

BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends

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BFM Newsletter May 2017 Version for Web

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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.

5	Fri		BYM Spiritual Formation Retreat, Sharpsburg MD
		7:00 p.m.	BYM Jr Young Fds Conference at Catoctin Quaker Camp
7	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business: Child Care is Provided
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Service: FCNL
		6:30 p.m.	WPH Potluck & Dialogue: Feeding Bodies/ Nourishing Minds
11	Thurs		Pendle Hill Conf.: Expanding Democracy, Wallingford PA
13	Sat	11:00 a.m.	Memorial Meeting for Ellie Fink, SFS Upper School
		3:00 p.m.	BFM Book Group at the Bethesda Library
		8:30 p.m.	June Newsletter Deadline (301-320-5083)
14	Sun	9:30 a.m.	ARE: Workshop on Vocal Ministry, Music Room
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share
		6:30 p.m.	Pendle Hill Week-long Program: Our Life is Love
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light at Jane Coe's House
15	Mon	8:00 p.m.	Committee Meeting: Adult Religious Education

20	Sat	9:30 a.m.	Friends Couple Enrichment: Deepening Connections
		10:00 a.m.	BYM Working Group on Racism, BFM Library
21	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Committee Day: Ministry & Worship and Pastoral Care
		9:30 a.m.	Committee Day: Religious Ed, and Stewardship & Finance
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Multi-Age Cooking for the Men's Shelter
		12:30 p.m.	Nominating Committee (not at BFM)
		12:30 p.m.	Environmental Sustainability Group, Meeting Room
26	Fri	7:00 p.m.	BYM Young Friends Conference, Annapolis
		7:30 p.m.	Frds Conf. on Religion & Psychology, Lebanon College, PA
27	Sat	9:00 a.m.	BFM Service Day: A Wider Circle
28	Sun	9:15 a.m.	Peace & Social Justice Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Playground Supervision
		12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light at the Nielsen-Jones's house

Query for May: Outreach

As the way opens, how do I share Friends' principles with others? In what ways do I make everyone, including newcomers, feel welcome in meetings for worship? How can I find ways to encourage a sense of community within the Meeting?

Social Concerns Box

The May Social Concerns box is for the Literacy Council of Montgomery County, an adult literacy organization that has been serving Montgomery County for 52 years. The Literacy Council teaches functional literacy skills to 1,500 adults through one-on-one tutoring and classroom instruction. Each year, over 700 trained volunteer tutors provide basic literacy and ESL instruction to approximately 900 adult learners, and 600 additional learners participate in intensive ESL classes. There are typically over 100 adults on the waiting list for services. Contributions help support LCMC's free and low-cost programs, and enable program expansion so that more Montgomery County residents can improve their English literacy and, thus, their lives. For details: 301-610-0030 or www.literacycouncilmcmd.org

In March, we raised \$1,080 to sponsor three women in Women for Women International programs, in addition to the one sponsorship in the BFM budget.

Religious Education for Children in May

Families are encouraged to bring their children to the first fifteen minutes of worship at 11:00 a.m., in the Meeting Room. After that, these are the following highlights.

On Sunday, May 7, children will meet as one class to hear how love is made visible through the social justice work of the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

On Sunday, May 14, the children will meet in two classes for Bible stories.

On Sunday, May 21, there will be a multi-age activity of cooking for the Bethesda Men's Shelter.

On Sunday, May 28, there will be no First Day School. Supervision for children up to age 12 will be available with the child care staff.

For details about the First Day School, see:

Events

5th/6th: Spiritual Formation Retreat

Do you yearn for spiritual deepening? Are you longing for growth in a community of seekers who support one another on their individual journeys? Have you felt a nudge to greater intentionality in your spiritual practice? If so, the [Baltimore Yearly Meeting Spiritual Formation Retreat on Living in Unity with Spirit](#) is for you. It will be on Friday, May 5, and Saturday, May 6, at the Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministry & Retreat Center in Sharpsburg MD. The retreat is open to all regardless of prior or planned participation in an existing spiritual formation program. The retreat is a time to explore and deepen one's practice of living and worshiping in spiritual community. Funds are available, via the Friendly Ear or the Pastoral Care Committee, for BFM F(f)riends who may wish help with the expenses. The cost is \$130.

