

BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends

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BFM newsletter January 2018 Version for web

January 2018 Calendar

Meeting for Worship is held at 11:00 a.m. every First Day. The meeting room is also available at 9:30 a.m. for those desiring a smaller, quieter Meeting for Worship, except on the first First day of the 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.

5	Fri	5:00 p.m.	Deadline for Registration for the Women's Retreat
7	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business: All are Invited to Participate!
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Qkr Camp Expo for Families
		12:30 p.m.	Environmental Sustainability Group
8	Mon	7:30 p.m.	Adult Religious Education
10	Wed	8:15 a.m.	Sandy Spring Friends School Open House
13	Sat	1:30 p.m.	Quaker Book Group in the BFM Library
		8:30 p.m.	February Newsletter Deadline
14	Sun	9:30 a.m.	ARE: Spiritual Coffee House, Music Room
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:00 noon	Welcome to New Members
		12:30 p.m.	Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment With Light

15	Mon	7:00 p.m.	BYM Camp Enrollment Opens
17	Wed	7:30 p.m.	Ad hoc Digitization Committee
20/21	Sat/Sun	10:00 a.m.	Junior Young Friends Conference, Herndon Friends Mtg.
21	Sun	9:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	Committee Day: Ministry & Worship; Pastoral Care Committee Day: Outreach & Communications, RE, & S&F
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Multi-Age Cooking
		12:30 p.m.	Worship Sharing re the Spiritual State of the Meeting
23	Tues	7:00 p.m.	Helping Refugees Group, BFM Meeting Room
26	Fri	4:00 p.m.	BYM Women's Retreat (www.bymwomensretreat.org)
28	Sun	9:15 a.m.	Peace & Social Justice Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		9:30 a.m.	ARE & M&W: Reflecting on the Spiritual State of BFM
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering, Meeting Room
		12:30 p.m.	Climate Change for Quakers, Music Room
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment With Light at Jane Coe's House

Query for January: Simplicity

What in my present life most distracts me from God? What am I ready to release so that I can give my attention to what matters most? How do the ways in which I choose to use my time, my possessions, my money, and my energy reflect my most deeply held values? How do we support one another in our search for a simpler life?

Social Concerns Box

The Social Concerns Box for January is for the Torture Abolition & Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC). TASSC is an organization founded by and for torture survivors, the only one of its kind. Its mission is to end the practice of torture wherever it occurs (in some 150 countries) and to empower survivors, their families, and communities wherever they may be. Given the fact that people in US prisons are tortured (solitary confinement is classified as torture), it is all the more important that we support such efforts. For details, see www.tassc.org

In November, the Social Concerns Box had \$190 for Action in Montgomery.

Religious Education for Children

Children of all ages are welcome and encouraged to join their families in Meeting for Worship from 11:00 to 11:15 a.m. each Sunday.

Jan. 7: A Quaker Camps Expo for parents, children, and potential camp counselors is in the lower level lounge of the Groome Building. Please invite your neighbors, too. Information will be available for local BYM camps (Shiloh, Opequon, Catoctin), which offer one, two, and four-week residential sessions for children ages 9 to 14. Activities include hiking, canoeing, climb-ing, art,

music, nature, and more in a supportive, affordable, Friendly community open to all. Meet campers and families, check out camping and adventure gear, and find out why they say “Quaker Camp changed my life.” For details about Quaker camps, see: <http://quakersdc.org/node/912>

Jan. 14: Classes

Jan. 21: Multi-age group: Cooking for the Bethesda Men’s Shelter

Jan. 28: Classes

Events

Spiritual State of the Meeting Month

In January, the Ministry & Worship Committee will begin its discernment process for writing the 2017 Spiritual State of the Meeting report. This process largely rests on conversations with people in the Meeting. In preparation, the Committee asks you to reflect on the following queries as they apply to your life in the Meeting over the last year:

1. How has Meeting for Worship and our community supported my spiritual growth?
2. In what ways have we and have we not lived our vision of being a spiritual community?
3. How has the Meeting supported our members’ leadings to let our lives speak to the challenges in our communities, country, and world?

Ministry & Worship members plan to formally gather reflections on these queries at three occasions in January. The first time will be at potluck on Sunday, January 14. The second will be at a Worship Sharing at rise of Meeting on January 21. Finally, on Sunday, January 28, at 9:30 a.m., in the Music Room, we will use the Experiment with Light process to guide us in shared reflection on the spiritual state of the Meeting.

In addition to these planned sessions, you are welcome to give your reflections at any time in any format to any member of the Ministry & Worship Committee.

The queries will be posted on the BFM website with a form you can use to submit your thoughts. Ministry & Worship is also asking each committee to reflect on the Spiritual State of the Meeting at the first committee meeting of the year.

