

FMW Newsletter Issue 92-07 (July 2022)

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MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP ~ ALL ARE WELCOME

Sundays:

- 9:00 - 10:00 am (online)
- 10:30-11:30 am (in-person—indoors & outdoors. Online-[Join here.](#))
- 6:00-7:00 pm (in person)

Wednesdays: 6:00 - 7:00 pm

Monthly Meeting for Business: 12:15 pm, July 17 - in person and via Zoom ([Join here](#))

Masks and Covid vaccine documentation are required.

For more information, email admin@QuakersDC.org.

7th Month Query: Caring for others

Do you respect that of God in every person? Do you search yourself for and strive to eliminate prejudices such as those related to race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and economic condition? In what ways do you accept and appreciate differences among your friends and associates? Do you avoid exploiting or manipulating others to accomplish ends, however worthy? (For more, see: [Prejudice and Discrimination; Those Requiring Special Care](#))

Source: [BYM Faith & Practice, Part II The Queries](#)

News

Reproductive Rights, Privacy and the State - The Recent Supreme Court Decision

Members of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee, which concerns itself largely with issues around marriage and family creation and planning, became very troubled when a draft decision written by Justice Alito was leaked earlier this year, threatening reproductive rights. We convened a number of meetings to which all Friends were invited. Out of this came a [Minute on Privacy and the State](#), which was approved by the committee and then brought to Meeting for Business in June. There, it was discussed and approved. A copy is below.

The Supreme Court has since issued its final decision, overturning 50 years of reproductive rights granted to pregnant people. In his concurring opinion, one Supreme Court Justice suggested that the court overturn the decisions which legalize gay relations, gay marriage, and contraception.

Friends were invited to gather and respond to this decision. While two Friends expressed support for the Supreme Court's decision, all other Friends present were troubled by it and made numerous suggestions as to how we might best respond.

Leaning into our [Minute](#), the committee gathered a working group to follow these leadings, as way opens. All Friends are welcome to join this group. If you are so led, please contact Martha Solt, soltdozier@gmail.com

Minute: Privacy and the State - June 2022*

Friends believe that there is that of God in every person, and that the spiritual journey is one of continual seeking and revelation. Often life brings us to difficult, meaningful moments of decision making. We are taught to hold these decisions in the Light, seeking guidance by Spirit. Often, we turn to our community for help in gaining clarity. We know and respect the individuality of each person's spiritual journey, knowing that decisions can lead to both endings and beginnings, often in unexpected ways.

The decision to have, or not have, children and the decision of who to marry, or not marry, are examples of deeply personal, individual decisions to be made by the person or people involved, in the presence of Spirit. Friends believe that all families have privacy rights and people of all genders have rights to reproductive health care, including pregnancy termination.

If a Friend or couple is struggling with a question regarding these personal decisions and asks the Meeting for help, the Meeting should provide a clearness committee to support them in their decision-making. Friends should also work to decriminalize any such decisions, and to preserve an individual's right and ability to carry out their decision.

** This minute was discussed and agreed to at Friends Meeting of Washington's monthly Meeting for Business, June 12, 2022. It builds on a statement from Baltimore Yearly Meeting's "Faith and Practice," which reads: "When the number of children exceeds the financial, physical and even spiritual capacity of the parents, a hardship is worked on all involved. Thoughtful decisions either to have or not to have children should be accepted and supported by the Meeting."*

FMW Joins Volunteer Effort to Aid Hundreds of Migrants Bussed from Texas - Volunteers needed.

Since early April, they have come as families with children, couples or alone. Six days a week, they arrive in Union Station after 36 hours by bus from Texas, and often weeks on the road before that, fleeing political chaos, climate disruption, food insecurity, joblessness. They have come to the US in hopes of safety, a new life, or at least a livelihood that can support their families. A few will stay in DC, many more plan to join family in cities all over the country. No matter where they actually need to go, Texas Governor Abbott is bussing them to the District so "Washington is going to have to...deal with the same challenges that we're doing."

So far, welcoming these families has been an all-volunteer effort, organized by an ad hoc group of faith groups and immigrant advocates under the umbrella name "Migrant Solidarity Network." Typically a bus arrives around 10:00 at night, and volunteers help the new arrivals to a hotel near Union Station. One or two more buses arrive around 6:00 am. Volunteers shuttle the weary travelers to one of the houses of faith that has agreed to provide a landing place, to give them a place to rest and plan the next step in their journey. Volunteers provide meals, assess what they need—bus tickets, phone calls to relatives, clothing, shoes, diapers.

In early June, FMW received an urgent request to lend our support to this effort. FMW's Committee on Peace and Social Concerns responded with a Social Justice Fund grant of \$1,000. On June 12, the full Meeting agreed that FMW will join our sister houses of faith in opening our doors, to provide respite for migrants arriving on the first and third Wednesdays in July

and August (July 6 and 20, August 3 and 17). According to the Migrant Solidarity Network, the number of arrivals seems to be increasing—more people, more buses every week—and their funds and volunteer resources are stretched.

FMW volunteers are needed to welcome our hungry, exhausted guests. Spanish (and sometimes Portuguese or French) speakers are needed for intake. People with cars are needed to shuttle folks from Union Station to FMW and back. But if you can smile as you serve a meal to a homesick young man, help a tired mom find a pair of shoes for her toddler, play with a child, do dishes, or help a family find the right bus tickets—you can help give these travelers the welcome they deserve. You can **sign up here**. Migrant Solidarity Network also needs **donations and other kinds of help—learn more here**. For more information, contact, Barbara Briggs, email: admin@QuakersDC.org, cell (412) 417-9384

The work of FMW member Susan Lepper lives on in a new book:

Respect & Justice for Indigenous Peoples: A Quaker Advocacy Group's Experience Recounted

