they may not in some parts of their conduct be inconsistent with that profession! ... Friends, it is an awful thing to stand forth to the nation as the advocates of inviolable peace; and our testimony loses its efficacy in proportion to the want of consistency in any...

Guard against placing your dependence on fleets and armies; be peaceable yourselves, in words and actions, and pray to the Father of the Universe that he would breathe the spirit of reconciliation into the hearts of his erring and contending creatures.

- Issued by Yearly Meeting in London 1804, 1805, during the Napoleonic Wars

2016/10-1 Welcome of Visitors Meeting for Business opened at 12:15 pm with 26 Friends present. Friends welcomed Emmeline Goodhue as a first time attender and 26 visitors to our Meeting for Business.

2016/10-2 Clerk's Report

- Alternate Clerk, Dan Dozier introduced himself as the clerk of the Meeting and asked if Grant Thompson could clerk while he took take minutes. Clerk Meg Greene and the recording clerk were unable to attend. Friends were reminded to rise when they speak and generally on speak once on an issue to help the flow of the Meeting.
- On October 23rd at the rise of Meeting We would like everyone to participate in the Capital Campaign Kickoff. Food and childcare will be available.
- In consultation with several others, the clerk wrote a letter to a member of our community clarifying boundaries for treating others that this person has sometimes violated in the past. The clerks were prompted to take action by the fact that the person's behavior was affecting the staff. If these boundaries are not respected going forward, we will be coming back to Meeting for Business to ask for your guidance on how to respond.

- DuPont Circle House Tour which will be held on October 16th will end with tea here at the Meetinghouse! Friends are reminded that to attend the tea they must have tickets for the tour. Tickets are available at - <http://www.dupont-circle.org/housetour>
- The clerk requested that Steve Coleman write a memorial minute for his father, Jack Coleman. Jack's Memorial Meeting was held in good order last Sunday. Steve has agreed to take the lead on the memorial minute with support from Elaine Wilson and his sister Nancy Coleman.

Friends APPROVED the request.

Major items

2016/10-3 Finance and Stewardship

Jim Bell, clerk of Finance and Stewardship, presented its annual report, a copy of which is attached.

The committee sees its role as to translate into dollars and cents the spirit of the Meeting's temporal activities. To this end it must help the Meeting raise the funds needed to translate that spirit into works. **Hunger** and Homelessness Task Force work over the years cannot happen without the financial support of the Meeting community. The three major sources of funding for the Meeting's work are: contributions, space use income, and investment income. Sadly the number of contributing families in the Meeting is declining.

The committee particularly thanked the bookkeeper, Laurie Wilner, for keeping our records in good order.

Jim asked: Do we value our spiritual home and its life as much as we do our secular world? He proposed that we consider each year if what we are giving to the Meeting is the right amount. Can we each give more when our income increases? If we have not given before, can we give this year? IF not, why not?

Friends were asked to encourage others to donate and support the Meeting.

A Friend expressed concern and surprise that the membership has declined so much.

Friends **ACCEPTED** the report.

2016/10-4 Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund

Anne Kendall, clerk of the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund, gave its annual report, a copy of which is attached.

Anne noted that the scholarship fund has grown in its purpose, providing mentorship and sometimes creative aid, as well as what amount to very small scholarships. Each year the committee goes through a process of sending out solicitations for applications, reviewing and winnowing sometimes about a hundred applications, interviewing a small number of applicants and then making the hard decision as to who receives the scholarship and mentoring. Each summer the committee holds a tea for the new scholars where the older scholars come and share their insights into the college experience. The new scholars often meet their committee mentors at this time. This year we have added the system of student mentors.

The committee is setting up a database of the student to keep better track of successes and failure. The committee believes that the data will show that our program has a much higher than average success rate for these students; we estimate that about 94% of our scholarship awardees do not drop out of college, a very high retention rate.

The committee noted that although the fund was founded in Friend Meeting of Washington, which contributed about \$13,000 last year; a substantial amount of its support comes from other meetings including \$15,174 from Bethesda Friends Meeting and more recently contributions from Langley Hill Meeting. Friends are reminded to be generous when the annual Barbara Nnoka luncheon comes in late February which makes approximately one third of the funds from Friends Meeting of Washington. The good news is that the committee has given 5 scholarships this year, totaling \$30,000.

