

# Newsletter, February 2017

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## **Friends Meeting of Washington**

### **Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business**

**January 2017**

#### **Query for Worship Sharing- 20 Minutes**

“What does membership at Friends Meeting of Washington and in the Religious Society of Friends mean to me?”

Key themes:

- Commitment to this specific community
- Commitment to the institution
- Taking on the responsibilities of ministry and care of the community
- Friendship and peace
- To represent Christ's principle of inclusiveness
- Membership is necessary to steward our property
- Membership is an intentional commitment to this particular monthly meeting.
- Membership is about mutual support: care for the meeting and for the member. In return, the meeting is charged with supporting its members.

- An intentional membership process makes us stronger and contributes to our community solidarity.

## **Welcome of Visitors**

The meeting for business opened at 12:15 with 24 Friends present. There were no visitors at the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business.

## **Clerk's Report**

- Update on Maurice Boyd's health
- The Women's March is coming up on January 21. FMW is hosting 70 individuals at the meeting house. There is a need for Friends to help with hospitality on Friday, January 20 through Sunday, January 22nd in the morning.

**Contact Elaine Wilson for details [elainewils@gmail.com](mailto:elainewils@gmail.com)**

- The Christmas Eve Potluck was a success with plenty of food for all.

## **Membership Committee Annual Report-Janet Dinsmore**

### **New Membership Update**

- Chris Wickham's application for membership was approved.
- Greg Robb's letter for membership was received. Janet provided a summary of some excerpts from the letter. Greg has participated on the Hospitality and the Ministry and Worship Committees as well as the Sexual Harassment Task Force. As is the custom, his application will be laid over for one month.

### **Associate Membership Update**

- According to our handbook, Associate Membership does not extend past the age of 25. The Membership Committee has done targeted, thoughtful outreach to these young adults to inquire about their spiritual path, how FMW can serve them, and if they would like to change their membership status. After the third attempt at contacting them, these individuals will be removed from our associate membership list. This policy was discussed three or less years ago.
- Here is the list of Associate Members older than 25
  - Lisa Marie Turner
  - Zachary Thompson

- Jason O'Neill
  - Kevin Newcomb
  - Carl Barrett Nnoka
  - Bryce Lowes Kenworthy-U'ren
  - Sarah Kellogg. Bruce Kellogg said her sister Makai should also be notified.
  - Annelise Haskell
  - Patrick Drennon
  - Rebecca Jane Dozier
  - William Dozier
  - Stephen Tucker Craig
  - Christine S. M. Capps
  - Meg Beiter
- Friends engaged in a robust discussion about the meaning of membership and brainstormed different ways we could do outreach to associate members and others. Additionally, there was discussion about the administrative importance and uses of the member/attender status.
  - Friends expressed gratitude to the committee for their thoughtful letter. Friends agreed that continued dialogue with former associate members is a priority and recommended additional final outreach through social media to confirm that our message has reached the associate members. Friends suggested exploring other forms of interpersonal outreach, like a consultation with Young Adult Friends or former associate members who have gone through similar transitions.
  - Regarding administration and communications, former associate members will be taken off the rolls once FMW is certain that they do not wish to become full members. The administrative secretary will determine the best logistical way forward for communications.

**Recorder's Report** (see attached). In summary, the Administrative Secretary was enthusiastic about the progress of our meeting this year. The report was accepted as written.

#### **Records and Handbook Committee** Annual Report-Beth Cogswell

- No additional updates apart from the written report. The Business Meeting accepted the committee report as written.

#### **Nominating Committee**-Todd Harvey

Approved:

- Finance & Stewardship: Neil Froemming (m); 3-year term ending 2019
- Ministry & Worship: Gregory Robb (a); clerk of the committee; 1-year term ending 2017 (held over from December Meeting for Business)
- Personnel: Bill Strein (a); clerk of the committee; 1-year term ending 2017 ( held over from December Meeting for Business)
- Records and Handbook: Mark Kavar (a); 3-year term ending 2019 (held over from December Meeting for Business)

#### Resignations Reported:

- Capital Campaign Committee: David Beavers (a)

### **Miscellaneous**

#### Question from a Friend:

- How does one make a contribution to FMW?
  - Online with a credit card or debit card through our website
  - Donations Box in the Meeting Room
  - Leaving a check in the office
  - Mail a check to the Meeting
- What are the criteria for determining if a person is inactive?
  - Not having served or volunteered at FMW in the last 10 years
  - Not having given any money in the last 10 years.
  - Not having physical presence at meeting

The Meeting closed at 1:45 PM with approximately 25 persons in attendance to reconvene as Way opens on February 12, 2017.

### **Recorder's Report 2016**

By year to year count these are the figures for the Meeting's membership as of December 31, 2016.

The figures: According to our database, there are 279 members and 64 associate members, for a total of 343 members. There are 187 members listed as residents, and 92 listed as nonresidents.

