

BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends

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BFM Newsletter September 2017, Web Version

Query for September: Fostering Community

What helps our Meeting build trust of one another? How do we get to know one another in community? How do we make time in our lives for our faith community? How does conflict enrich the life of our community? How do we provide for spiritual refreshment at all stages of the spiritual journey?

September 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 second 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	Tues	7:00 p.m.	Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform, Annapolis
8	Fri	6:00 p.m.	Spiritual Formation Program Fall Retreat, WV
9	Sat	1:30 p.m.	BFM Book Group in the BFM Library
10	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business
		12:30 p.m.	Potluck
		12:30 p.m.	Nominating Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		1:30 p.m.	Interfaith Unity Walk, Massachusetts Avenue, NW
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment With Light
11	Mon	8:00 p.m.	Committee Meeting: Adult Religious Education

13	Wed	8:30 p.m.	October Newsletter Deadline
16	Sat	10:00 a.m.	Working Group on Racism at BFM
17	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Committee Day: Pastoral Care and Ministry & Worship
		9:30 a.m.	Committee Day: Religious Ed., A&O, S & F, & Nominating
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School Begins
		2:00 p.m.	Memorial Meeting to Celebrate the Life of Ed Brandt
24	Sun	9:15 a.m.	Peace & Social Justice Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		9:30 a.m.	Nominating Committee, Teachers' Lounge Annex
		12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering, Meeting Room
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment With Light
29	Fri	7:00 p.m.	Young Friends Conference, Lincoln VA
30	Sat	9:00 a.m.	BFM Service Day at A Wider Circle

The Social Concerns Box

The September Social Concerns Box is for the [Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund](#), which each year awards college scholarships to DC public school seniors with high potential, who are coping with difficult backgrounds and have very low incomes. This fund is managed jointly by Bethesda Friends Meeting, Friends Meeting of Washington, and Langley Hill Friends Meeting. BFM plays a vital role in mobilizing funding, selecting the awardees, and making decisions about the program's policies and practices. Since the scholarship fund first began, it has awarded 121 scholarships to graduates from 27 DC Public schools. The amount of each scholarship is now \$6,000, and each year the program supports about 20 students through their four years of college. Please be generous.

In the June Social Concerns box, \$1,197 was donated to the refugee fund. In July, Right Sharing of World Resources received \$188.

Events

Please Fill Out Our Survey Card

As a first step in becoming a more diverse community, beginning on June 18 and continuing through the end of September, all who attend a Meeting for Worship (no matter how often you have been to our Meeting) will be invited and encouraged to answer two questions on a post card as they are led (or to decline to answer either question). Bethesda Friends Meeting is interested in including a diversity of people in our meeting activities, especially young adults (ages 18 through 35) and people with various racial and ethnic identities. The first question is worded as follows: "We understand that race is a social construct and that all human beings share a common ancestor; nevertheless, how would you describe your racial and/or ethnic identity?" The second question is worded as follows: "Are you between the ages of 18 and 35 inclusive?" The cards will be collected in a box on the credenza and will be anonymous. Thank you for your participation in this first stage of the endeavor. This has been seasoned by an Ad Hoc Committee, which welcomes all comments, in the full understanding that this is only a first step in our communal reflections on the opportunities and challenges of becoming the diverse community we wish to be.

Mid-Week Meetings for Worship Resume

After a summer hiatus, BFM's mid-week meetings will recommence on Wednesday, September 6, and succeeding Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. in the meeting room at Bethesda Friends Meeting.

5th: MAJR Strategy Session

On Tuesday, September 5, at 7:00, the "front door" committee of MAJR (Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform) will hold a strategy planning session to improve the policies of Maryland's criminal justice system which happen before people are incarcerated. The meeting will be at the Annapolis Friends Meeting House, 351 Dubois Road, Annapolis. There will be snacks.