In response to a question, even though other Meetings are contributing, the scholarship fund is limited to students from the District of Columbia.

Friends ACCEPTED the report.

2016/10-5 Marriage and Family Relations Committee

Jim Bell, member of Marriage and Family Relations Committee, presented the request for marriage under the care of the Meeting the marriage of Tracy Hart and Ahmad Olabi for the second time.

Details about the wedding will come later.

Friends **APPROVED** the request.

2016/10-6 Membership

Joe Izzo, member of Membership committee, brought forward the following:

- Request for transfer of membership of Elaine Wilson from Ann Arbor Friends Meeting
- Request for transfer of membership of Tara Tappert from Roanoke Friends Meeting

Friends **APPROVED** the transfer of membership of Elaine Wilson from Ann Arbor Friends Meeting.

Friends **APPROVED** the transfer of membership of Tara Tappert from Roanoke Friends Meeting.

2016/10-7 Ministry and Worship

Gene Throwe, clerk of Ministry and Worship, presented the Annual Report of the committee, a copy of which is attached. The committee sees its role as shepherd of the Meetings spiritual life. In the last year it has continued experimenting with the configuration of benches in the main meeting room to make it more welcoming to those who have difficulty hearing. It has also helped convene a workshop about setting boundaries, the first in a series of workshops intended to improve the pastoral care practices among Friends. M&W was part of a larger group of Friends from the various pastoral care committees at FMW which is convening a series of pastoral care workshops. M&W also **STRONGLY** recommended that we update our sexual harassment policy. The Committee also completed the Spiritual State of the Meeting Report.

Saturday, October 22, 2016 from 10 am to 2:30 pm a second workshop in this series will be presented by Ronald Hopson on predatory behavior, how it manifests itself, what the warning signs are, and how to recognize and contain it. The fee is \$20 and includes pizza for lunch

The committee continues to seek ways to deepen both our worship and our community. The Committee is seeking ways of attracting newcomers to Meeting. For example, the Committee has developed and placed a sign on the sidewalk outside of the Meeting.

A friend suggested that newcomers may have difficulty understanding where to go on our campus three buildings and grounds. Perhaps M&W would discuss signage on the property, plus people to guide visitors to the proper places for worship for all times.

A Friend suggested that the harassment report should be more than just a policy, but that the policy and Meeting practice be made known to Friends and visitors.

A Friend noted that as one of the three people who has volunteered to work on the group, The Task Force is earnestly seeking a volunteer to clerk the group.

Friends **ACCEPTED** the report.

2016/10-9 Nominating Committee

Merry Pearlstein, a member of the Nominating Committee presented

Nomination of F.T. Clark (attender) to the Capital Campaign Committee for an indefinite term.

Friends Approved the Nomination.

Other business

2016/10-10 Trustees

Dan Dozier, presented a report from Trustees including an update on the Capital Campaign, a copy of which is attached. The Trustees, the Capital Campaign Committee, the Property Committee and the Clerks have scheduled a called meeting on October 23 from noon to 1:30 PM to discuss financing the Construction project.

Friends **ACCEPTED** the report.

Friends **APPROVED** the minutes as improved.

The Meeting closed at 1:15 PM with approximately 25 persons in attendance to reconvene as Way opens on November 13, 2016

ATTACHMENTS

Friends Meeting of Washington

Finance and Stewardship Annual Report, October 2016

The Finance & Stewardship Committee supports the Meeting through fund raising, accounts management, budgeting, support and interaction with committees and ad hoc groups, and longer-term planning. It attempts to translate into dollars and cents the spirit of the Meeting's temporal activities and to mobilize the needed funding.

The Committee identifies the general operating income and expenses, and appropriate support for organizations and projects beyond the Meeting that are in keeping with Meeting policies and leadings. Annually, the recommends to Meeting for Business an operating budget to meet these needs.

Through a bi-annual appeals letter, we highlight the activities and programs of the meeting. We had a particularly favorable response for FY 16: the November appeal letter raised \$17,077 for the operating budget and the June FY 16 raised \$8,300 from 35 donors. In addition, the June appeal resulted in two persons signing up for making automatic monthly contributions.

