

BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends

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BFM Newsletter February 2017 Version for Web

February 2017 Calendar

Meeting for Worship is at 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. every First Day (except for the first First Day of each month, when Meeting for Business is held at 9:00 a.m.). We have a mid-week Meeting for Worship at BFM on Wednesdays, at 7:30 p.m., and a worship group in Boyds the second Sunday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

1	Wed	10:00 a.m.	BYM New Campers Enrollment Opens
3	Fri	6:30 p.m.	Silent Retreat for Friends at Dayspring, Germantown
5	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business (Child Care Provided)
		11:00 a.m.	FDS: Worship & "Letting Your Light Shine"
6	Mon	7:00 p.m.	First Monday: A White Historian Confronts Slavery
9	Thurs	6:00 p.m.	AIM Public Action, Silver Spring
		6:00 p.m.	From Tarzan to Tonto: Stereotypes as Obstacles
10	Fri	7:00 p.m.	BYM Young Frds Conf., Sandy Spring Frds School
11	Sat	9:45 a.m.	Family of Frds Workshop on Community Dynamics
		3:00 p.m.	BFM Book Group at the Bethesda Library
12	Sun	9:30 a.m.	ARE: A Look at Our Faith & Practice, Music Room
		9:30 a.m.	ESG Wkshop on Carbon Footprint Calculators, TL
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light
13	Mon	8:00 p.m.	Stewardship & Finance Committee
		8:30 p.m.	March Newsletter Deadline
17	Fri	6:15 p.m.	Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology
19	Sun	9:30 a.m.	Committee Day: A&O, RE, M&W, & ARE

		11:00 a.m.	FDS: Worship & Cooking for the Men's Shelter
		12:30 p.m.	Committee Day: Pastoral Care
22	Wed	5:00 p.m.	Deadline for Annual Sessions Workshop Proposals
24	Fri	6:00 p.m.	Pendle Hill Workshop on Say the Wrong Thing
25	Sat	2:00 p.m.	Memorial Meeting
26	Sun	9:15 a.m.	Peace & Social Justice Committee, Teachers' L.
		9:30 a.m.	Env. Sustainability Gp: Energy Efficiency Workshop
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering, Meeting Room
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light

Query for February: Caring for One Another and Listening

How can we most effectively foster a loving and understanding attitude in our community? What helps me to listen deeply and with an open heart to others? When is it hardest for me to be ready to listen? How do we share in the diverse joys and transitions in each other's lives? In challenging or stressful times, how open am I to seeking support from the Meeting community?

The Social Concerns Box

The February Social Concerns Box is for hunger relief programs in Montgomery County (provided by Bethesda Help, Bethesda Cares, the Manna Food Center, and Shepherd's Table).

Hunger in our community comes in many forms and is probably more widespread than most of us realize. (Approximately 70,000 to 80,000 of our neighbors are not always sure where their next meal is coming from.) The February Social Concerns Box is for four hunger relief programs. BFM has the longest association with Bethesda Help (www.bethesdahelp.org) which offers immediate short-term food and financial assistance for rent (to prevent eviction), utility bills (to prevent service interruption), and prescription medicines (as needed) to residents in southern Montgomery County who are in financial crisis. Manna Food Center (www.mannafood.org) provides nutritious food to 3,600 families each month and 2,800 school children each week. Bethesda Cares (www.bethesdacares.org) and Shepherd's Table (www.shepherdstable.org) serve the homeless (in Bethesda and Silver Spring respectively). Please support the range of efforts to make our County hunger-free.

In December, we raised \$473 through the Social Concerns Box for A Wider Circle.

Religious Education for Children

First semester was filled with learning and laughter, culminating in the spectacular Christmas Celebration pageant. To deepen an understanding of faith and practice, there are two initiatives underway: encouraging families to bring their children to the first fifteen minutes of worship and, at the start of First Day School, inviting children to share a moment of silence, with one of the children serving as "head of meeting" to say good morning.