8th to 10th: BYM Spiritual Formation Retreat

We are invited to join Friends from across the Yearly Meeting (the wider association of Quaker meetings in this area) to the retreat at Priest Field Pastoral Center in Keaneyville, WV, from Friday, September 8, to Sunday, September 10. The retreat provides a welcome respite from our busy lives and offers plenty of time and space for spiritual reflection, renewal, and revelation. It is also an opportunity to explore and deepen our practice of living and worshiping in spiritual community. To register visit:

<https://www.bym-rsf.org/events/spiritform/> Although the registration deadline is Monday, August 28, there may still be room for additional participants. For information and directions for the retreat center, see www.priestfield.org

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9th: BFM Book Group

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 will be undergoing renovations in coming months, the meeting place will be 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, 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. For details:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/bfm-book-group>

10th: Meeting for Business

On Sunday, September 10, 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. All who come to Meeting for Worship are welcome and encouraged to participate in our worship. Meeting for Business will include reports from the Yearly Meeting Annual Gathering, Adult Religious Education, and William Penn House.

10th: Potluck

Please join us for potluck in the Groome Building at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, September 10. It is an opportunity for feast and fellowship. Please bring a dish to share.

10th: Interfaith Unity Walk

On Sunday, September 10, from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m., there will be an [Interfaith Unity Walk](#). The opening ceremony will be at the Washington Hebrew Congregation (3935 Macomb Street, NW), and the closing ceremony will be at the Islamic Center of Washington (2551 Massachusetts Avenue, NW). The point is that over a thousand people representing many different faiths will be walking together in friendship to show that we support all our neighbors, whoever they are, with no exceptions. There will be a resource fair from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. The walk begins at 1:30 p.m.

10th & 24th: 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. All are welcome to attend. First-time participants find the process quite easy to follow and, often, richly rewarding.

This is an invitation to two Sunday evenings sessions, September 10 and 24, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

16th: Working Group on Racism

The Yearly Meeting's Working Group on Racism will be meeting in the BFM Library from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 16. The purpose is to strengthen our abilities to contribute positively to our multiracial society. We share resources and experiences and benefit greatly from the process.

24th: 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, September 24, at the rise of Meeting.

29th to October 1st: Young Friends Conference

On the weekend of September 29 to October 1, there will be a [Young Friends Conference](#) for high-school-aged Quakers at Goose Creek Meeting, 18204 Lincoln Road, Lincoln VA 20160. For more information, please contact: Jossie Dowling (301-774- 7663) or Please remember that the deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is two weeks before the conference (September 15). Any one registering after that date will be placed on a waiting list and may not be able to attend.

30th: BFM Service Day at A Wider Circle

The Peace & Social Justice Committee is planning a community service volunteer day for BFM participants at A Wider Circle in Silver Spring, on Saturday, September 30, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. A Wider Circle is a non-profit organization that assists individuals and families transitioning out of shelters to more stable living situations. Please join us to help assist clients in selecting needed household items, to help organize furniture/household items in the warehouse, or to assist with administrative tasks. Individuals and families (children should be at least 5 years old to volunteer) are welcome! A Wider Circle is located at 9159-C Brookeville Road, Silver Spring. See www.awidercircle.org

Into the Future

October 1st: World Quaker Day

Sunday, October 1, marks World Quaker Day, the day when we Friends celebrate worldwide our different ways of worship, traditions, and practices. This year's theme is Gathering in Worship around the World. For details: www.worldquakerday.org

1st: William Penn House Potluck & Dialogue

F(f)riends are invited to a potluck and Quaker dialogue at William Penn House on Sunday, October 1, at 6:30 p.m. Peter Toscano will display his artful, playful, outrageously funny, and deeply moving storytelling craft. A shapeshifter, he transforms right before your eyes into a whole cast of comic characters who explore the serious worlds of gender, sexuality, privilege, religion, and environmental justice. Bring a dish to share; family members and friends are always welcome. WPH is at 515 East Capitol Street, SE. For more details: www.WilliamPennHouse.org, 202-543- 5560.

