

# BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

*Religious Society of Friends*

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## March 2017 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 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.

4	Sat	10:00 a.m.	Junior Young Friends Conference, Annapolis
5	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business (Child Care is Provided)
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Let Your Life Speak
		12:30 p.m.	ESG Workshop on Carbon Footprint Calculators
		6:30 p.m.	WPH Potluck & Dialogue: Crime, Race, & Poverty
6	Mon	6:30 p.m.	First Monday: "Before the Flood" at the Bethesda Library
11	Sat	3:00 p.m.	BFM Book Group at the Bethesda Library
12	Sun	9:30 a.m.	ARE: Spiritual Journey, Music Room
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share
		1:15 p.m.	Library Committee
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment w/ Light
13	Mon	8:00 p.m.	Adult Religious Education Committee
		8:30 p.m.	April Newsletter Deadline
18	Sat	10:00 a.m.	BYM Interim Meeting, Richmond Friends Meeting, VA
19	Sun	9:30 a.m.	Committee Day: A & O, Religious Ed., and S & F
		11:00 a.m.	FDS: Worship & Cooking for the Men's Shelter
		12:30 p.m.	Committee Day: Ministry & Worship and Pastoral Care
26	Sun	9:15 a.m.	Peace & Social Justice Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering, Meeting Room

**12:30 p.m. Environmental Sustainability Group, Teachers' Lounge**  
**6:30 p.m. Pendle Hill Retreat: Present in Every Moment, PA**  
**7:30 p.m. Experiment with Light**

Details are available on our web site: [www.bethesdafriends.org](http://www.bethesdafriends.org)

### **Query for March: Social Concerns**

How have I expressed my faith in action? How are my actions grounded in my faith? To what extent is my sense of justice based in love? In what ways do I endeavor to respond to my own pain and suffering, that of others, and in the wider world? How do we teach our children, and show through our way of living, that love of God includes our affirming the humanity and dignity of everyone and seeking that of God within every person? How do we prepare ourselves and our children to play active roles in a changing world?

### **The Social Concerns Box**

Donations to the Social Concerns Box in March will go to Women for Women International. The Peace & Social Justice Committee has agreed to support three women with notes of encouragement, a monthly stipend, and training as they move from being survivors of conflict to active citizens engaged in rebuilding their lives and communities. The program includes financial assistance, leadership training, technical skills, access to capital and small business development, and the opportunity to gain support from other sponsored sisters in her community. We are sponsoring three women from Rwanda, at a cost of \$360 per woman per year. Please be generous with your contributions, and please visit the notewriting table at the entrance to Meeting during March. For details: [www.womenforwomen.org](http://www.womenforwomen.org)

In January, [TASSC](http://TASSC) (Torture Abolition & Survivors Support Coalition) received \$501.25 via the Social Concerns Box.

### **Religious Education for Children**

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 (11:00 to 11:15 a.m.) 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 March include:

5th: Let Your Life Speak program about Women for Women International. Children will learn about the women that our Meeting sponsors and then write letters and draw pictures to send to them. All are welcome.

12th: Worship and classes and singing.

19th: Multiage Activity: Bethesda Men's Shelter Meal Preparation. Children and adults will cook an entree for the Bethesda Homeless Shelter supper from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Parent volunteers are welcome. Showing up without notice is also okay.

26th: Worship and classes and singing.

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

### **Events**

#### **4th/5th: Junior Young Friends Conference**

The third conference for 6th to 8th graders will be from Saturday, March 4, to Sunday, March 5 at Annapolis Friends Meeting. The conference goes from 10:00 a.m. on Saturday to noon on Sunday,

and costs \$40. The phone number during all events is 301-5000- BYM. JYFs should bring a change of clothes, toiletries, sleeping bag, pad, and anything they think will help them make new friends (a game, musical instrument, or sports equipment). Please remember that the deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is one week before the conference. Any one registering after that date will be placed on a waiting list and may not be able to attend. For details, contact Jossie Dowling (youthprograms@bym-rsf.org, 301-774-7663) Future dates are May 5 to 7 at Catoctin Quaker Camp and at Annual Meeting, July 31 to August 6 in Frederick MD (at Hood College).

### **5th: Meeting for Business**

Meeting for Business will take place on Sunday, March 5 at 9:00 a.m. Meeting for Business is open to all who attend BFM. It is an opportunity to meet worshipfully and for business in a special way. We will hear the draft of our Spiritual State of the Meeting report and reports from FCNL and on our Meeting community. There will be an update from our Treasurer. The Peace & Social Justice Committee will bring a DACA (Deferred Action on Children Act) petition for us to consider signing. Please come! Your participation is welcome. Child Care is provided.

### **5th: 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, March 5, at 12:30 a.m., in the Teachers' Lounge. Feel free to bring a portable computer and some recent energy/fuel bills.

### **5th: William Penn House Potluck & Dialogue**

F(f)riends are invited to a potluck and Quaker dialogue at William Penn House on Sunday, March 5, at 6:30 p.m. The topic is the criminalization of race and poverty in DC. Karen Dolan of the Institute for Policy Studies will share her research and advocacy on the intersecting nature of racial discrimination, poverty, and policing. Bring a dish to share; family members and friends are always welcome. WPH is at 515 East Capitol Street, SE. For more details: <http://www.williampenhouse.org/>, 202-543- 5560.