Upcoming highlights in February include a conversation with Lauren Brownlee about her Quaker witness for peace and justice, Bible study classes on the New Testament and Quakerism, cooking for the Bethesda Men's House, and singing.

On Sunday, February 5, an intergenerational experience of "This Little Light of Mine." The session will explore how we imagine and nurture the light within us and will include singing and worship. Open to all ages.

On Sunday, February 19, children and adults will cook an entree for the Bethesda Homeless Shelter supper from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For details about the First Day School, [click here](#).

Events

1st: Getting Ready for Summer 2017: BYM Camps

Enrollment for the BYM camping programs (at Catoctin, Opequon, Shiloh, and Teen Adventure) began on January 15 for returning campers, and will begin on February 1, at 10:00 a.m., for new campers. The camps are residential for children ages 9 to 17. Anyone may apply online (please do!). Spaces are available first-come, first-served, so please register as soon as you can if you need a particular session. For details: www.bymcamps.org For those who might want financial assistance for their children, please contact the clerks of Pastoral Care. [Extended list of Quaker camps.](#)

3rd to 5th: Silent Retreat for Friends at Dayspring

Is your spirit in need of nourishment and refreshment? Come to the Silent Retreat at Dayspring for Friends. We will keep the silence from Friday evening until after worship on Monday, enjoying the beauty of God's creation in meadows and woods, reading, walking, resting, praying, finding our own rhythms, and listening for the Still Small Voice at Dayspring Retreat Center in Germantown, MD. The cost of the retreat is \$210. Please register as soon as possible.

5th: Meeting for Business

On Sunday, February 5 at 9:00 a.m. Bethesda F(f)riends will consider various business items. How the Spirit will lead us in discernment of issues both large and small is part of the mystery that is the Religious Society of Friends. There will be reports from Friends Committee on National Legislation and the Recorder (re membership changes in the last year). All who come to Meeting for Worship are welcome and encouraged to participate in our worship. Child care up to age 12 is provided. Please join us if you can.

6th: First Monday: A White Historian Confronts American Slavery

BFM is sponsoring a free talk and discussion on Monday, February 6, at 7:00 p.m., at the Bethesda Library with Dr. Susan Strasser. In response to Black Lives Matter 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 [by Dr. Strasser] 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." The topics include lynching, housing segregation, and voting rights. For more about Susan Strasser, see www.susanstrasser.net

9th: Action in Montgomery Public Action

On Thursday, February 9, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Silver Spring United Methodist Church, 8900 Georgia Avenue, Action in Montgomery (AIM) will gather to hold County officials accountable and demand a response to AIM's agenda to fund high-quality after school programs in low-income communities and build affordable housing. Please attend if you can because politicians are very impressed by turnout.

9th: Tarzan to Tonto: Stereotypes as Obstacles to Progress Toward a More Perfect Union: A Symposium

As early Americans sought to define their identity in a new country, race became a major fixation. Tarzan and Jane, Tonto and the Lone Ranger, Uncle Ben and Aunt Jemima—these and other stereotypes about Native American, African, and African American people have long been part of the

American scene. Noted scholars, writers, and critics discuss the ongoing presence of such stereotypes and the barriers these stereotypes pose to the advancement of American culture. The event will be on Thursday, February 9, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., at the National Museum of the American Indian, 4th Street and Independence Avenue, SW For more details: NMAI-SSP@si.edu

10th to 12th: Young Friends Conference

On the weekend of February 10, there will be a Young Friends Conference for high school-aged Quakers at the Sandy Spring School, 16923 Norwood Road in Sandy Spring. Young Friends should arrive beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Friday. For more information: youthsec@bym-rsf.org, 301-774-7663, or yf.bym-rsf.net The deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is two weeks before the conference. Anyone registering after that date will be placed on a waiting list and may not be able to attend. Future dates of YF conferences are: March 31 to April 2, May 26 to 28 (Memorial Day weekend), and July 31 to August 6, at Hood College, in Frederick MD.