The committee recognizes and appreciates all those who make contributions to the operating fund each year and we sincerely thank you. With donor support, FMW was able to provide funding for the following activities: numerous FMW committee activities, William Penn House, BYM Camping Program, Friends Wilderness Center, Friends Committee on National Legislation, American Friends Service Committee DC Program, Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund, SOME Saturday morning breakfast program, Grate Patrol, and Young Adult Friends activities. The donations also allow us to support the Religious Education program, campus improvements, staff, and daily maintenance and operation of the campus, etc. At the same time, we also recognize the value of members and attenders contributing many volunteer hours to all aspects of FMW's committees, outreach programs and social services, and many other activities with which the community engages. Because of the generosity of members and attenders contributing both money and time, FMW has increasingly been offering its facilities to a wider range of organizations which offers opportunities for visitors to learn more about Quaker traditions and our faith.

Our three major sources of income for the general fund are contributions, rental income and investment income. Contribution income in FY2016 was \$178,000 which was disappointing as it was \$22,000 lower than the \$200,000 that we had originally budgeted. Rental income from monthly rentals and event rentals was \$182,000 which was approximately \$34,000 less than budgeted due to losing a long term tenant at the end of the fiscal year and also a major event rental client. F& S recognizes the hard work of the Administrative Secretary, Property Manager and Property committee in FY 16 and wishes to acknowledge their very positive contributions in maximizing rental income to the extent possible. Investment income was \$84,000. FY2016 began on July 1, 2015 and ended on June 30, 2016.

For the first time in many years our expenses were greater than our operating income and FY 16 ended with a \$561 loss from operations. The main reason for this loss is the continuing decline in contributions from members and attenders. This income has declined steadily from \$231,000 in FY2011 to \$178,000 in FY2016—a drop of \$53,000 from FY 11 to FY 16.

The number of contributing families (members and attenders) declined from 283 in 2008 to 221 in 2014 for an average decline of four percent a year. From 2013 to 2014, the number of member families contributing declined from 140 to 116, and the number of attenders contributing declined from 123 to 105 which represent a total of 42 less contributors. As of December 31 of the years 2010 to 2015, the number of resident members (DC, Virginia and Maryland) declined from 276 to 201—a drop of 75 members. In summary, the committee believes that the decline in giving is largely due to a decline in the number of members and attenders giving, and a decline in the actual number of members and attenders at FMW. At this time, the committee seeks the guidance and concern of all at FMW to assist in increasing the total amount given each FY and in increasing the number of members and attenders who give.

For FY 17, the committee projects a small \$99 gain from Net Operations. FMW needs a much larger gain from operations to finance needed property improvements. We have brought these concerns to the Meeting for Business and we are focusing on ways to change the decline to an increase in FY2017 through giving more thought and attention to strategies and actions that the committee and FMW as a whole may implement to increase contributions.

The Committee has worked closely with the Trustees and other committees of the meeting to develop a sound approach to finance the planned construction.

The F & S committee compliments and recognizes the dedication and hard work of the bookkeeper in providing accurate and up to date financial information to the committee, Trustees, and ultimately Meeting for Business.

Do we value our spiritual home and life as much as we do our secular world: our automobile(s), our internet and television? Every year, we each should evaluate our annual giving and ask ourselves: Has our giving to the Meeting kept pace with inflation? Do we have a Cost of Living Index for our charitable giving? Has our giving increased as our personal income has increased? If we are not giving to Meeting, have we considered giving this year? And if not why not?

Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund

Annual Report to Bethesda Friends Meeting and Friends Meeting of Washington

This report was compiled by Tia Duer with some additions by Anne Kendall

September 2016

Introduction

The Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund has given a total of 116 scholarships to deserving students in the District of Columbia to enable them to attend college. All seniors in DC Public Schools can apply. The scholarship is awarded to students with

- Major financial need (this year 4 new students had \$0 family income and one had less than \$40,000 in family income);
- Strong values and contribution to the community;
- Good academic standing (GPA, class rank, AP classes);
- Demonstrated drive and determination to succeed in college;
- Demonstrated success in overcoming past obstacles.