#### Changes in 2015:

On the plus side, we gained 4 new adult members and 1 associate members. Total gains equals 5.

On the minus side, 1 members died, 2 transferred out, and 27 were removed by the Membership Committee following a careful process. Those removed haven't been active in any meaningful way in quite awhile; this brings us closer to truth. Total losses equal 30.

Our database continues to tell us that we have 8 Sojourners, a number that hasn't changed for many years.

#### RECORDS AND HANDBOOK COMMITTEE REPORT

January 8, 2017

For the year 2016 Records and Handbooks Committee was asked to edit the handbook in two areas. The edits were presented to Meeting for Business and approved.

January, 2016. This change was requested by the Committee of Clerks. Section 8 was altered to allow the Committee of Clerks to co-opt additional members as needed.

July, 2016. The second change was suggested by the Clerks of the Meeting. In Section 10 the annual reports from the nine Related Organizations to the Meeting for Business were assigned to either May or July.

In addition, 2 committees, The Senior Center Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee for Special Events, were identified as inactive or no longer existing, and were eliminated from the listing of Related Organizations.

(this ends the Minutes & Reports from the January 2017 Meeting for Business)

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

**February 1- BYM Camps Registration Open for All Campers, Catocin, Opequon, Shiloh, and Teen Adventure Quaker Camps** [For full information about BYM Camps, see their website](#)

**Feb. 1:** Help make sandwiches for the **Grate** Patrol to take to our vulnerable neighbors, starting at 5:30 pm. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at [sbrooks@uab.edu](mailto:sbrooks@uab.edu)

**Feb. 4:** Help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. Convene at 6:15 am at **So Others Might Eat**. For more information, contact Betsy Bramon at [betsy.bramon@gmail.com](mailto:betsy.bramon@gmail.com)

**February 3-5 – Annapolis Friends Meeting Silent Retreat Dayspring Retreat Center (Germantown, MD)** Our winter silent retreat at Dayspring awaits us. I hope you can experience the beauty of woods, meadows and ponds. We hope you can share the warmth of the fire at the hearth and in our hearts as we listen for the still small voice. While Annapolis Friends will have priority at this retreat, all Friends and friends of Friends are welcome and encouraged to register. We have always had plenty of room at the Dayspring Inn. For more information or for the registration form, contact Jean Christianson. (410-544-1912 or [jschristianson@gmail.com](mailto:jschristianson@gmail.com))

**February 6 – A White Historian Confronts American Slavery, Bethesda Public Library (Bethesda, MD)** This free talk and discussion is sponsored by Bethesda Friends Meeting and will begin at 7pm. In response to #BlackLivesMatter and the murders at Charleston's Emanuel AME Church, historian Susan Strasser seeks to serve people grappling with contemporary issues of race and racism by discussing the latest historical scholarship on slavery. Mark Greiner, pastor of the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church, writes: "The lecture so evocatively described our shared history and its ongoing legacies and struggles. Further, you modeled how a white person/scholar can struggle into owned history. You simultaneously "performed" history and solidarity. Sobered, delighted with and inspired by your work." This is part of a series of illustrated talks, "A White Historian Reads Black History." Others are about lynching, housing segregation, and voting rights. Dr. Strasser, Richards Professor of American History Emerita at the University of Delaware, is a prize-winning historian of American consumer culture. She has been praised by the New Yorker for "retrieving what history discards: the taken-for-granted minutiae of everyday life." For more about Susan Strasser, see [susanstrasser.net](http://susanstrasser.net).

**Feb.10-11– Young Friends Conference, Sandy Spring Friends School (Sandy Spring, MD)** Young Friends should plan to begin arriving at 7:00 pm on Friday. For information, check the Young Friends website ([https://bym-rsforg.presencehost.net/what\\_we\\_do/yfs/yfcon.html](https://bym-rsforg.presencehost.net/what_we_do/yfs/yfcon.html)) or contact [Jocelyn Dowling](mailto:jocelyn.dowling@bym-rsforg.org). (301-774-7663) Please remember that the deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is two weeks before the conference (January 27). Any one registering after that date will be placed on a waiting list and may not be able to attend.

**February 11 – Family of Friends: How can we help Quaker community work? Friends Meeting of Washington** People come to communities of faith seeking not just divinity, but the affirmation of humanity through relationship. And herein lies the difficulty. Close relationships are easily thrown off balance in community. Conflict can be an opportunity for greater intimacy, but all too often it drives us apart. This workshop will take seriously the Quaker tenant that we are all ministers. Family Systems Theory will help us to understand relational dynamics in our Quaker communities. In his book, Generation to Generation, Friedman writes to help clergy deal with healthy and unhealthy patterns of human connection in faith communities. Just as families have patterns of relating that lead to health or harm, so too do communities of faith have recognizable patterns. Using our collective

experience, we will seek pastoral interventions to alleviate discord. We will reflect upon how our habits of relating help or hinder dynamics of friendship in Quaker community. Please RSVP ([admin@quakersdc.org](mailto:admin@quakersdc.org) or 202-483-3310) so we can get an accurate count for lunch and so that we can send optional background reading. 9:45am to 2:30pm.