11th: Family of Friends: How can we help Quaker community work?

On Saturday, February 11, from 9:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Friends Meeting of Washington (2111 Florida Avenue, near Dupont Circle Metro) will host a workshop on community dynamics. 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 tenet 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*, Edwin 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 a Quaker community. Please RSVP (admin@quakersdc.org or 202-483-3310) so we can get an accurate count for lunch and can send optional background reading.

11th: BFM Book Group

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly, normally on the second Saturday at 3:00 p.m. at Bethesda Public Library (not at Meeting). This month's meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 11. Newcomers are always welcome!

12th: ARE: A Look at Our Faith & Practice

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice* spells out the basic tenets of our Quaker faith and the ways we live out that faith in our Meeting life and personal life. This book is not short or easy to read, but contains a treasure of information. On Sunday, February 12, at 9:30 a.m., in the Music Room, please come join a discussion of Faith and Practice with Susan Kaul, who has been privy to efforts to revise and update it. (For those who do not have a copy, there will be copies available at the book table.) Susan will be addressing questions such as: what parts of Faith and Practice do we find helpful and relevant? What parts could be revised or expanded? As Friends, we have no formal creed, but do we have core beliefs? Why do Friends compile and keep revising such a book?

12th: Up-County Worship Group

Live up-County? BFM is experimenting with a new worship group to meet on the second Sunday of each month in Boyds, Maryland. Initially, at least, it will be held at Lucille Harrigan's home at Breezy Hollow Farm in Boyds. The first meeting was on Sunday, January 8, at 11:00 a.m. and went very well with between five and ten people. It was decided to meet monthly on the second Sunday of the month, including a potluck lunch.

12th: Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share

Please join us for potluck at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, February 12. We gather in the Groome Building multi-purpose room for feast and fellowship. Potluck is a good way to make connections with people you don't know so well (newcomers and others), so bring a dish to share and be ready to make some new friends. Your contribution of a dish to share with others adds greatly to the occasion.

12th: ESG Workshop on Carbon Footprint Calculators

Friend, has thee examined thy carbon footprint? How do Friends' lifestyles impact the sustainability of the earth's natural systems? For Friends, tracking our own carbon footprints can be a form of discipline to remind us of our responsibility to care for the earth.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting has urged individual Friends and local meetings to examine their carbon footprints. Fortunately, tracking your carbon footprint may be easier than you think. An on-line "carbon footprint calculator" provides a step-by-step process for estimating one's carbon footprint.

Please join BFM's Environmental Sustainability Group for a workshop on how to use on-line carbon footprint calculators, on Sunday, February 12, at 9:30 a.m., in the Teachers' Lounge. Feel free to bring a portable computer and some recent energy/fuel bills. Rick Morgan and Keith Campbell will explain how carbon calculators can serve as springboards for action by individual Friends and their meetings.

12th/26th: Experiment with Light Sessions

How do we quiet our brains enough to hear the still, small voice within us? How might we deepen our experience of meeting for worship? Experiment with Light is a meditative and centering practice based upon Rex Ambler's book *Light to Live By*, which describes early Quaker meditative habits and translates them into a highly accessible process of clearness and understanding. This is an invitation to two sessions. One will be on Sunday, February 12, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. The second will be on Sunday, February 26, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Please come if you can.

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17th to 19th: Washington Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology

The 40th Annual Washington Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology, February 17 to 19, will be at the Claggett Center in Buckeystown MD (near Frederick). The theme is Decline and Ascent: The Paradoxical Passage to Elderhood. The speaker for the plenary sessions will be Melanie Starr Costello. She will discuss how disparaging views of aging and our environmental crisis stem from the same ideological root, looking deeply into our fear of change and our fear of loss - fears that stymie the spirit and inhibit growth. Change can serve as a motive-force in reconnecting us to our roots in nature, in opening us to mystery, and in honing our intentions in relation to self, others, and our work in the world. There will also be interest groups on art, music, and movement. [Click here for details.](#)

22nd: Deadline for Workshop Proposals for BYM Annual Sessions

It may seem early to be thinking of a workshop you might lead at the BYM Annual Sessions, from Monday, July 31, to Sunday, August 6, at Hood College, in Frederick MD. But the deadline for workshop proposals is Sunday, February 22. The time between now and then can go by very quickly.