The Friends Meeting of Washington established the program 35 years ago, and Bethesda Friends Meeting has been a long-term partner. Last year, Langley Hill Meeting joined the effort, contributing both volunteer and financial support. A committee comprising members and attenders of the three meetings jointly manage and mobilize financing for this scholarship fund. The committee members contact public schools to raise awareness of the scholarship opportunity, select recipients, manage the funding, provide mentoring to scholars, and make decisions about the program's policies and practices.

The scholarship award is now \$6,000 per student: \$1,500 per year for freshmen through senior years. For 2016-2017, we have disbursed \$2,000 to seniors, and hope that future fund-raising will be sufficient to increase the total scholarship amount to \$6,500. We commit to support students through their four years of college. To maintain eligibility each year, students must submit their college transcript, proof of enrollment for the next school year, and a letter discussing the successes and challenges of the last school year.

We had 125 applicants this spring from 27 DC Public Schools (up from 108 last year) and granted five scholarships in June. We now have outstanding commitments to a total of 20 students for this academic year: five per college class. When each student enters the program as a freshman, we commit the full \$6,000 to support him or her through the four years. Funding for next year's freshman will need to be at least \$30,000.

This year we had our annual tea in July for recent and former scholarship recipients and committee members. This has been a very successful addition to our program where the old timers share what they have learned about managing college. This year we have added student mentors which will be a way of keeping the older students involved in the program.

The process we use appears as Attachment 1. The Scholarship Announcement and the Application Form are in Attachment 2. Attachment 3 shows this year's number of applicants, grouped by DC public school and trends in numbers of applicants and schools. Attachment 4 is our status report on all who received scholarships from 2010 to 2016. Attachment 5 presents information on sources and uses of funds. There are no overhead charges: 100% of funds raised are spent on scholarships.

The New Freshmen

This June, we selected five students – three young women and two young men – who demonstrated strong academic potential, inspiring community service, and significant financial need.

To respect their privacy, we are listing only the students' first names in this report.

1. Merhawi. Merhawi graduated from Cardozo High School with a 3.96 GPA, 7 AP courses and 3 Project Lead the Way honors courses. He was second in his class. When he started high school, he didn't understand English. Though born in the US, when he was two, his mother took him to Eritrea and left him to live with her mother. He was facing conscription into Eritrea's military camps on his fourteenth birthday. Merhawi's grandmother got him out of the country and back to the US just before he turned 14. But his mother didn't take him in; she had a drug problem.

He went into foster care. He didn't understand English, and it was very hard for him to express himself to the judge, social worker, lawyer, and foster parents. He explained, "I couldn't grasp the situation." He was bullied at school but he pushed himself to talk to English speakers. Sports became a sort of family for him, "where judgment didn't exist." He became captain of the indoor and outdoor Varsity Track teams, Varsity Cross-country Team, and Varsity Tennis Team.

Merhawi is a responsible, self-driven, intelligent, and humble young man. He is a highly disciplined student and actively involved in school life and in community service. He has tremendous personal will, commitment, and ability to learn and adapt to new situations and diverse people. He also shows great empathy toward others who are shy and reserved.

He will attend the University of Virginia, where he wants to major in biochemistry or pre-med. He has already been accepted into a research program at UVA that is normally open only to upperclass students. He wants to become a physician and cancer researcher.

2. Marie-Helene. Marie-Helene graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School with a 3.62 GPA and four AP courses. Marie was raised by an immigrant single mom and had hard times growing up. She often did not have enough money for food and transportation. They were nearly evicted several times. Their cell phone service was cut off. Her mom's financial woes weighed heavily on her and she became withdrawn.

In the summer of 2013 she became a Youth Organizer at SMART (Student Multicultural Action Research Teams). Then she volunteered as a Youth Educator in Sexuality and Reproductive health, in the Young Women's Project of the DC Education Department. She testified before the DC Council's Education Committee on the need for better English-language learner education. These experiences and her other jobs and internships built her confidence that she could be heard.

Now she is confident, opinionated, curious, and very aware that it's OK to be different and unique. Her outlook is informed by being the daughter of immigrant, low-income single mom. She is entering George Washington University, and wants to major in political science. She wants to be an advisor in the White House.