This account of eight decades of the work of the Indian Affairs Committee of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting upends assumptions and yields surprising clues to many questions that arise for those who seek a path to right relationship with native peoples: How can those who are not Indigenous, but who wish to assist Native Americans in their fight for justice, be appropriate allies? What comes after truth telling and public statements of regret? Can colossal ignorance be overcome? Readers of this **audiobook** by Patricia Powers will learn about horrendous injustices, historic and present, perpetrated against Native peoples – wrongs that Quakers have called out and sometimes caused. (Indian boarding schools are one example.) But one also learns about hard-won successes by Indigenous peoples, and the supporting role that some non-Natives have sought to play. From helping to ensure access to sweat lodges for Native prisoners wanting to practice their spirituality, to adding their voices against projects that would flood ancestral lands, the activities of this small group of Quakers offer examples of solidarity, deepened and enriched by a celebration of Indigenous leadership, vitality, and invincibility. *Respect and Justice for Indigenous Peoples* describes a myriad of issues tracked, addressed or neglected by BYM's Committee on Indian Affairs, including references to the work of FMW member Susan Lepper, who was active with the Committee for years.

The Conflict in Ukraine: a new report by Just World Educational

by Helena Cobban

In mid-April, the organization that I am honored to serve and to lead, Just World Educational, issued a 32-page report on the situation in Ukraine. It contained digests of eight extremely rich, hour-long webinars in which, during March, board member Richard Falk and I co-hosted conversations involving a total of 17 superbly thoughtful and well-informed guests, experts on different aspects of the current situation. Richard Falk is a distinguished international jurist who was a leading thinker in the Vietnam-era antiwar movement and has served on numerous UN and other international bodies over his decades-long career. My experience on issues of war and peace goes back to my work as a correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* in the Middle East in the late 1970s, a period in which I lived, parented, and ran a household with my Lebanese then-spouse amidst the risks of the ongoing civil war. After I left Beirut, I studied strategic affairs under a special fellowship at the University of Maryland, authored seven books on different international issues, and in 2000 became a convinced Quaker.

JWE's report, *Ukraine: Stop the Carnage, Build the Peace!*, included a list of eight policy recommendations that Richard, the other board members, and I felt emerged from what we had learned during the March webinars. We gave the highest priority to recommendation #1, a call for a Ukraine-wide ceasefire now.

You can read the full list of policy recommendations **here**, and access our **full report here**. If you'd like to watch the March webinars you can find the **full multimedia records** (video, audio, transcripts) **here**.

In stressing the need for an **immediate halt to the fighting by all sides** in Ukraine we were very moved by the judgment expressed by webinar guest Anatol Lieven, a long-time expert on Russian military affairs and on Ukraine-Russia relations, when he said that the outline and many details of a workable long term settlement between the two countries were already quite clear and *the nature of this settlement would be unlikely to change much even if the fighting should continue many more years*. For his part, Richard Falk noted that the conflict inside Ukraine was also overlaid by a broader, "geopolitical" struggle between the United States and Russia. He warned against the temptation seemingly felt by many Americans to "fight Russia to the last Ukrainian."

The second of our policy recommendations was a call for "**An embargo on arms shipments into Ukraine by all countries.**" This was probably the most controversial of our recs, though it is hard to see that a ceasefire could last very long without such an arms embargo. We had also (#4), urged that the arms embargo and the **ceasefire should be monitored by the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation** in Europe, two international

organizations that have both the United States and Russia as members, and which enjoy considerable support from Washington.

During our March webinars, the reality rapidly emerged that the U.S. and Russia possess far and away the world's two largest nuclear arsenals and that any move toward confrontation between them could snap the world almost instantly into an omniscient nuclear war. On March 28, we presented a special episode of the webinar series on this topic. It is clear that today, the threat of nuclear war between Russia and the US is as precarious as it has been at any point since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 (and the size and lethality of the two arsenals is much greater today than then.)

After the 1962 crisis, Washington and Moscow started working together to conclude a series of arms-control agreements that acted as "circuit-breakers" to prevent any rush or slide into direct nuclear confrontation. In 1989-91, those agreements and the partial trust built through the process of negotiating them allowed for the almost miraculously peaceful end of the Cold War. But in the present century, Washington unilaterally abrogated some of the most crucial of those arms-control treaties, and later on Russia exited the "hotline" agreement between the two leaders.

Meantime, in 2017, a large number of other countries around the world were able to conclude a ground-breaking new treaty, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Sadly, none of the nine states that have nuclear arsenals, including our own, have signed on. The risks and threats laid bare by the crisis in Ukraine underline the need for all Americans to work hard to push our government to join it.

Many Americans have been shocked and outraged by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. But outrage is not a policy. It's not even a good guide to policy. Indeed, in a tragic situation like the one in Ukraine today it's a uniquely dysfunctional guide to policy. The best policy guide was penned by our Quaker forebearers: A commitment to end war and to work hard to eliminate all the causes of war. I hope that the work that Richard Falk, our colleagues and I did to explore the roots of the conflict in Ukraine, the unique, omniscient risks associated with it, and the prospects for building a more peaceful world will find resonance among Quakers.

The author, Helena Cobban, is founder and executive director of Just World Educational and a member of Friends Meeting of Washington

BeyondGas Citizen Science Investigation—initiated by FMW's First Day School—enters Phase 2: Gas Stoves & Indoor Air

Following the highly publicized release this spring of a year-long investigation of gas leaks under DC's streets and neighborhoods, FMW social justice partners Washington Interfaith Network, Sierra Club and Interfaith Power & Light will soon be launching Phase 2 of their citizen science research—this time on the impact of gas stoves on indoor air quality.

The so-called "natural" gas used in over half of DC homes is mostly methane, a climate disrupting greenhouse gas 84 times as potent as carbon dioxide. When burned, methane emits nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), a pulmonary irritant that exacerbates asthma, COPD and bronchitis. In fact, *a child who lives in a home with even one gas appliance has a 42% greater likelihood of asthma.* (The amount of NO₂ generated by home heating and cooking with gas is not trivial for the climate, either. A [California study](#) found that gas burned in buildings is a significant source of NO₂ that creates outdoor air pollution, including smog.)