The BYM Program Committee is looking for inspiring leaders for topical workshops to attract new attendees and to keep our community involved. The 2017 theme is "Growing towards Justice; Acting on Faith," focusing on ways to "live in that life and power that will take away the occasion" for violence, injustice, and the waste of precious young lives in our communities. Of course, workshops on other topics of interest to Friends are also accepted. Workshop sessions are held during three time slots

at Annual Session, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., with 10 to 15 workshops during each time slot. To submit proposals, see www.bym-rsf.org

24th to 26th: Say the Wrong Thing: Strategies for Racial Justice & Authentic Community

Is your meeting working toward greater welcome and inclusiveness for all, but feeling like you are walking on eggshells? Do you know that bold and truthful conversations need to happen, but worry that people's feelings will be bruised? Accept Pendle Hill's and Dr. Amanda Kemp's invitation to "Say the Wrong Thing: Strategies of the H.E.A.R.T. for Racial Justice and Authentic Community." In this weekend workshop (Friday evening, February 24, through Sunday noon, February 26), practice having the hard conversations about race that will foster a deeper communion for all. Pendle Hill is encouraging two people from each Meeting. If your meeting pays for one Friend, Pendle Hill will support the other. For details, see www.pendlehill.org For BFM support, contact Alex Bell or Peirce Hammond.

25th: Memorial Meeting for Joseph Taber

John Taber, Jr.'s, father, Joseph John Taber, died shortly after enjoying the Christmas season at nearly 97 years of age. He was in good spirits and chattering with those around him through his last day and then died peacefully in his sleep, with his hands folded on his chest. He lived a full life. John and Kathy have asked to hold a memorial Meeting for Worship at BFM on the weekend of February 25/26. Plans are somewhat tentative at this point in time. It will probably be at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 25.

26th: Peace & Social Justice Committee

The P&SJ Committee has oversight of a portion of the BFM budget. In the current budget, it identified 23 outside groups concerned with social justice and peace issues, which will receive a total of \$16,610 from this year's BFM budget. As part of the budget process for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2017, P&SJ invites you to attend the P&SJ Committee meeting at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, February 26, in the Teachers' Lounge to make proposals on how the Meeting's funding of peace and social justice concerns should be allocated.

26th: Home Energy Efficiency Workshop

Want to help save the planet and save money at the same time? On Sunday, February 26, at 9:30 a.m., in the Music Room (SAM Building basement), the Environmental Sustainability Group is hosting a workshop on home energy efficiency and simple steps you can take to help mitigate climate change. The workshop will cover simple and relatively inexpensive things you can do around your home to save on energy costs and stay warm. We will talk about starting with an energy audit, and the power of insulation and caulk. We will show how to source your electricity supply with wind power, discuss solar power options, and reduce your "carbon foot print."

26th: Coordinating Gathering

Representatives of most BFM committees meet during the week before Meeting for Business to discuss the upcoming agenda and to share our reflections on the spiritual state of our community, specific tasks, and Quaker processes. These meetings are open to all who wish to attend. There will be one at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, February 26.

Into the Future

April 27th to 30th: White Privilege Conference

A number of us from Baltimore Yearly Meeting went to the White Privilege Conference in Philadelphia in 2016. This year the Conference is in Kansas City MO from April 27 to 30. It is a very

inspiring opportunity to work with a couple of thousand other people to combat racism and white privilege in our society. There is a Quaker discount and opportunity for hospitality through Friends General Conference. Contact them at ministryonracism@fgcquaker.org for details. More information on the conference [here](#).