### **6th: First Monday: "Before the Flood"**

BFM is sponsoring a free movie and panel discussion on Monday, March 6, at 6:30 p.m., at the Bethesda Library. The movie is "Before the Flood," featuring Leonard DiCaprio and many notables, followed by a panel discussion on global climate change: what we can do collectively and individually. The film will begin at 6:35 p.m. sharp. Speakers include Joelle Novey, Director, Interfaith Power and Light, and a representative from Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). There will be fliers and other information on energy efficiency. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

### **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). We will be in one of the two study group rooms in the rear

of the Library. Newcomers are always welcome (even if you have not read the book)! By joining the [list serve](#), you can participate in the online discussions, read the post-meeting summary, and help choose the next book.

### **12th: ARE: Spiritual Journey**

At the invitation of the Adult Religious Education Committee, one of our members will share her spiritual journey with us. Spiritual Journeys are occasional talks sponsored by ARE to provide insight into how some of our members have come to embrace Quakerism, what influenced them most, and how they see Quakerism in their personal and spiritual development. The session will take place on Sunday, March 12, at 9:30 a.m., in the Music Room (Lower Level) of the SAM building at Sidwell Friends Lower School.

### **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 a member'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, March 12. We gather in the Groome Building multipurpose room for feast and fellowship. Your contribution of a dish to share with others adds greatly to the occasion.

### **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. There will be two Sunday evening sessions in March, on March 12 and 26, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

### **18th: Baltimore Yearly Meeting Interim Meeting**

The BYM Interim Meeting will be hosted by Richmond Friends Meeting on Saturday, March 18. Attendance offers a chance to get to know Friends from across the Yearly Meeting and be part of the decision making at the afternoon session. But visiting Richmond in mid-March is also a lovely chance to experience spring early as the season there is always several weeks more advanced than in the DC area. Friends will begin gathering at 10:00 a.m. Committee meetings will begin at 10:30 a.m. For details, see [www.bym-rsf.org](http://www.bym-rsf.org)

### **26th: 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 at 12:30 p.m. in the meeting room on Sunday, March 26.

### **26th: A Pendle Hill Retreat: Present in Every Moment**

From March 26 to April 2, there will be a mindfulness Meditation Retreat at Pendle Hill in Wallingford PA. The retreat is suitable for both beginners and experienced meditators. For details, 1-800-742-3150 or [pendlehill.org](http://pendlehill.org)

### **Into the Future**

#### **April 7th to 9th: Practicing Forgiveness as a Spiritual Discipline**

From Friday, April 7, to Sunday, April 9, there will be a Pendle Hill workshop on practicing forgiveness as a spiritual discipline. Practicing forgiveness can move us closer to Spirit and inner peace and renew our relationship with self and others. The workshop will include presentations, guided meditations, quiet worship, practical exercises, and group and individual time. Pendle Hill is in Wallingford PA. For details, 1-800-742-3150 or [pendlehill.org](http://pendlehill.org)

#### **April 9th: Opportunity to Learn About Ramallah Friends School**

On Sunday, April 9, at 12:15 p.m., in the Meeting Room, the Head of Ramallah Friends School, and a tenth grader there who is studying at Sidwell Friends this year, will talk about their school and their lives in Palestine and here. The student will also talk with BFM First Day School students about her experiences, starting at 11:15 a.m. Ramallah Friends School's Scholarship Fund receives the proceeds of BFM's annual Spring Fling on April 23. Copies of a new history of the school, titled *Sumoud*, meaning "steadfast," will be available for purchase.

#### **April 12th to April 17th: Buy Silent Auction Items early from the on-line Buy It Now Sale**

The list of possibilities will be sent out by email the first or second week of April. If you have an item or service or talent to offer, please contact the organizers.

#### **April 23rd: Spring Fling for Ramallah Friends School**

Spring Fling is BFM's celebration of our community and the season. It's also our Meeting's biggest fund raiser. Proceeds go to the scholarship fund for Ramallah Friends School in Palestine. Founded in 1869, its mission is to provide "educational excellence based upon the Quaker values of equality, simplicity and peace." Spring Fling, which engages scores of us, is built around three main activities, all of which welcome volunteers, donations, and customers. The activities are:

- Middle Eastern Buffet.
- "White Camel" Rummage Sale. Note: any child attending Spring Fling receives a \$5 gift certificate to the White Camel Sale. Donations of items for sale should be brought to BFM on Saturday, April 22, between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. so we have a chance to price them.
- Silent Auction of donated goods and services from canoes to karaoke coaching.
- Perennial Plant Sale.
- Ramallah Friends tee-shirts and Palestinian olive oil will be sold as well.