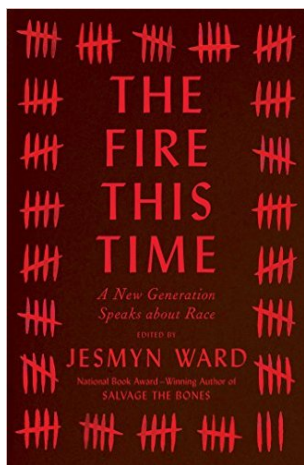
## February 17 – 19 – **40<sup>th</sup> Annual Washington Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology**

**Claggett Center (Adamstown, MD)** The plenary speaker for this year is Jungian Analyst Melanie Starr Costello who presents the topic of Decline and Ascent: The Paradoxical Passage of Elderhood. In addition to the plenary sessions, you may join any one of seven (7) Interest Groups. Overnight accommodations are comfortable and all meals are included in the price of the Conference. The themes of the Conference incorporate the Quaker belief in the inner Light, as well as the principles of depth psychology with an emphasis on the work of C.G. Jung. Affiliation with the Religious Society of Friends is not necessary to attend. All are welcome. For questions, contact Loy Jones (301-288-7867) or Susan Brown (301-570-9728 or [webmaster@fcrp.quaker.org](mailto:webmaster@fcrp.quaker.org)). You may check out the entire program and preregister at <http://fcrp.quaker.org>.

Feb. 25: **J.E. McNeil** will give another **Active Bystander Training** from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Ever seen someone being harassed and wondered what to do? She has specific, concrete actions you can take to protect the targeted person and stop the abuse. Free.

Feb. 26: Come to the annual **Barbara Nnoka Lunch to support the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship program**. Bring an empty stomach and a full wallet, and leave with a full stomach and an empty wallet. For more information, contact J.E. McNeil at [jmcnrick@gmail.com](mailto:jmcnrick@gmail.com)

## **Thinking About Race** (February 2017) – “The Fire This Time” by Jesmyn Ward



For this 2016 book, *The Fire This Time*, author Jesmyn Ward\*, after the 2012 killing of Trayvon Martin, invited other African American writers to share their thoughts. In her introduction, she calls it, “A book that would reckon with the fire of rage and despair and fierce, protective love currently sweeping through the streets and campuses of America. A book that would gather new voices in one place, in a lasting, physical form, and provide a forum for those writers to dissent, to call to account, to witness, to reckon.” Among those writers is Carol Anderson, whose essay “White Rage” makes some of the same points as her book by the same title, cited in our December “Thinking about Race” column.

“Protests and looting naturally capture attention. But the real rage smolders in meetings where officials redraw precincts to dilute African American voting strength or seek to slash the government payrolls that have long served as sources of black employment. It goes virtually unnoticed, however, because white rage doesn’t have to take to the streets and face rubber bullets to be heard. Instead, white rage carries an aura of respectability and has access to the courts, police, legislatures, and governors, who cast its efforts as noble, though they are actually driven by the most ignoble motivations.”

\*Ward's novels to date are *Where the Line Bleeds* and *Salvage the Bones*, which won the 2011 National Book Award. Her 2013 memoir, *Men We Reaped*, has won multiple awards.

*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](mailto:david.etheridge@verizon.net).*

## RANDOM HAPPENINGS

So I got an email around the third week of November from William Penn House, saying they were already totally booked for the weekend of the Women's March and would we consider opening up our floors? I dutifully took this to Peace & Social Concerns, who jumped on board right away. **Brian Lutenegger**, who is brilliant with Google docs, set up a form so people could sign up and we could track how many were coming. Excellent planner **Elaine Wilson** figured out another Google doc to list the many tasks and who would do them. **Beth Cogswell** stepped up to lead the food brigade. And **Steve Coleman** and **Michel Beer** became excited about offering other programs as well during the weekend.

As so often happens with a leading, one small step in the right direction made many other steps both visible and possible. So this one decision to say Yes to a few requests for housing eventually led to our accepting 70 such requests and providing space for an active Bystander training by **J.E. McNeil**, the launch of a rapid-response-to-hate group, a folk concert, a panel discussion about next steps, and a special talk with a local Congressman about how to work for peace & social justice. All of this work fell on the shoulders of nearly 40 FMW volunteers, each one of whom stepped up cheerfully and kindly. And then our Meeting hosted a worship group so full, it took 45 minutes just to make the introductions!

The news since then has been crushing to those working for peace and social justice—and heartening, as individuals and leaders around the country step up to resist and labor for a kinder, more inclusive and sustainable world. We are made for this, Friends. And we are ready.

- Debby