Gas stoves are especially bad health-wise because they are in our living areas, and usually not vented to the outside (as is required for gas furnaces and water heaters). Gas stove emissions are unhealthy for everybody, but there may be greater likelihood of damaging levels of NO₂ in lower income housing due to smaller spaces and poorer ventilation.

If you can't get rid of your gas stove, don't panic. Even if you can't electrify your home immediately, you can reduce your family's exposure: Always use the hood fan. Open a window. Use a fan to pull air out of the kitchen. Minimize gas stove use by using electric cooking appliances like your microwave, toaster oven, electric kettle, crockpot, or induction burner (some cost less than \$100, and they work great!)

If you would like to join the indoor air investigation as a volunteer researcher or offer your kitchen (with a gas stove) as a test site, sign up [here](#). For more information contact Barbara Briggs at (202) 630-5046.

Events

Reproductive Rights March, Saturday, July 9 - details TBD

If you would like to join an FMW contingent [sign up here](#). For more info email: SoltDozier@gmail.com

FMW Trans Justice Event: An Abolitionist Conversation on Trans Liberation **At FMW and on Zoom, Sunday, July 10 at 12:15 pm. Join on Zoom**

(Hosted by Peace & Social Concerns Committee) This educational event looking at the legislative attacks on Trans youth and communities, the insights of Trans organizers, and options for how to be an accomplice to Trans people in our current climate. The Trans Community Discussion will include time on Trans Joy, Trans Experiences, Interpretations of anti-Trans violence & connection to state policing of gendered bodies (with possibility of dissecting intersectional transphobia against Black/POC/poor Trans folks). Our goal is that everyone walks away with a better understanding of intersectional anti-Trans systems of oppression and of how they can aid in resistance/community care efforts.



Reminder: FMW's July Meeting for Business is always on the 3rd Sunday, **July 17, 12:15 pm**

Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Session 2022, Hood College, Frederick, MD, August 1-7
Registration is open through July 15.

Thinking about Race, July-August 2022: Under the Skin

Excerpts from Jerald Walker's **review** of Linda Villarosa's book, **Under the Skin – The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation**, The Washington Post, June 12, 2022.

Equal treatment within the health-care system, Villarosa argues, regardless of class or social status, remains elusive because of three primary obstacles: long-standing institutional and structural discrimination; implicit biases in the medical profession resulting not only in misdiagnoses but even blame for being unwell; and “weathering,” which, Villarosa writes, refers to the “struggle with anger and grief triggered by everyday racist insults and microaggressions ... [which] can, over time, deteriorate the systems of the body.”

The female reproductive system is not immune. Villarosa cites a 2007 American Journal of Public Health study that demonstrates that Black women who reported experiencing racial discrimination had double to triple the rate of low-birth-weight babies compared with Black women who did not report incidents of discrimination. Summing up, Villarosa writes, “The researchers’ conclusion: low birth weights among African American women have more to do with the experience of racism than with race.”....

To combat racism in health care, Villarosa advocates implicit-bias training for medical personnel and champions expanding the diversity of students, faculty and curriculums in medical schools.

Racism cannot be combated, however, if its existence is denied. Signs of its persistence were apparent in remarks made by the deputy editor of the prestigious Journal of the American Medical Association in a 2021 podcast. “Structural racism is an unfortunate term,” this editor said. “Personally, I think taking racism out of the conversation will help. Many people like

myself are offended by the implication that we are somehow racists.” JAMA’s Twitter account posted a tweet about the podcast: “No physician is racist, so how can there be structural racism in health care?” The podcast and the tweet were deleted, and, Villarosa writes, “*the deputy editor and the editor in chief – both white male physicians – resigned.*” [Emphasis added]

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each local Meeting. The BYM WGR meets most months on the first Saturday, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, currently via Zoom. If you would like to attend, contact the clerk at david.etheridge@verizon.net.

Meeting for Business Minutes & Attachments

Friends Meeting of Washington

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

Minutes - June 12, 2022

Query for Worship Sharing: *What steps could we take to be a more welcoming and inclusive community? What is stopping us from taking these steps?*

Meeting began at 12:15 pm.

At maximum, 15 friends were in attendance in-person and 7 friends were in attendance online.

First time attenders included David Smith.

Elaine Wilson serving as substitute Co-Clerk in Rebecca’s absence

Friends approved this substitution with enthusiasm.

Clerk’s Report, June 2022

Upcoming Events

- **Today! - Quaker Pride Festival** booth –stop by or [volunteer](#) at our FMW/area meetings booth this afternoon (Sunday) More on the [Festival](#) June 12, 12:00-7:00 pm. For more info: Jessica Arends at jessica.arends@gmail.com, cell: (814)769-6906
Poor People’s Campaign Moral March on Washington, June 18, 3rd & Pennsylvania Avenue NW, 9:30 am Join with the Rev. William Barber and his [Poor People’s Campaign](#) as they march for social justice.
8:30 am Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) will provide a gathering place, bathrooms & refreshments. FCNL, 245 2nd St NE #5795. For more info contact Bobby Trice, bobbyburnstrice@gmail.com.
10:00 am: FMW F/friends will meet at the Judiciary Square Metro. Contact: Debby Churchman, DChurchm@yahoo.com, cell: (540) 467-3455
- **Juneteenth, Honey Extraction & Committee Fair**, Assembly Room, June 19 at Rise of Meeting. We will celebrate *Juneteenth*—the day of liberation for the enslaved—with a program on Quakers and White Privilege in the North Room. For more info, contact Debby Churchman (dchurchm@yahoo.com). FMW kids will help our beekeepers extract and sell honey harvested from FMW’s rooftop hives. FMW Committees will have tables to give people a chance to learn more about “who does what around here,” and how to become involved. For more info: Contact Nominating Cttee clerk Michael Beer, MikeBeerDC@gmail.com
- **Friendly Quaker Film Club**, QHLR, Wednesday, June 22, 6:00 pm This month: “Friendly Persuasion” (1956) with Gregory Peck—a Quaker classic! For more info, contact convener Bill Parker, WParkerCRA@gmail.com
- **Quaker Peace Testimony & the War in Ukraine**, Sunday, June 26, Quaker House, 12:30 pm Sponsored by FMW Committee on Peace & Social Concerns. For more information, contact Jim Bell at kellybell21@comcast.net

FMW Community Highlights & Kudos

On Sunday afternoon, June 4, members of FMW’s Committee on Peace & Social Concerns traveled to Piscataway Park in Accokeek, MD to meet with Piscataway tribe matriarch Julie Tayac-Yates and visit the burial place of her father, Chief Turkey Tayac. We have invited Julie Tayac-Yates to visit us at FMW, and are planning a return visit to Accokeek in the fall.