3. Dayasia.Dayasia graduated from Woodson High School with a 3.16 GPA. Her GPA was damaged by a terrible freshman year when she said she was “plagued by indolence.” Then she received a “devastating diagnosis of lupus.” Her mother, who is unable to work following an injury, implored her to “[d]o what you need to do now so you’ll be able to live the way you want later,” and Dayasia pulled herself together. She has followed a solid, challenging curriculum (including 2 APs). Her English teacher notes that she has unusually strong writing and oratorical skills, and both teachers commend her as a student who “continuously strives to improve, takes instruction and criticism well, works independently, is a team leader, and rises to the challenges set before her.” Another teacher calls her “a shining star.” With others, Dayasia took on the Aspen Challenge to imagine a program or project to address inner-city problems. Her group created a HOPE club that teaches non-violent conflict resolution to elementary school children. She led the club during her senior year. Dayasia also loves computer programming and mentoring others. She wants to join a research program in her sophomore year, and wants to have a career in the field of bioinformatics. Dayasia has entered the University of California at Santa Cruz, located near Silicon Valley.

4. Alexis.Alexis graduated from Friendship Technology Prep, 3rd in her class, with a 3.5 GPA. Her essay showed an empathetic understanding of the underemployment, poverty, and social dysfunction of her neighborhood, and imagined some solutions, including providing basic financial counseling as a component of receipt of public benefits. Her family, which includes many younger siblings, relies entirely on public assistance, and she has an ambition to excel and later return to uplift her community. Alexis writes that reading is a channel for her to escape her problems and the problems of the community around her. “My passion is reading. I plan to earn a bachelor’s degree in English/literature, a Master’s degree in library sciences, and if the doors are open enough I’ll take a shot at a PhD in the field of literature.” She is entering George Mason University.

In high school, Alexis took four AP classes, and also participated in a dual enrollment program with Trinity University. She has also been an active volunteer in different programs in DC. One of her teachers wrote strongly about her “academic brilliance, outstanding moral fiber and perseverance.” He said, “I always found myself refreshed and invigorated by the thoughts she was able to put on paper.” He even kept her final exam for his class because it inspired him to continue believing in the talent that could emerge from the distressed area in which he teaches.

5. Bakari.Bakari graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School with a 3.3 GPA. He noted that his high school is predominately white, in a predominately white NW neighborhood. The races self-segregate. In particular, he felt that the African-American students were not being well served. So he started the Black Student Union to create community and a unified voice. He expected to face conflict but was surprised that to the extent there was conflict it did not come from the faculty and administration. He felt he made a difference. His teachers and principal were glowing in their recommendations. They pointed out Bakari’s ability to work with all racial groups. His leadership in forming the Black Student Union contributed greatly to the school. The principal called him an “old soul.”

In addition to being the founder and president of the BSU, Bakari co-founded the Woodrow Wilson Minority Male Roundtable, was an Alpha level member of the Mayor’s Youth Leadership Institute, a Student Leader of the Capital Partners for Education, member of the swim team, a lifeguard and

member of the economics club. Bakari is entering Morehouse College where he plans to be an economics major. He would like to work in the field of community and economic development.

Mentoring for Students

Mentoring by committee members has continued to provide guidance, support, and encouragement to each student. Students have repeatedly told us how important this encouragement has been to their success. In addition, we have continued with our annual summer networking meeting for all scholars in the program, where upperclassmen can offer advice to incoming freshmen on how to cope with the challenges of college. Their advice is amazing, and much more directly helpful than what our older committee members can provide. We compile these tips and send them to all those in the program, along with all the students' contact information.

This spring, one of our students suggested that we also set up a formal mentoring system provided by the students themselves. So we mobilized upper-class mentors for each of the incoming freshmen. During interviews we told each applicant that, in this program, mentoring is as important as financial aid. We asked if they were interested in being mentored by upper-class students, and once they became sophomores, would they be interested in mentoring. They were all very enthusiastic about this approach. This summer, student mentors have talked with their mentees. They are committed to maintaining contact throughout the year, and we will monitor this as well. Students have also set up a Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship group on Facebook, and, with our help, contacted all the recipients since 2010 to join. They are also setting up an e-group for the student mentors to exchange advice.