3rd/10th/17th/24th/31st: Mid-Week Meeting for Worship

On Wednesday evenings, at 7:30 p.m., there is a mid-week Meeting for Worship. All are welcome! This is an opportunity for some to come for whom Sundays are just too busy. Others may appreciate the additional time for communal worship. Please come when the Spirit moves you. Child care is not available.

7th: Meeting for Business

On Sunday, January 7 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. On the agenda are reports from the Friends Non-Profit Housing, the American Friends Service Committee’s DC Project, Child Care, Fellowship & Hospitality, and Ministry & Worship Committees. 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.

10th: Discover Sandy Spring Friends School

Do you know a family who has been meaning to come and explore all that we have to offer here at Sandy Spring Friends School? Please encourage them to start their New Year by attending our Discover SSFS Information Session and Tour on Wednesday, January 10, from 8:15 to 11:00 a.m. A financial aid Q&A will follow in Scott House. If possible, [please RSVP here](#)

13th: Quaker Book Group Meeting

The Quaker Book Group has been meeting monthly, normally on the second Saturday at 3:00 p.m. at Bethesda Public Library (not at Meeting). Because the library is undergoing renovations, the meeting place is in the BFM Library from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Newcomers are always welcome (even if you have not read the book!). Since the time and date can change on short notice, join the Book Group List Serve. By joining the list serve, you can participate in the online discussions, read the post-meeting summary, and help choose the next book. For details: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/bfm-book-group>

14th: ARE Spiritual Coffee House

Please come to the Adult Religious Education Committee's Spiritual Coffee House, on Sunday, January 14, at 9:30 a.m., in the Music Room. All participants are encouraged to bring writings, poems, songs, music, art work, photography, and anything else that speaks to your spirit. These can be your own creations, or the creations of others. Even if you choose not to bring anything, please feel welcome to join us and experience the joy of sharing what inspires us and opens our hearts.

14th: Welcome to New Members

On Sunday, January 14, at rise of Meeting, Pastoral Care will welcome and re-introduce our new members since January 2017. Please join us in giving them all another warm welcome.

14th: Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share

Please join us for potluck at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, January 14. 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. We gather in the Groome Building multi-purpose room at the rise of Meeting for feast and fellowship. Your contribution of a dish to share with others adds greatly to the occasion.

14th/28th: Experiment With Light

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 three sessions. One will be on Sunday, January 14, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. The second

will be at BFM, at 9:30 a.m., on Sunday, January 28, in the Music Room, as we use the Experiment with Light process to reflect on the Spiritual State of the Meeting. The third will be on Sunday, January 28, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Please come if you can.

15th: BYM Camp Enrollment Opens

Enrollment for Baltimore Yearly Meeting camping programs (at Catoctin, Opequon, Shiloh, and Teen Adventure) begins January 15, at 7:00 p.m., for returning campers and 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 serve, so please register as soon as you can if you need a particular session. For details: Jane Megginson (717-481-4870) or www.bymcamps.org

20th/21st: Junior Young Friends Conference

Middle School-aged youth are invited to Herndon Friends Meeting (Herndon, VA) on the weekend of January 20/21 to participate in a Junior Young Friends Conference. There may be as many as 60 other kids from local Meetings hanging out and having a good time, getting to know one another, learning something, and sharing activities. Please arrive at 10:00 a.m. with sleeping bag, pad, pillow, change of clothes and toiletries. Please remember that the deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is one week before the conference (January 13). For details, contact Jossie Dowling, Youth Programs Manager (youthprograms@bym-rsf.org, 301-774- 7663). To register, see: www.bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/jyfs/jyregister.html

26th to 28th: BYM Women's Retreat

The 2018 Baltimore Yearly Meeting Women's Retreat will be held the weekend of January 26 through January 28 for the third year at the Pearlstone Conference Center in Reisterstown MD. The theme is Leaning into our Light on Gender, Race, and Sexuality. [Registration is now open through this link](#): Registration ends January 5. There may still be openings after that, though. Please register ASAP.

28th: Coordinating Gathering

Representatives of most BFM committees meet during the week before Meeting for Business to discuss the upcoming agenda. These meetings are open to all who wish to attend. There will be one on Sunday, January 28, at the rise of Meeting in the meeting room.

28th: Climate Change for Quakers Forum

How are Friends called to respond to the threat of global climate change? What guidance do Friends' testimonies provide? Please join us for a forum on Climate Change for Quakers, Sunday, January 28 at 12:30 pm in the Music Room in the SAM Building. A member of Annapolis Friends Meeting will lead us in an exploration that joins science and spirituality through an interactive presentation/discussion. This timely forum is sponsored by Peace & Social Justice Committee's Environmental Sustainability Group.