Committee Notes

Nominating: BFM 2017 Committee Clerks:

Clerks of committees are reminded that copies of the minutes of all committee meetings should be given to the co-clerks.

Also, to schedule any event at Meeting, please contact our scheduler. Please list events on the calendar on the bulletin board of the Meetinghouse library when you have confirmation; and let the newsletter editor know before the newsletter deadline of the 13th of every month except July. Events are then posted at: www.bethesdafriends.org

Many of the newly constituted committees have met now, but whether you have or not (and whether you are the clerk or not), please reach out to new committee members soon, welcome them, and ask if they have any questions. Some folks are new to committee work or new to our Meeting, and will be especially appreciative of outreach and welcome.

Take time to consider how to make participation on committees a nurturing experience for all, including plans for the coming year, the committee's priorities, and what might be laid down, shared more widely with the larger meeting, or done differently in a more spirit-led way.

There are more helpful tips in the committee resource guide on page 46 of the 2016 BFM Directory.

Library

Hospitality. We wish to thank both the Library Committee and the Book Table for providing hospitality at the rise of Meeting and potluck this month. The Library Committee takes care of our library resources. It is responsible for the acquisition, care, and circulation of the Meeting's books and other information resources. If you would like to help out in any way or know more about how to use the library, please contact our librarian. The Book Table offers an engaging selection of books (for sale) to our community during coffee hours.

Pastoral Care

Between the Lines: Straighten Up and Park Right! Among the formidable challenges we face in today's world, parking may not be on the top of your mind. Unless it's your car that has been blocked, squeezed, damaged or otherwise abused by someone who failed to park within the lines of his/her space. We can begin to practice better parking etiquette right here in our very own BFM lot. Just straighten up and park between the lines!

Ministry & Worship

Parking at BFM. Our parking lot can get filled up on Sunday mornings. Friends are reminded that there is also parking in the garage under the gymnasium. There is also the possibility of parking on the basketball court behind the SAM Building (if earlier drivers have left space for access to it). Please do not park on the field without express permission of someone from school security. Energetic Friends are reminded that parking in the Bethesda Library lot is another alternative during non-library hours.

What Do We Do When It Snows? There will be Meeting for Worship for whomever comes, unless an e-mail has been sent out saying the school (and hence the Meetinghouse) is closed. The school does make every effort to clear the grounds as quickly as possible. Those without access to e-mail need to call someone with a computer or the school security office: 202-537-6991 and 202-537-8197.

Peace & Social Justice

The Peace & Social Justice Committee is hoping to spearhead an effort to help Syrian refugees. The committee has been looking at this issue for some time with the hope of eventually involving the Meeting as a whole. Ralph Steinhardt recently informed us that he and others in the Meeting who are not on P&SJ are also interested in pursuing this. As information is gathered about the current refugee situation and as specific needs are identified, the committee hopes to move forward with a project plan. Anyone who has information or suggestions that might be helpful should contact the clerk of P&SJ.

Meeting Notes

Peace Notes

For those who know they want to engage in social justice work but don't necessarily know how, there is an online course being offered in February called "We Were Made for This Moment," which might be helpful. Eileen Flanagan, environmental and social justice activist, board member for Earth Quaker Action Team, and teacher of "Discerning Our Calls" at Pendle Hill, is leading the course. She writes, "What is unique about this course is that it will blend three types of teaching: social change theory, spiritual discernment, and personal empowerment. For example, you will learn about different social change roles and what makes them effective. Then you will practice the tools of inward listening to access the wisdom already within you about what role you are meant to play. Finally, you will explore what gets you stuck and learn tools to help you take action even when you are afraid." The second round of the course will begin Sunday, February 12, and take place from 7:30 until 9:00 each Sunday evening through March 5. It costs \$99, and would qualify for Pastoral Care financial support if that amount is prohibitive. [Details here.](#)