If you are willing to work but don't have a strong preference where, contact the co-ordinators. If you can't make this date or simply want to make a donation, Ramallah Friends is the Social Concerns Box beneficiary for April. See: [http://www.bethesdafriends.org/spring\\_fling.aspx](http://www.bethesdafriends.org/spring_fling.aspx)

#### **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. For more about the conference, see: [www.whiteprivilegeconference.com](http://www.whiteprivilegeconference.com)

There is a Quaker discount and opportunity for hospitality through Friends General Conference.  
Contact: [ministryonracism@fgcquaker.org](mailto:ministryonracism@fgcquaker.org)

## Committee Notes

### Religious Education

We thank the Religious Education Committee for providing hospitality at the rise of Meeting and at potluck in the month of March. The committee organizes the First Day School religious education for children in the Meeting, including recruiting teachers and getting appropriate educational materials. It also organizes the Christmas pageant each year. It usually meets on the third Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the Teachers' Lounge Annex.

### 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. P&SJ has now compiled a list of those interested in pursuing this, and will keep them updated. 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. Several P&SJ Committee members are investigating opportunities to join other area organizations with projects already underway. Anyone who has information or suggestions that might be helpful, or who would like to be added to the list, should contact the clerk of P&SJ.

### Ministry & Worship

**If you have trouble hearing spoken messages in Meeting for Worship, give our hearing system a try!** System users must wear an earpiece attached to a small FM receiver. Compact receivers are available each Sunday on the table outside the meeting room. Users can choose from three types of earpieces to plug into the receiver:

- an inside-the-ear earpiece for those who don't wear a hearing aid;
- an over-the-ear earpiece for use with a conventional hearing aid;
- an induction "necklace" for use with a "T-coil" hearing aid.

Since our microphones are very sensitive, users may find it helpful to keep the volume turned down when no one is speaking. Otherwise you'll hear every little cough and rustle in the room! Like most sound systems, ours is susceptible to interference from cell phones, so please make sure your cell phone is turned completely off during Meeting for Worship.

## Meeting Notes

### Peace Notes

Jim Wallis, the President of Sojourners, recently wrote an article entitled "Sustainability and Solidarity." He shared that there is the opportunity for everyone to get involved in the struggle for justice, starting from where he/she may be. He wrote:

*"Speaking the truth and acting on behalf of what is right will take all of us, at the deepest levels. Preachers should preach ever more prophetically, teachers should teach formation and not just information, writers should write ever more honestly, lawyers should fight courageously for those who need their help, reporters should report the facts ever more diligently and speak the truth to power regardless of what the powers think about that, artists should make art that nurtures people and makes them think and inspires them to action. People who know climate change should fight on climate change, people working for living wages and economic justice should keep organizing, people working for human rights, voting rights, women's rights, immigrant rights, refugee rights, and LGBTQ rights*

*should keep defending and advocating. We all should serve those around us. We all should watch for people being left out and alone.”*

Quakers have always stood in solidarity with those on the margins.

Sustainability is key in the struggle for equality, peace, and community. Two useful pieces have recently been shared on how to civically engage in a sustainable way:

[“Finding steady ground: strengthening our spirits to resist and thrive in these times”](#)

[“How to #Stay Outraged Without Losing Your Mind: Self-Care Lessons for the Resistance”](#) by [Mirah Curzer](#)

Many people have felt exhausted from trying to keep up with the local justice events. The website [www.risestronger.org/events](http://www.risestronger.org/events) provides a searchable calendar, which allows activists to plan ahead and not feel reactive. Instead of falling into the pattern of constantly reacting to new challenges to peace and justice, we should be proactively working toward and sharing with others our vision for the Beloved Community.

### **Pendle Hill Pamphlets**

Pendle Hill has been publishing pamphlets on various topics for decades. Two recent ones are:

[Pendle Hill Pamphlet #442](#): *Meeting at the Center: Living Love and Reconciling One with Another* by Bruce Birchard. Expanding on his plenary address at the 2011 Friends General Conference Gathering, Bruce describes the work of reconciliation on three levels: between his gay brother and traditional father, among three branches of the Religious Society of Friends, and in two African nations torn apart by genocidal conflict. He shares how he reexamined his thinking about the roles of activist and reconciler and about God as a noun and a verb. Discussion questions included.

[Pendle Hill Pamphlet #443](#): *Individual Spiritual Discernment: Receiving, Testing, and Implementing Leadings from a Higher Power* by Jerry Knutson. This pamphlet presents, in a kind of how-to format, methods for receiving individual spiritual guidance; testing the guidance using methods that give both reliable and ambiguous results; and implementing the guidance. The pamphlet concludes with suggestions on using spiritual disciplines to build a better relationship with a Higher Power. Discussion questions included.

### **BFM 2017 Directory**

New BFM directories were mailed out in early February. Additional copies are available on the hall table and the literature table. The directory includes important dates, a schedule of reports to Meeting for Business and of which committee serves hospitality, committee memberships, and addresses of Friends Meetings, organizations, and publications. Two additions in the back are: 1) A listing by first names which may help avoid confusion about which Dan or Marion or Jane one is trying to reach; and 2) the resource guide for committees, which describes how to reserve a room for a meeting, how to get announcements in the weekly bulletin or monthly newsletter, etc.