Into the Future

February 1st: BYM Camps Registration Opens for New Campers

One of the most popular programs of Baltimore Yearly Meeting is the camping program at Catoctin, Opequon, Shiloh, and Teen Adventure Quaker Camps. Kids have a wonderful time in the natural world and in getting to know one another. For details, see www.bymcamps.org

February 9th to 11th: Dayspring Silent Retreat

The purpose of silent retreat is the deepening of communion with God, with other persons, and with oneself. The point is to “make space for...a time of waiting in silence, in solitude, to hear the voice of the One Who speaks in everything that is, and who, most of all, speaks in the depths of our own being.” (Thomas Merton) The retreat is at Dayspring in Germantown MD, and sharing the warmth of spiritual community in the heart of winter, amid nature’s beauty, is a great blessing! It is a wonderful opportunity for spiritual refreshment.

February 17th to 19th: Tribe of the H.E.A.R.T. Retreat at Pendle Hill

After years of doing anti-racism work with a range of people, Dr. Amanda Kemp has formulated a sustainable and effective approach to that work, which she calls H.E.A.R.T. (Hold space for transformation; Express yourself; Act with intention (driven by vision); Reflect on yourself; Trust the process.) If you are deeply engaged in anti-racism work, have read Amanda's book, *Say the Wrong Thing: Stories and Strategies for Racial Justice and Authentic Community*, or have participated in one or more of her classes or programs, you are invited to participate in a three-day retreat from Saturday, February 17 at 9:00 a.m., through Monday, February 19 at 5:00 p.m. This retreat is a time for you to take a step back from the work you have been doing in order to get grounded in your vision, reconnect with the love that is at the center of all justice work, and nurture your body with mindful movement, healing sound, and liberating touch. For details, see www.pendlehill.org

Committee Notes

Nominating

Thank you. On December 3, Meeting for Business approved the Nominating Committee’s nominations for committee members, officers, and liaisons to other organizations for 2018. The Nominating Committee thanks everyone who has agreed to serve and is grateful for the continuing service of so many.

Transitions to new positions. As of January 1, the newly named committee members assume their new assignments. Current committee clerks are encouraged to welcome the new members and inform them of the time and place of the first committee meeting of 2018. At that meeting, the agenda should include orientation of new members and selection of the clerk (or co-clerks) for the year. Please provide the names of the clerks by mid-January. For information on choosing a clerk and other committee functions, please see the Community Resource Guide on page 47 of the 2017 Directory.

So far, the following committees have selected their clerks for the next year:

Ministry & Worship
Pastoral Care

Book Table
Library
Peace & Social Justice
Religious Education

Hospitality. The Nominating Committee is happy to provide hospitality at the rise of meeting and to serve potluck in January. The committee seeks to understand the interests and talents of members and attenders, and the ways they may feel led to support the work of the Meeting, and to make nominations that strengthen our community, serve the Meeting's needs, and support personal growth.

Ministry & Worship

Please be mindful of hearing-impaired Friends. M&W would like to encourage everyone to please be mindful during Meetings for Worship of those who are hearing impaired by: (1) speaking clearly and with full voice when delivering messages, and (2) turning off cellphones.

What do we do when it snows?! In general, there will be Meeting for Worship if the Sidwell Friends Lower School is open. Call 202-537-8197 or see www.sidwell.edu

Peace & Social Justice

This month BFM begins its participation in the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) "Letter Writing Project." FCNL will provide an overview of the monthly topic, as well as offering guidance on the most impactful content and recipients. Postcards and FCNL materials will be provided on a table at potluck each month. You can either fill out a postcard during potluck or take the materials to send them from home. Are postcards to Congress are effective? The answer is that if one puts one's address on the postcard, it is tallied in the same way that a phone call, letter, or e-mail would be. Members of Congress rely on constituents to guide their choices. Let's make our voices heard for peace and justice!

From Advancement & Outreach to Outreach & Communications

On the recommendation of the Advancement & Outreach Committee, BFM agreed to change its name to the **Outreach & Communication Committee** at its Meeting for Business on December 3, 2017. The committee felt that the word advancement was too unclear, and that communication is central to its mission. The O&C Committee will continue to focus on greeting, welcoming, and communicating. Since the new name retains the word outreach, that word could serve as a guidepost as we adapt to the change.

Meeting Notes

FCNL Witness Wednesdays

Each Wednesday evening, beginning at 5:15 p.m., the Friends Committee on National Legislation's Welcome Center offers an opportunity for silent reflection. Quakers bear witness as a direct expression of faith, and the recent opening of FCNL's Quaker Welcome Center helps ground its advocacy work and foster fellowship with others. If you have 45 minutes, come worship with others at the center at 245 2nd Street NE, Washington, DC. (Enter through the FCNL patio.) Help

spiritually ground Friends' advocacy work on the Hill, as we communicate our values and vision of the Beloved Community. For details, see:

<https://www.fcnl.org/action/quaker-welcome-center>