5th to 7th: Junior Young Friends Weekend

The next Junior Young Friends (6th to 8th grade) conference will be May 5 to 7 at Catocin Quaker Camp. JYFs should arrive on Friday evening, and leave at 12 noon on Sunday. JYFs are encouraged to bring a sleeping bag, cushion, pillow, clothes (including a bathing suit), flashlight, toiletries, and games, music, or sports equipment. Personal electronics are discouraged.

Pre-registration is required one week in advance of the conference or until the 35-person maximum is met. After that, JYFs will be placed on a waiting list and registered as space permits. For details, Jossie Dowling (301-774-7663, youthprograms@bym-rsf.org)

6th: Peace Conference & Award Ceremony

On Saturday, May 6, from 9:30 a.m. to noon, Friends Meeting School in Ijamsville, MD is sponsoring a peace conference and awards ceremony to which we are invited. There will be an interactive exercise on What is Peace? and a student panel presentation. Twelve schools in Frederick County and a broad array of community groups are involved. The school is at 3232 Green Valley Road (MD-75) in Ijamsville.

7th: Meeting for Business

On Sunday, May 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 this month are these reports: the final budget for the next year, and reports from Pastoral Care and the Library Committee. All who come to Meeting for Worship are welcome and encouraged to participate in our worship. Child care up to age 12 is provided.

7th: William Penn House Potluck & Dialogue

F(f)riends are invited to William Penn House for potluck and Quaker dialogue on Sun-day, May 7, at 6:30 p.m. Staff and members from DC Urban Greens will discuss the importance of accessible food and healthy communities. Bring a dish to share; family members and friends are

always welcome. WPH is at 515 East Capitol Street, SE. For details: 202-543-5560 or info@WilliamPennHouse.org

11th to 14th: Expanding Democracy in an Age of Polarization and Resistance

Pendle Hill is sponsoring a conference on how to expand our democracy in this age of polarization and resistance. Greater militarization of police and documented instances of systematic abuse of the marginalized communities they “police” are very prominent aspects of how “law and order” manifests itself. But as visible, robust, and sustained opposition to these abuses grows, the state’s display and use of its ultimate weapon (violence) will escalate. As many movements in our nation’s history show, greater repression exposes some of the most vulnerable among us to much greater risks than others. At the same time, greater repression sharpens political, economic, and social issues and dramatizes their interrelationship. It creates an environment where a mass movement for positive social change can grow. We are invited to accept the challenges and embrace the opportunities that this historical moment offers us by participating in this conference on [Expanding Democracy in an Age of Polarization and Resistance](#).

13th: Memorial Meeting for Worship to Celebrate the Life of Ellie Fink

The memorial service for Ellie Fink will be on Saturday, May 13, at 11:00 a.m., at the Robert L. Smith Meeting Room in the Quaker Meeting House and Arts Center, Sidwell Friends Upper School, 3825 Wisconsin Avenue, NW. The memorial service will be followed by a reception at the school.

13th: 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!). Since the time and date can change on short notice due to the Library’s scheduling practices, please 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.

14th: ARE: Workshop on Vocal Ministry

Have you ever struggled with whether or not to speak in Meeting for Worship? What leads you to speak when you do? Have you ever encountered difficulty being open to, or understanding, certain messages? What constitutes meaningful vocal ministry for you? We all yearn to for ministry to be inspiring and spirit-led; how can we as a community create the circumstances for this to occur? We will have an opportunity to explore these and many other questions in a workshop, led by Betsy Meyer, past clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Betsy inspired many of us with her workshop on vocal ministry at BFM about 15 years ago. This one will be on Sunday, May 14, at 9:30 a.m., in the Music Room (basement) of the Science & Arts Building, across the patio from the Meeting House. Please join us if you can!

14: Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share

Please join us for potluck at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, May 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 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 on 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 sessions in May, on Sundays, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., one on May 14 and the other on May 28.

20th: Friends Couple Enrichment: Deepening Connections

On Saturday, May 20, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at Sandy Spring Friends Meeting, 17715 Meeting House Road, there will be a day-long opportunity for couples (regardless of marital status or sexual orientation) to deepen their relationship in a safe and sacred space. Child care will be provided. The cost is \$40 per couple; bring your lunch; beverages and snacks will be provided. To learn more, see www.friendscoupleenrichment.org

20th: BYM Working Group on Racism

On Saturday, May 20, the BYM Working Group on Racism will meet in the BFM Library at 10:00 a.m. This is a group of representatives from Quaker Meetings in Baltimore Yearly Meeting. One goal of the group is to deepen our understanding of what white anti-racism means and how to put our knowledge into practice. What can Meetings do to become more welcoming and open?