Creating a Student Database: Recipients since 2010

The Meeting suggested that we take stock of the progress our recipients have made – to assess our rate of success. Of the 32 students who have received scholarships since 2010, 30 of them are attending or have graduated from four year colleges – a 94% success rate - one became a certified medical assistant and only one is having difficulties that may prevent him from graduating. Several are in graduate school or are gaining job experience needed to apply for graduate or medical school. All those who have graduated are gainfully employed. Their status is summarized in Attachment 4.

Bethesda Friends Meeting Support in 2015-16

BFM contributed \$15,174 to the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund in FY2015-16, \$4,000 from the regular BFM budget (through the Peace and Social Justice Committee) and \$11,174 from contributions through the Social Concerns Box and from individuals and families of our Meeting. We are profoundly grateful for the Meeting's strong support for these wonderful kids. These contributions allowed us to increase the annual scholarship to a level that provides meaningful assistance in the acquisition of necessary technology and books. We have learned over time that most of these students would fall short by the thousands of dollars needed for academic materials if they relied exclusively on the grants and loans provided by their schools, and the MJS funds help bridge that gap. The students who attended our mid-summer gathering expressed profound gratitude for the difference the scholarship makes in their ability to finance the education that will open the way to their future.

Friends Meeting of Washington Support in 2015-2016

FMW contributed \$13,993 to the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund in FY2015-16. The Meeting gave us \$4700 from the budget, we received \$3,368 in contributions from the Barbara Nnoka luncheon in late February and we got \$5925 from members and attenders of the meeting, including our faithful anonymous donor who contributes \$25 a month.

Friends Meeting of Washington

Ministry and Worship Committee Report

October 2016

The Ministry and Worship Committee currently consists of Gene Throwe as clerk of the committee, Debby Churchman, Marsha Holliday, Malachy Kilbride, Liz Pomerleau, Greg Robb, Bertie Rossert, and Hayden Wetzel serving as recording clerk. Blair Forlaw and Michael Huffington resigned from the committee in September 2016. The committee meets once a month on the first First Day of the month at 12 noon.

This year, the committee worked on the next steps concerning the issues raised when a former meeting member left after having inflicting emotional hurt on many women in our community. After conducting listening sessions last summer, the committee looked at the meeting's most current harassment policy that was adopted in May 1997. The policy only covers staff at Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) but not the members and attenders. It also does not address the use of internet to intimidate and harass individuals. The committee recommended to the Meeting for Business that a task force be formed to review and update the harassment policy to include everyone in the meeting and address modern technology and its use in harassment. The Meeting has created a task force but there has not been any movement forward. This dismays the committee due to the gravity of the issue.

The committee also worked closely with the Personal Aid Committee, the Healing and Reconciliation Committee, and the clerks of the Meeting to look at the pastoral care options available to FMW. People from these committees attended a seminar given by the Stephens Ministries but felt that the time commitment and the evangelical slant of the ministry would not work for FMW. The same group of committees then looked at pastoral care professionals, Jenn Fredette and Ronald Hopson to conduct a series of workshops on pastoral care. Last month, Jenn Fredette conducted a workshop on setting boundaries and this month, Ron Hopson will conduct a workshop on stopping predatory behavior.

Because of last year's Spiritual State of the Meeting, this year's survey focused on the future of Quakerism and FMW. A quantitative survey was sent to members and attenders of the meeting in February and a series of 6 focus groups were held to ask more in-depth questions. One of the main findings was that the meeting feels that integrity and equality were the most important Quaker testimonies but that stewardship would become more important in the future. Many friends felt that Quakers were losing their influence in the world even though we have always had a greater influence than what our numbers would indicate. Finally, younger Friends do yearn to reconnect to the spirituality of early Friends.

The committee looked at ways to increase offerings in adult religious education. The committee has under its care the Spiritual Journeys sessions each month, the Inquirers classes, and added a new program on Welcome to Quakerism. We have also reintroduced the Quaker in the Corner program as a way to welcome newcomers with great success.

Under the care of the committee already are the Quaker chaplaincies at American University and Georgetown University. Both chaplaincies, although small, continue to grow. Students from both universities attend FMW regularly. Gene Throwe conducted a workshop at Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Annual Session on starting Quaker chaplaincies at other colleges and universities. Adelphi Friends Meeting is starting a Quaker Meeting at the University of Maryland-College Park and Lauren Brownlee at Bethesda Friends Meeting is trying to start a chaplaincy at Howard University.