Tenant Updates- Activities at our Meeting House

Income from event rentals continues to be strong, and we are off to a good start in terms of bookings for FY23. Challenges include the limited ability of the lower level of the west garden to accommodate large events as well as a potential economic downturn. The former Dupont Circle Village office space on the ground floor of Quaker House remains available for rent. See *Rentals manager’s report below*

Business

Budget, Second Presentation - Merry Pearlstein FY 2023 Final Draft Budget Expected FMW Donations FY 2023

Merry noted that some small changes had been made between the prior month's MfB and this meeting, and that she intended to focus on those changes during this presentation.

Merry noted that the budget was intended to outline Quaker values.

Merry noted that the Meeting will be operating at a deficit for the upcoming year, and that while this was cause for concern, it was not cause for panic or significant worry. A primary reason noted for the deficit was the uncertainty surrounding the health of the grass in the lower garden. Additional reasons noted were the intention to address building maintenance and repairs that had been delayed in previous years, the need for continued maintenance, new appliances, the impact of inflation on wages and contract costs, prior underestimation of actual maintenance costs, and a reduced quantity of volunteer work.

Merry noted some reasons for optimism, including a new financial coordinator, potential solutions to the grass problem within the lower garden, that the Meeting house is currently not being fully rented out, and that the Meeting may be adjusting its rental fees.

One friend raised the idea of increasing the length of the Meeting's budget cycle as a way of reducing projected variability in the budget. Merry raised the idea of offering preliminary projections for FY 2024 in December.

One friend offered their expertise in future budgetary forecasting.

One friend offered their sincere thanks to Merry and the Finance and Stewardship committee for their work.

One friend emphasized the vital importance of the rental income of the Meeting, as well as the generosity of friends, for the health of the Meeting. This friend noted that Quakers traditionally avoid discussions of finances, and encouraged additional reminders to friends to give.

One friend requested more information regarding a potential decrease in projected rental revenue. Merry noted that the projected rental revenue had increased instead.

Friends approved the budget. Friends approved the capital budget.

Support for Poor People's Campaign - David Etheridge Friends approved the meeting's participation in the Poor People's Campaign.

Committee of Clerks, Elaine
See minutes, below.

Proposed IT Taskforce - Debby

Proposal: Property Committee will create a temporary IT Taskforce to last eight months, which will include representatives from Property, F&S, and Library and Handbook, with significant input from office staff. Their scope of work is as follows:

- Understand and document current IT use, starting with the list Neil made at our last meeting
- Understand and document IT needs, both met and unmet
- Understand and document which committees or individuals are currently making decisions about these IT uses
- Discern supervisory needs of those decision-makers
- Write suggested Handbook changes, if necessary, to outline those supervisory roles

One friend requested a more specific definition of IT in regard to the taskforce. It was noted that our website, listserv, zoom, and all things that require technical expertise (both internal and external) were included. -Friends approved the creation of the taskforce.

Religious Education Annual Report - Julie Johnson
See below and [linked here](#).

Julie noted that the main themes to consider regarding the report were discernment (what friends need) and capacity (what friends can provide). Julie noted several successes in the past year regarding religious education, in particular relating to

scheduling, contemplative activities, the benefits of the use of the outdoor space, and greater engagement. Julie noted that their main priorities for the upcoming year were childcare and high-school aged youths, and that their primary strategy was to create a supportive space for engagement. Julie requested additional volunteers to help with religious education.

One friend expressed their appreciation for the work of the Religious Education committee, noting their skill and organization.

Friends accepted the report.

Membership - Rob Farr

Letty Coffin, second presentation

Friends approved the membership of Letty Coffin and their children Seville Edeler and Flinn Edeler as associate members.

Nominations - Nominating Committee (Michael Beer)

- Anita Drever, Financial Coordinator (July 2022-June 2023) Friends approved the nomination of Anita Drever as Financial Coordinator.
- Bill Parker, continue as FMW liaison with AFSC. Friends approved the nomination of Bill Parker as FMW liaison.
- Betsy Bramon is resigning from Membership Committee. Friends accepted the resignation of Betsy Bramon from the Membership Committee.
- Letty Coffin, Trustees

One friend noted that Trustees have specific legal requirements that should be reviewed and that Trustees can only be nominated at a certain time of the year, and that only if there is an unexpected vacancy can a new Trustee be nominated. This friend noted their support for the nomination regardless.

Friends agreed to hold over the nomination for an additional month to clarify the terms under which Letty Coffin would be serving.

One friend noted a special thanks to Neil Froemming for their contributions to the Meeting.

Minute in response to Supreme Court decision re: Roe v Wade - Martha Solt

Attached below.

One friend noted their appreciation and support for the minute.

One friend requested information on what the minute would do. Another friend noted that it would serve as guidance for action.

One friend noted that there may be some members of the Meeting who would be upset or uncomfortable with the minute, and requested guidance on how to have an open and loving conversation in response. Another friend suggested that an openness regarding the decision-making process may be helpful toward that end, and also noted that such a conversation may lead to greater engagement, participation, and insightful conversation in the community. This friend noted a particular worry that some community members may have felt excluded from the decision-making process, although there were many opportunities, open to all, to engage on the topic.

One friend noted appreciation for the prior comments.