26th to 28th: Young Friends Conference

Calling all high schoolers! From Friday through Sunday, May 26 to 28, there will be a Young Friends Conference sponsored by BYM. The location is still being decided. The conference will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Friday and will include a workshop, time for some exercise out-side, a service project, worship sharing, Meeting for Business, community-building activities, free time, meal preparation, and lunch, dinner, and First Day breakfast. The conference will conclude at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday. For details, contact youthprograms@bym-rsf.org or 301-774-7663.

27th: BFM Service Day at A Wider Circle

The Peace & Social Justice Committee invites your participation in a community service volunteer day at A Wider Circle in Silver Spring, on Saturday, May 27, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. A Wider Circle is a non-profit organization that assists people transitioning out of shelters to more stable living situations. Please join us to assist clients in selecting needed household items, to help organize furniture, household items, and children's toys and furniture in the warehouse, or to assist with administrative tasks. Individuals and families (children must be at least 5 years old to volunteer) are welcome! [A Wider Circle](#) is located at 9159-C Brookeville Road, Silver Spring.

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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 at 12:30 p.m. in the meeting room on Sunday, May 28.

Into the Future

June 2nd to 4th: BFM Camp Catoctin Weekend

Our time at Camp Catoctin this year will be the first weekend in June. Come for a wonderful, nature-filled Saturday. Come at any time, for any part of the day. Arrive for breakfast at 9:00 a.m. and stay through dinner and evening s'mores! There will be plenty of relaxation, water play, and fellowship. Simple meals will be provided; please bring something to add to a soup and sandwich lunch and a spaghetti dinner. Bathroom construction may still be under way, so we might just have jiffy johns and the lodge bathroom. There are cabins and plenty of space for anyone who would like to sleep over on Friday or Saturday night.

[Catoctin Quaker Camp](#) has 385 acres of beautiful wooded hills and a grassy meadow with a small lake for canoeing and a lovely rocky stream. An old stone lodge attached to a large camp kitchen and dining room provides a cozy place to gather. There are places for tents as well. This is an unstructured weekend so come prepared to enjoy the outdoors with your children and friends. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Library. Friends are asked to contribute as they are able toward our rental and food expenses. The suggested contribution is \$20/day/person. Catoctin Quaker Camp is at 12611 Tower Road, Thurmont MD 21788.

June 30th to July 2nd: Silent Retreat for Friends at Dayspring

True silence is to the spirit what sleep is to the body: nourishment and refreshment. (William Penn, 1699) Is your spirit in need of nourishment and refreshment? Come to the Dayspring Silent Retreat from the evening of Friday, June 30 to Sunday afternoon, July 2. We will keep the silence from Friday evening through worship on Sunday, enjoying the beauty of God's creation, reading, walking, resting, finding our own rhythms, listening for the Still Small Voice. The Dayspring Retreat Center is located at 11301 Neelsville Church Road, Germantown MD 20876. You can arrive any time between 3:30 and 7:00 p.m. Friday. (Dinner at 7:00 p.m.) The cost of the retreat is \$220. The registration deadline is June 23.

Committee Notes

Adult Religious Education

We thank the Adult Religious Education Committee for providing hospitality at the rise of Meeting in May. ARE's mission is to foster spiritual growth and development in the Meeting. It arranges programs for both newcomers and seasoned Friends on Quaker faith and practice, Quaker

history and testimonies, Bible study, prayer and meditation, and shared reflections on our spiritual experience.

Stewardship & Finance

Our Meeting needs our support! Each fall and spring, Bethesda Friends Meeting asks everyone in the BFM community to make a financial contribution in support of our Meeting. BFM depends on individual contributions to meet our Meeting's direct expenses, our support of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, our support of Quaker organizations, and our support of charitable causes. By giving to our Meeting, we also affirm the importance of our Meeting in our lives, as well as our solidarity with our Friends community. Every contribution, whatever the size, is greatly appreciated.

There are several ways we can make our financial contributions, including (but not limited to):

- By check. Write a check payable to Bethesda Friends Meeting, and mail it to Bethesda Friends Meeting, PO Box 30152, Bethesda MD 20824
- By credit card online. Go to www.bethesdafriends.org, click on the "Support the Meeting" quick link, and follow the prompts.
- The contribution box for BFM in the Meeting House can be used for cash or checks.