The committee was asked by the Baltimore Yearly Meeting's (BYM) Working Group on Racism to review their proposed change to the BYM Vision Statement to be more inclusive about diversity. The committee made changes and referred to the Business Meeting for approval. Many of the proposed changes that FMW suggested to the working group were incorporated into the final proposed vision statement.

Due to the floors in the meeting room being refinished, the committee suggested having Meeting for Worship on April 24 in the back garden. The change of scenery was well received and we proposed that we have meeting outside at least twice a year. Meeting for Worship on September 25 was conducted in the back garden again to much acclaim. Another change that the committee proposed, while working with the Property Committee, was to realign the center benches to face the sounding board to help with the acoustics in the room. Although the change was met with mixed reviews, our dear Friend, Jack Coleman, said he was able to hear better with the new arrangement. The committee continues to work with the Property Committee to look at better ways to enhance the acoustics in the meeting room.

The committee has been concerned about the nature of messages given in meeting, from rambling messages to overtly political messages in an election year. Member of the committee met with the Young Friends recently to talk to them about discerning when a message should be given. The teens then learned a skit which they performed before the meeting later that morning. The skit was well-received by the meeting and many said they learned a lot from it.

In order to provide a special space for grieving for those that have experienced a loss, the committee created a working group to examine having specially called Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Loss. The working group hopes to schedule a few special meetings a year to allow Friends to mourn various losses.

The Ministry and Worship continues to work diligently to enhance the worship experiences of the meeting and welcomes any suggestions or concerns.

Accessibility Renovation Update

FMW Trustees Report to Meeting for Business – October 9, 2016

We have reached the point at which Friends must demonstrate our commitment to the Meeting's long-awaited renovation by providing/pledging financial support. Design work is nearly complete on the project to provide wheelchair access to all parts of our facility, protect our rivers by capturing storm water runoff, and make our campus more open, usable and welcoming.

We expect the plans to be ready to submit for building permits next month. Permit review takes 5-6 months, so we can sign a construction contract and begin work in the spring, if we wish. Many Friends have worked for years to bring us this far. We have reached the point that we could see the project nearing completion a year from now.

Our remaining hurdle is the cost, which has risen from prior estimates. A construction contract will be about \$2.8 million, and we must allow for further contingencies that could add up to \$500,000 to the final cost. Remaining design, administration, permitting, legal, financing and fundraising costs could add another \$300,000.

If we proceed, we must be ready to spend as much as \$3.6 million, \$2.6 million of which will have to be borrowed.

We have met with several banks, and loan officers have visited the campus. Sandy Springs Bank has offered us a construction loan for up to \$2.6 million, at 3.99% interest, fixed for 15 years and amortized for 25 years. We would refinance any balance remaining at the end of 15 years. The bank recommends that we close within 60 days to lock in this extremely low rate.

We must continue to support existing expenses of the Meeting and find up to \$15,000 a month (\$180,000 per year) in *additional* cash during the mortgage repayment period. For at least the first 5 years of the mortgage repayment period, the \$15,000 per month must come from donations.

Property Committee believes, based on conversations with event planners and space providers, that the Meeting can increase event and office rental income substantially after completion of the project. These potential gains will take five years or more to substantially reduce our reliance on donations as the source of mortgage payments. The Committee is preparing a business plan to clarify future rental revenue prospects, which will be submitted to the Trustees and the Meeting for review and then to the lending Bank.

The Meeting can proceed with the project if we can satisfy ourselves and the bank that we will have the means to support mortgage payments. But Trustees cannot sign a construction contract unless: (1) the Meeting has pledges and donations sufficient to make payments of \$15,000 a month over the next 5 years, while continuing to support existing Meeting expenses; and (2) additional rental income will offset a substantial portion of the loan costs after about 5 years.

The Meeting has been in unity for several years that we want this accessibility project to succeed. At this point, the question we face is not “Do we want to go forward?” but “Do we want to contribute enough to make this work?” We can answer this question with checks and pledges.

The Meeting will convene a community-wide meeting on **Sunday, October 23 from noon to 1:30 PM in the Meeting room.** The purpose of the meeting is to communicate our shared responsibility for raising the funds for the construction project.