October 6th to 9th: Silent Retreat for Friends

Is your spirit in need of nourishment and refreshment? Join members of Annapolis Friends Meeting for a Silent Retreat. This retreat has never been full, so please join us. 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 \$300, and the deadline for registrations is September 29. If Dayspring is new to you, check their web site (www.dayspringretreat.org) to get a sense of it. There is also a YouTube piece online created at an October BYM retreat.

Committee Notes

Advancement & Outreach

We thank Advancement & Outreach for providing refreshments at the rise of Meeting in September. The committee welcomes newcomers and visitors, helps them connect with Meeting community activities, and furthers community-building activities. It manages BFM publications, the Listserv, and web site. It hosts Getting to Know One Another gatherings and Experiment with Light. It coordinates the plant sale. The A&O Committee meets on the third Sunday of the month at 9:30 a.m., in the Teachers' Lounge.

Nominating

We are again entering our nominating season, the time of year when the Nominating Committee makes recommendations to fill the openings on the Meeting's committees and among the Meeting's officer and organizational liaison positions.

It is very helpful for the Nominating Committee to learn about the interests of all who participate in BFM so that we can place individuals in roles that are a good fit.

For people who have not been involved in committee work before, we strongly encourage you to join a committee. We have found working with others on committees is one of the most rewarding ways of deepening our relationships within the Meeting community and putting our Quaker principles into practice. BFM committees are always eager to have new faces, new ideas, and new energy.

During September and October, the Nominating Committee will identify nominees to begin serving in January 2018. Nominations are presented at the November Meeting for Business and approved in December. Committee members typically serve for two two-year terms.

To learn more, please see the list of committees with descriptions of their activities and responsibilities on pages 2 to 10 in the 2017 BFM Directory or go to:

http://www.bethesdafriends.org/officers_committees.aspx or contact any member of the Nominating Committee by phone, e-mail, or at the rise of Meeting.

Pastoral Care

Are you experiencing serious illness or death of a loved one? Please notify the co-clerks of the Pastoral Care Committee. They will try to activate help for you.

Child Care

We are sorry to lose one of BFM's Child Care providers. She was offered a wonderful opportunity for a part time job in her field of special education, so she can no longer work for us on Sundays. We wish her well in her teaching career! Luckily for us, she recommended several of her colleagues, so the Child Care Committee has set up several interviews in August. We hope to have a candidate for the Meeting to consider in a few weeks.

Peace & Social Justice

Helping Refugees Group. In preparation for supporting a refugee family when they arrive in the US, we are collecting furniture donations which would be appropriate for an apartment. If you have room in your house, please let us know sooner rather than later.

Please join the Bethesda Shelter Supper Group! For many years, BFM has taken supper once a month to the Bethesda Shelter, which is now located on Marinelli Road in Rockville. The shelter provides transitional housing to homeless men with chronic mental illness.

The BFM supper group has six teams; each team provides supper two times a year. On the first Saturday of each month, members of a designated team provide different components of a meal for 15 men consisting of a main dish, a vegetable side or salad, a dessert, and a gallon of milk/soy milk.

For 2017-18, we will need some new people for our teams. As you think about your Meeting plans for the fall, please consider participating in this project. Participating is a great

way for a family to do a service project together. Maybe you have friends in the Meeting (or out) you'd like to work with in fixing food together? Also, some months, the children in First Day School do a portion of the cooking. If you are a parent or an adult who would like to do some cooking with them, join us! Finally, if you want to cook all by yourself, that works too. It is all very flexible and worthwhile. We need new members and your contribution will be appreciated!

Meeting Notes

Quaker Lunks

This has been the most useful year in Quaker lunks history. They have helped six households thus far, triple the old norm. There is a new coordinator, starting September 1. The coordinator is in effect the assigner of lunk teams, and the lunk responsible for helping clients make the best possible use of our muscle (awesome) and time (two hours). Typically, people seeking lunk help are referred to the coordinator by Pastoral Care, a bulletin announcement, or word of mouth.