One friend requested information regarding legal challenges and whether FMW would participate in such challenges. This has yet to be discerned.

One friend requested that the minute might be better titled "Individual conscience, privacy, and the state".

One friend noted appreciation for those with conflicting views within the meeting, and noted that, despite their own aspects of conflicting views, still was able to find a home in the meeting. This friend requested that an additional statement saying that "ongoing discussions regarding the minute were welcome" be added.

One friend noted that the footnote in the minute needed an in-text reference, and that an asterisk should be added to the title. Friends approved the minute, with the addition of a statement that "ongoing discussions regarding the minute are welcome."

FMW Support for Migrants arriving in DC - Peace & Social Concerns (Steve Chase)

Issue Background: Immigrants from Central America, Venezuela, Haiti, and elsewhere who cross the Mexican border into Texas are now being bused 36 hours to DC by the Governor of Texas and dumped at Union Station. DC residents, mutual aid groups, and faith organizations have formed the **Migrant Solidarity Network** to welcome and take care of the adults and children arriving six days a week, often with nothing, and usually hundreds of miles from family members waiting for them in other parts of the United States.

P&SC Committee Response: Volunteers from the Migrant Solidarity Network have reached out to FMW asking for help. One meeting participant is already offering long-term lodging for migrants at their home. In support of the Migrant Solidarity

Network's ministry, Peace and Social Concerns Committee has agreed to donate \$1,000 from the FMW Social Justice Fund to this effort and will promote opportunities for FMW members and attenders to help this ongoing ministry in support of migrants facing very difficult conditions. (Here is the [list of what is needed](#)—which includes money (for food, bus tickets, clothing and basic supplies), volunteers (to help provide respite, drivers, Spanish speakers), short- and longer-term lodging. Can you help—[sign up here to join FMW folks who want to volunteer.](#))

P&SC Committee's Proposal to FMW as a whole at the June Business Meeting:

- 1) Publicly endorse the work of the Migrant Solidarity Network and encourage members and attenders to support this effort. (In addition to Peace & Social Concerns beginning to work on this, one FMW attender is already deeply involved, a number have signed up to volunteer, and RE Committee is exploring how our teens might be able to help out.)
- 2) Authorize the FMW staff and P&SC Committee to open the Meeting House up 1-2 Wednesday's a month as daytime respite space for migrants arriving in DC on those days, a place for MSN volunteers to assess their needs and help them with next steps. (Area churches have most days covered. Church of the Epiphany just agreed to provide respite space every Wednesday in June. There is a need for space on Wednesdays in July and thereafter. We propose that FMW offer the Meeting as a respite space 1-2 Wednesdays a month beginning in July.

One friend requested clarity regarding scheduling for those interested in volunteering. The schedule was clarified to be at 6:30 am on Wednesdays at Union Station (the arrival time of the buses). Another friend noted that the commitment of the meeting would likely begin at 7:00 am.

One friend requested information regarding the support of the property committee. Another friend noted that the property committee fully supported the proposal.

One friend requested clarity on whether the proposal was limited or open-ended. Steve noted that the issue was likely to be open-ended, though they raised the idea of the commitment being reviewed after a period of time. The prior friend noted that some spaces may be already committed for rentals in the future which may conflict with a long term commitment to the proposal.

One friend noted that Wednesdays tend to be less likely to conflict with current rental trends.

One friend requested information on whether volunteers who speak Spanish were preferred. Steve noted that several existing staff members were able to speak Spanish and provide translation services when needed.

Friends approved the proposal into September, with a review of potential rental conflicts and whether to continue the proposal at September Meeting for Business.

Steve requested a formal endorsement of the wider work of the Migrant Solidarity Network.

Friends approved the endorsement.

Friends approved the minutes with thanks.

Meeting for Business was concluded with a time for silence, and ended at 1:57 pm, to reconvene as way opens on 7/10/2022..

ADDENDA: ATTACHED COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee of Clerks, 5.2022

Present: Merry Pearlstein, Grant Thompson, Rebecca Nelson, Bill Strein, Elaine Wilson, Neil Froemming, Mike Beer, Martha Solt, Greg Robb, Ken Forsberg, Debby Churchman. Julie Johnson, Mary Melchior, Rob Farr, Jean Capps, Michael Wood, Gene Throwe

Meeting began with a moment of silence at 9:01 am

In the absence of our Recording Clerk, Debby Churchman approved to record Minutes

Personnel Committee report on annual review of Administrative Secretary (see materials provided by Bill Strein)

- Reviewed proposed letter to Administrative Secretary regarding performance evaluation
- One Friend complimented Personnel Committee on thoughtful, nuanced letter
- Various edits proposed to the letter (specific notes taken by Clerk of Personnel)
- Clerks agreed that the letter, as amended, should be presented to Barbara, along with a synthesized version of comments.
- Friends **approved** the formal renewal of the contract

Follow-up to Spiritual State of the Meeting: revisit some of the main points for change and how Clerks can address them.