Pastoral Care

[Friends Helping Friends: Pastoral Care Resources List](#). The Pastoral Care Committee assembles and sustains a confidential list of offers of help from our Meeting community. If you are a regular participant in the BFM community, con-tact the committee to express a need, either to the Friendly Ear at rise of Meeting, or through your personal friendly ear. Please also contact them if you want to offer your help, a referral, or your sensitive listening based on your experience. The topics below reflect the offers of knowledge and experience received thus far from members of our community. There is a fuller listing on the BFM website (www.bethesdafriends.org):

- Health, including physical and mental health care, home and hospice care, and diet
- Family, including elders, teens, divorce, loss, and foster care
- Home Care, including downsizing/decluttering, sewing, computers, and handymen. Note: We continue to seek referrals or assistance in such areas as carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, and small machine repair.
- Learning and Education, including tutoring, alternative education, college advice, and art
- Quakerism and Spiritual Exploration, including Quaker history, ideas and terms, and Zen
- Legal and Financial Matters, including referrals and help with taxes, budgeting, and careers
- Language and Culture, including culture shock, relocation, learning French, and teaching ESL.
- The Gift of Time for driving, cooking, and care relief for family and animals.

Meeting Notes

Spiritual Friendship/Discernment Circles

Are you interested in becoming a part of a spiritual friendship circle or having an opportunity for spiritual discernment with a few others? In various ways, we want to encourage and support spiritual friendships. As you may know, BFM had a spiritual formation program a few years ago, which included groups of three to five people who practiced various spiritual disciplines and discussed various readings in *Listening Spirituality*. Some of the groups continued be-yond the formal program.

One may still be meeting. Another group has been meeting every other week for the last few months to hold one another in the Light as they reflect on the following queries: 1) How have I experienced Spirit since we last met? 2) What is Spirit showing me? or What is Spirit teaching me? 3) How is my inner life shaping my outer life? Or How is my outer life being shaped by my inner life? Each person has 15 to 20 minutes in which to center, discern, and be held and listened to. Adult Religious Education may host a session in June in which people can share their experience so that new groups can form.

Conway Listening Tour

President Trump's supporters in Conway SC (pop. 17,000) seemed wary of their two Washington visitors, one a retired reporter and the other a retired federal regulatory lawyer, until the visitors explained that they were Quakers who believed that when people misunderstood one another, it was time to start listening. Their week of listening left the visitors no less wary of President Trump. But they took home a much deeper and mostly sympathetic understanding of people who voted for him. [For details, click here.](#)

Peace Notes

In our March Meeting for Business, BFM agreed to become a member congregation of Sanctuary DMV, which describes itself as “a solidarity group that pledges to resist the newly elected administration’s policy proposals to target and deport millions of undocumented immigrants and discriminate against marginalized communities including those who are black, indigenous, Muslim, latin, and LGBTQ.” There are many ways for individuals at BFM to stand in solidarity with immigrants, and one can learn how at [the Sanctuary DMV website.](#)

Quaker Lunks

Quaker Lunks, BFM's finest human beef, will help you remove trash from your home to your curb, or manhandle items too bulky or heavy to move by yourself. This free service provides two lunks for up to two hours. It requires a preliminary inspection to size up the job. Quaker Lunks will not normally take jobs longer than two hours or jobs that require hauling beyond your curb. The service is available year-round. Donations to BFM earmarked “Ramallah Friends School-Lunks” are welcome but not expected.

Thinking About Race

In his recent (2016) book, *Invisible Man, Got the Whole World Watching: A Young Black Man's Education*, writer Mychal Denzel Smith includes a chapter about his personal struggles with depression. He goes deeply into how difficult it is for black men, whose persona is gener-ally supposed to be macho, to acknowledge mental health problems and any need for or access to mental health treatment.

“What would happen if we reframed the way we understand black male life in a way that took mental health seriously? If we looked out-side and didn't see ruthless gangbangers but teenage boys left hopeless and giving themselves suicide missions? If, instead of chastising young men for fighting over sneakers, we asked why they feel worthless and unseen without them? If we didn't label them junkies, but rather recognized their need for affirmation? If we held our boys close when they cried,

instead of turning them away to face the frustration, pain, and sadness 'like a man'? If we believed black boys were worthy of second chances that didn't involve prison cells? What if?"

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