- While some Friends expressed aversion or dislike of digital technology to conduct our affairs, others rejoiced at being able to welcome geographically distanced members and other spiritual seekers into our community.
- A robust worship group gathered in our beautifully renovated garden each week, as weather permitted. Unfortunately, maintaining digital connection between the worshippers in the garden and those in the Meeting Room became too challenging over time and caused some sense of fragmentation to our worship.
- Due to [adjustments to] changing risks some regular attenders and members have receded from active participation either virtually or in person. We've missed their presence and look forward to their return.
- Friends shared their feelings of isolation when we gathered only virtually and expressed concern for those with limited or no internet access. Not meeting in person at times during the beginning and end of 2021 took an emotional toll on those who see themselves as extroverts.
- Some Friends expressed disappointment that our attention to anti-racism seemed to waver during the year as there were no discussions around the letter written by Friends of Color nor on the anti-racist guidelines we used to read before Meeting for Business. *This is being addressed by the Change Group for Racial Equity, which is planning several events/meetings for the remainder of 2022*
- *First Day School has been severely disrupted by Covid. One Friend talked about how much she misses having the kids join us in the last 15 minutes. RE is discussing this as they plan the 2022-23 FDS year. Hoping to restart the High School group, and go back to a weekly meeting. One Friend hopes that RE will get all of the resources it needs to carry out a weekly meeting. The proposed budget does include all funds requested. We do plan to re-open Child Care in June.*
- Finally, as a result of the extensive renovation and connection of all the buildings of our physical space we have created a useful, highly functional, and beautiful environment in which to build our community and offer space to other community groups and events. We are blessed to have an Events & Space Manager who promotes Friends Meeting of Washington as an ideal venue for weddings, memorials, non-profit meetings; other Faith's services and rituals. This has expanded our presence in the wider DC environment and drawn more spiritual seekers to us.
- One Friend notes that meeting by Zoom has reduced the informal meetings that happen in person, which depletes the whole community. Especially important to Personal Aid—informal meetings are often how we find out about struggles within the community.
- Friends considered several ideas for increasing our welcome to Newcomers. Hospitality will head this up; clerks are urged to continue to share concrete ideas.

Inform committee about IT taskforce recommendation:

Property Committee will create a temporary IT Taskforce to last eight months, which will include representatives from Property, F&S, and Library and Handbook, with significant input from office staff. Their scope of work is as follows:

- Understand and document current IT use, starting with the list Neil made at our last meeting
- Understand and document IT needs, both met and unmet
- Understand and document which committees or individuals are currently making decisions about these IT uses
- Discern supervisory needs of those decision-makers
- Write suggested Handbook changes, if necessary, to outline those supervisory roles

Friends approved.

Long-term visioning:

Clerks began a preliminary discussion about the long-term health and direction of the Meeting. CoC considered whether we need a Futures Taskforce to explore ideas for a long-term vision. A small group will also reach out to other houses of worship that include businesses, to see if there are lessons to be learned.

Committee of Clerks Meeting ended at 10:15 am, to reconvene as way opens July 31, 2022

#####

Minute: Privacy and the State, May 2022

Friends believe that there is that of God in every person, and that the spiritual journey is one of continual seeking and revelation. Often life brings us to difficult, meaningful moments of decision making. We are taught to hold these decisions in the Light, seeking guidance by Spirit. Often, we turn to our community for help in gaining clarity. We know and respect the individuality of each person's spiritual journey, knowing that decisions can lead to both endings and beginnings, often in unexpected ways.

The decision to have, or not have, children and the decision of who to marry, or not marry, are examples of deeply personal, individual decisions to be made by the person or people involved, in the presence of Spirit. Friends believe that all families have privacy rights and people of all genders have rights to reproductive health care, including pregnancy termination.

If a Friend or couple is struggling with a question regarding these personal decisions and asks the Meeting for help, the Meeting should provide a clearness committee to support them in their decision-making. Friends should also work to decriminalize any such decisions, and to preserve an individual's right and ability to carry out their decision.

** This minute was discussed and agreed to at Friends Meeting of Washington's monthly Meeting for Business, May 8, 2022. The minute builds on a statement from the 1988 edition of BYM's Faith and Practice, which reads: When the number of children exceeds the financial, physical and even spiritual capacity of the parents, a hardship is worked on all involved. Thoughtful decisions either to have or not to have children should be accepted and supported by the Meeting.*

Religious Education Annual Report 2021-2022



2021-2022 Annual Report





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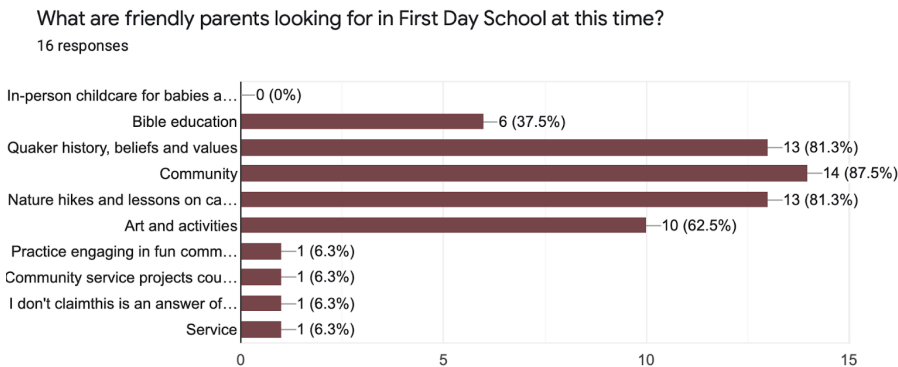
Committee Members and Staff

Religious Education (RE) re-launched in Fall 2021 with a new RE committee.

I . RE in 2021-22

Discerning Direction

We surveyed families in August 2021 about what they were looking for in FDS. We also held an open RE meeting in September 2021 to gain additional feedback from families. We used this to inform our plans.



Capacity

RE committed to do only what we had the capacity to do for this year, with the main focus being on relaunching First Day School. We hoped also to launch a high school gathering (Young Friends), but were not able to do that.

Pandemic Safety

We prioritized health and safety for First Day School. We paused childcare all year for safety reasons and are now working to relaunch it.

1. **Location:** First Day School met outside in the upper back patio for as long as weather permitted. During the winter, we met in the bridge room across from the upper back patio and opened all doors and windows for airflow.
2. **Hospitality:** RE provided hospitality/fellowship for children and parents on the upper back patio after meeting.

First Day School

1. **Modified Schedule:** First Day School ran on a bi-weekly schedule each month on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. This schedule was based on limited staff and volunteer capacity.
2. **Approach:** We applied a structured approach to each FDS consisting of: 1) a lesson aligned to Quaker testimonies, including responses to current events and relevant issues, 2) queries for reflection, and 3) a related contemplative activity. See list of FDS lessons in section IV..
3. **Staffing FDS:** The FDS lesson was often led by an RE committee member, with the help of a paid support teacher. We also brought in guest speakers and guest art instructors.
4. **Attendance:** We typically had about 10 to 15 young people participate in First Day School, with ages ranging from 5 to 15 years old. The majority of participants have been elementary and middle school aged.

5. **Summer Hiatus:** FDS will go on hiatus from July-August 2022 as many families will be away.

RE Lessons Learned This Year

1. **Approach:** Our approach to FDS this year, specifically the contemplative activities, has seemed to hit the mark with young people and felt relevant across age groups.
2. **Space:** The upper back patio, with easy access to the bridge room, Quaker house living room and restrooms, has proved to be an ideal space for FDS. Children run, play, and hang out before and after FDS in a contained, safe, pleasant area.
3. **Community:** Having a separate hospitality space for young people in the upper back patio fostered a sense of fellowship and community for families coming out of pandemic isolation — both for young people who play and talk after FDS and for the parents who come to pick up their children and stay to chat with other parents. This has allowed the RE committee to have a better handle on the needs of our families.
4. **Consistent FDS Structure:** Families seemed to appreciate knowing what to expect from FDS in terms of the structure. We've heard that our approach this year has helped take pressure off of parents to provide teaching coverage.
5. **Schedule Boosted Engagement:** We heard from families that meeting bi-weekly worked well for them. It was both a lighter lift for families that allowed them to balance their lives and schedules a bit more and it enabled parents to know when to focus their efforts on getting their young people to meeting. As a result, we had a strong and consistent turnout each time.
6. **Flexibility:** RE found that we were able to adapt during the pandemic, meet the needs of families, create community, and serve young people and families in slightly new ways.
7. **More to Serve:** While we count FDS as a success this year, we recognize that there are families who have not returned since the pandemic and there are others who we did not serve this year due to not having child care and a separate high school gathering. These are priorities going forward.

II. Planning for 2022-23

Intentional Discernment

We aim to learn from what worked this year, respond to the needs identified for next year, and be intentional in how we grow and move forward. We recognize the pandemic has changed things and we must respond and adapt accordingly. We realize we should not simply try to go back to the way things were done before.

Childcare

We have reengaged a manager for childcare who was with us before the pandemic and we're hoping to hire additional staff and begin offering childcare soon.

Young Friends

We plan to launch a high school group in Fall 2022. Our goal for this group is to create a space and community where our high schoolers feel supported and cared for. We will start the year with discussions about how Young Friends would like to

structure their time together. We are exploring the option to have one Sunday a month designated to service during meeting time, such as Grate Patrol.

First Day School

We plan to focus on creating contemplative space and community for young people through conversations/queries and intentional activities. We always welcome ideas from Friends for discussions and appropriate activities. We hope to recruit additional support teachers and to continue to bring in occasional guest speakers/presenters.

Meeting for Worship

Many Friends have expressed a desire to see children return to Meeting for Worship. We are evaluating options on how best to do this. We plan to survey families in August on possible approaches here based on the circumstances at that time.

Volunteer Engagement

In addition to paid staff, FDS relies on FMW volunteers with a leading to create welcoming and supportive space for young people. RE is seeking to expand the number of Friends willing to offer their supportive presence on a regular or occasional basis.

Schedule

We plan to survey families to determine preferences on schedule. We expect to begin next year on a bi-weekly schedule, with a long-term vision of returning to a weekly schedule as capacity allows.

III. RE Committee Operations

Planning Meetings

Monthly meetings were held via Zoom mid-week for RE committee members. Our support teacher often joined. Open RE meetings for all parents and Friends were held in the fall (Sept) and the spring (May).

Budget

We will end the year with a significant surplus due to reduced staffing and paused childcare.

Child Safety

COVID safety protocols were a key issue as we strove to ensure the safety of children and families. FDS was staffed by RE committee members who were fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and vetted with background checks. Committee members are familiar with FMW's established safety protocols. As we prepare for the upcoming year and the reinstatement of the childcare program we have joined with the Personnel Committee to update our child safety training slideshow. The new version incorporates COVID protocols, integrated guidelines for the childcare program, and a quiz at the end for trainees to test their knowledge of the content. All FDS teachers and regular volunteers are expected to complete the training and background check.

IV. First Day School Lessons and Activities

	Date	Topic	Lesson/Queries	Activity
1	10.3.21	FDS Re-Opens	Lesson: Come hear a story about Quakers who, in 1778, saved their town of Nantucket. Queries: We'll break into small groups to discuss queries.	We'll have activities for children to reconnect with each other.
2	10.17.21	Loss and Healing	Lesson: We'll read A Land Called Grief about a child who experiences loss, lives	Activity: We'll learn about the tradition of making beautiful sand mandalas and then

in a space of darkness and sadness, then finds wiping them away. Everyone will make their light and peace and is able to help others. own sand mandalas.

Queries: We'll do queries in small groups about any type of loss and healing the children have experienced.

High schoolers: We invite our FMW high schoolers to meet this Sunday at 10:30 am for a time of gathering and connection and a reflective discussion on general themes of loss and healing.

3 11.7.21 Our Interconnection to Earth and Each Other

Lesson: We'll discuss the Quaker value of stewardship in the context of the recent climate conference and relevant issues.

Activity: We'll do a "web of life" game in a big circle to show how everything affects everything else.

Special Guest: Allen Fawcett, Chief of Climate Economics at the Environmental Protection Agency, will offer an inside view of what just occurred at COP26 in Glasgow and what it means for our interconnection to Earth and each other.

Inflatable Games: After FDS is over, we will gain early access to the large inflatable games that will be set up near our space for the open house. We hear rumors of giant jenga, giant corn hole bean bag toss, and soccer darts.

Queries: We'll discuss ways to feel hopeful and help. We'll share efforts that are happening in DC, our schools, and our homes. We'll share a few examples from [Old Enough to Save the Planet](#).

4 11.21.21 Understanding and Practicing Gratitude

Lesson: We'll learn about the power of gratitude, how it impacts us, and how it relates to Quaker values of peace and simplicity.

Activity: We'll make and design our own gratitude journals, plan to use them for a week, assess impact, and continue using them.

Activity: We'll move through stations of gratitude, which include games, reflections, and sharing.

Queries: We'll discuss this experience of practicing gratitude.

5 12.5.21 Shoebox Project

Instead of a lesson, we will practice some fun group service in the form of the Shoebox Project, which is about filling backpacks with essential items for neighbors who have lost their homes.

Our participation will be separate from the rest of FMW in our regular outdoor location of the upper back patio.

6 12.19.21 Celebrating Holidays and Simplicity

Lesson: We'll learn about Friends' historical and current approaches to celebrating holidays. We'll discuss how some Friends at FMW think about simplicity during the holidays and incorporate the Quaker value of simplicity into their celebration.

Activity: We will make clove apple pomanders, a fragrant holiday ornament with roots that date back to the Middle Ages.

Queries: We'll move through a reflective activity to identify what parts of a holiday celebration are most meaningful to each of us, explore what simplicity during the holidays might mean, and consider ways to potentially include it this year and beyond.

1.9.22 [No FDS]

Due to Omicron surge

1.23.22

7 2.6.22 [No FDS]

BYM-sponsored trip to China Folk House Retreat at Friends Wilderness Center

2.20.22 [No FDS]

Due to Omicron surge

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| 8 3.6.22 | Ukraine and the Quaker testimony of peace | Lesson: We'll discuss what is happening in Ukraine, learn how Quakers historically have lived out the testimony of peace, and how Quakers in Russia and around the world are responding to the invasion. | Activity: We'll make a string of origami peace cranes and decorate sunflowers as a reminder to hold the people of Ukraine in the Light. |
| 9 3.18.22 | Understanding ourselves through art and color | Lesson: Elaine Wilson, an artist who loves color, will lead a lesson and reflection on how color is like a person - complicated, individual, and changing but always in need of community. | Activity: We will use colored paper to explore the magical changing nature of color and make our own color collages. |
| 10 4.3.22 | Our connection to Earth and nature walk | Lesson: We will share and reflect on the 2015 Quaker statement on the challenge of climate change and Barbara Briggs will briefly share the FDS citizen science report on gas leaks. | Activity: We'll take a contemplative nature walk to the park and collect found natural objects (not taken directly from trees or plants). We will bring back these items and make a nature self portrait to signify how we borrow from the earth and give back to it. |
| 11 4.17.22 | Ukrainian egg decorating and egg hunt | Activity: We will do a Ukrainian egg decorating project, known as Pysanky, which is drawing designs on an egg with melted wax and then coloring them. Thank you to Alisoun Meehan who will lead this activity. | Egg hunt: By popular demand, we will do an egg hunt after the activity above. |
| 12 5.1.22 | Families and mothers | Conversation: We will have a short chat on encouraged families to go to Catoctin Weekend. | Activity: We will make cards and art for Mother's Day and then will play some games. |
| 5.15.22 | [No FDS] | | |
| 13 5.27.22 | Guest artist and art lesson | Lesson: Artist Elaine Wilson will guide us through an art activity on figure/ground fluctuation and will share a lesson on mutual responsibility, as seen through art. All ages are welcome. | Activity: We will explore mutual responsibility visually by making our own artwork using paper cutouts. |
| 14 6.5.22 | Planting flowers and our connection to nature | Lesson/Queries: We'll briefly explore the role of beauty in nature and our connection to nature. | Activity: Get ready to dig! We have many lovely flowers to plant in a special plot designated just for us in the garden at FMW. |
| 15 6.19.22 | Juneteenth | Lesson: [forthcoming] | Activity: Honey harvest |

FMW Rental Report, May 2022

Prepared by Brian Lutenegeger, Event and Rental Manager

Financials – FY22 Bookings

Here is a breakdown of where we are in terms of bookings for recent past and future fiscal years as of May 31, 2022.

The chart above shows \$19,116.55 in new bookings during May 2022 and \$265,768.49 booked so far this fiscal year.

During May, we also booked \$30,301.25 worth of events for FY23 that will begin on July 1st. So far, we have booked \$95,572.25 for the next fiscal year. Our fiscal year runs from July 1 to the following June 30th.

Financials – FY22 Earned

In May, we earned \$46,458.69 for events successfully completed, representing our busiest month ever in terms of event value. We have earned \$238,251.39 during the eleven months of FY22. Comparing booked events above and income earned from rentals, this leaves at least \$27,000 worth of events yet to happen during June (likely with a few more events to book). We have exceeded the income from event rentals that we had budgeted for in FY22 (\$100,000).

Events

The following activities occurred at FMW during May:

- DC Minyan continuing to hold regular services
- Four b'nai mitzvahs
- Three weddings and an arrival dinner for non-FMW members
- Three memorial services
- Several staff retreats / conferences / workshops
- AsylumWorks' dinner for LGBTQ asylum seekers
- Weekly Al-Anon meetings
- Nine days with film crews

Office Space Rentals

Income from office rentals has changed in recent months due to turnover in tenants.

This fiscal year to date, with most rents paid for June, we have collected \$156,999 in office tenant rent – more than our fiscal year budget of \$151,172.

At present, we have ten nonprofit and small business tenants. Dupont Circle Village has moved into the suite formerly occupied by AsylumWorks and I am still looking for a new tenant to take their old spaces.

Opportunities for the FMW community to help with rentals

Please think about whether your employer, an organization whose board you sit on – or even yourself for a special event – might be able to make use of our event rental spaces. Of course, at least for now, these events would need to be kept small and happen safely.

If you have ideas for content that we can post on Facebook and Instagram that might be of interest to a wide (not necessarily Quaker) audience, I am happy to consider.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fmw.event.venue/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/friendsmeetingofwashington/>

Finally, if you know of any potential new office tenants, please connect them to me.

END June Meeting for Business Minutes



Meet Mack, FMW's newest associate member (center), son of Betsy Bramon and Tom Yonker, snuggled here between Betsy and Debby Churchman.