

A Guide to What’s Inside! Details are available on our web site: www.bethesdafriends.org

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April 2019 Calendar

Meeting for Worship is held at 11:00 a.m. every First Day. The meeting room is also available for worship at 9:30 a.m., except when Meeting for Business is held at 9:00 a.m. The meeting room is available for worship at BFM on Wednesdays, at 7:30 p.m. There is a worship group in Boyds the second Sunday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

1	Mon	7:00 p.m.	Adult Religious Education Committee, at Bernie Benson’s
6	Sat	9:30 a.m.	BYM Peace & Social Concerns Networking Day, SFS US
6 to 14			MD Civil Rights Educational Freedom Experience
7	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business (Child Care is Provided)
		11:00 a.m.	FDS: Worship & Cooking for the Men’s Shelter
		12:30 p.m.	Spiritual Enrichment Gathering, Multi-purpose Room
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light at the Nielsen-Jones’s House
12	Fri	7:00 p.m.	BYM Young Friends Conf., Adelphi Friends Meeting
13	Sat	1:30 p.m.	BFM Book Group in the BFM Library
		8:30 p.m.	Deadline for the May Newsletter
14	Sun	9:30 a.m.	ARE: Deborah Haines on William Penn & Equality
		11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	No Potluck at BFM (because of Spring Fling on the 28th)
		2:30 p.m.	Holy Land Film: “The Occupation of the American Mind”
16 to 22			Buy Silent Auction Items Early: Buy It Now Sale
21	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Committee Day: Pastoral Care, Ministry & Worship
		9:30 a.m.	Com. Day: Stewardship & F. and Outreach & C.
		11:00 a.m.	No First Day School: Childcare Supervision Available
		12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light at Jane Coe’s House
26/27	Fri/Sat		Shalem Institute’s Gerald May Lecture, Rockville UU
27	Sat	9:00 a.m.	Antiracist Bookfest at American University
		10:00 to 2:00	Drop-off of Items for Spring Fling, Groome Bldg.
28	Sun	11:00 a.m.	First Day School: Worship & Service: Spring Fling
		12:30 p.m.	Spring Fling for Ramallah: Food, Fun, & Contribution

Details are available on our web site: www.bethesdafriends.org

Query for April: Integrity

How do we seek truth by which to live? How do we know it when we find it? In what ways does my life speak of my beliefs and values? In what ways is my life out of harmony with the truth as I know it? Why?

Social Concerns Box

The Social Concerns Box for April is for scholarships to the Ramallah Friends School in the West Bank (Palestine). RFS, founded by American Quakers in 1869, is a co-ed K through 12 school that provides a first-class, peace-oriented education to children of all faiths. Most of the money for two scholarships will be raised at Spring Fling on April 28 (see details below). Or contribute to the social concerns box. It is an opportunity for us to help build peace in the Middle East.

The February Social Concerns Box for the Central Pennsylvania Clinic: A Medical Home for Special Children and Adults in Bellesville PA received \$3,461.

Personal Notes

Hearing from Recent Visitors to Ramallah Friends School

BFM is looking forward to having Arthur Boyd and Meg Meyer join us at Spring Fling on Sunday, April 28, because they have recently returned from serving as “Living Letters” from September 2018 to February 2019, living at Ramallah Friends School, and traveling in Israel and Palestine to gain perspective on the situation. Ramallah Friends Meeting felt familiar. The school - bigger than the big US Friends schools - felt familiar, yet different. They returned home with some insights on living in another culture. Under military occupation in Palestine, Ramallah Friends School is thriving and facing challenges. How are Quaker values providing hope and building a foundation for a peaceful, just future? The school is beginning an in-depth process of expanding Quaker reflective practices and is facing challenges related to the current United States political situation. What can US citizens do to help the school? To help the region? How does the Israel, Palestine situation affect daily life? What might the future hold for this troubled region?

Events

6th: BYM Peace & Social Concerns Networking Day

On Saturday, April 6, at 9:30 a.m., F(f)riends from the Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s 52 meetings will be gathering at the Sidwell Friends Upper School at 3825 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, for a networking day on peace and social justice concerns. This is an opportunity to share interests and concerns. We also will offer four, practical 90-minute workshops, two in the morning and two in the afternoon, each led by Friends with experience in these areas. In the morning, the two workshops are 1) The Back from the Brink Campaign re the threat of nuclear war; or 2) When individuals with mental health problems land in jail, how can we get them help before trial? In the afternoon the two workshops will be on 1) Immigrants, refugees and sanctuary in our midst (update and new resources); or 2) A closer look at our Friends’ slow historic progress re civil rights and inclusion. Please register before April 1 by sending an e-mail to: pcaroom [at] gmail.com Include name, e-mail, monthly meeting, and which two workshops you prefer to attend.

Workshop sessions will begin at 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. During breakfast/arrival time, Friends will be encouraged to mingle and share information about specific programs/ activities of our own Monthly Meetings.

Coffee, bagels, and pastries will be provided at 9:30; lunch (wraps, salad, chips, drinks) will be provided at noon. Vegetarian/vegan treats may be included both times. Donations are welcome, but not required, to assist with our Networking Day costs (estimated to be \$14 per person).

6th to 14th: Maryland Civil Rights Educational Freedom Experience

Esther D. has been active with the Human Rights Commission of Montgomery County for decades. She has gone on their Freedom Ride and highly recommends it as a life-changing journey to relive history. The next one is from April 6 to 14. The group will travel by bus to explore the birth place of the Civil Rights Movement and retrace the Freedom Trail including the Lorraine Motel, Central High School, the home of Medgar Evers, and the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church.

The leaders are Joan Mulholland, a 1960s Freedom Rider, and Willie King, who transcribed Dr. King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." For details: 240-777- 8450 or: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/humanrights

7th: Meeting for Business

On Sunday, April 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 Spiritual State of the Meeting (final), the preliminary budget, and Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Interim Meeting. 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.

7th: Spiritual Enrichment Gathering

Enriching our spiritual lives and enriching our Meeting: Are you yearning for more spiritual fellowship, for deeper conversations among those who are in the BFM community? Or are you wondering how you might enrich your spiritual life? Do you have questions, concerns, reflections about Quaker faith and practice that you would like to share with others? The gathering has met three times previously: on November 18, January 6, and February 3. Our next time together will be on Sunday, April 7, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. We plan to gather in the multi-purpose room of the Groome Building (where we have potlucks). We will first break bread together (participants bring brown bag lunches). The rest of the time will include guided conversations and activities to deepen our connections and reflect on brief readings and queries. You need not have attended any of the prior gatherings to join in this one! Everyone is welcome!

7th/21st: 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 sessions in April, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings. For location details, see the website calendar of events. Please come if you can!

12th to 14th: Young Friends Conference

Calling all high schoolers! From Friday through Sunday, April 12 to 14, there will be a Young Friends Conference sponsored by BYM at Adelphi Friends Meeting in Adelphi MD. The conference will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Friday and will include a workshop, time for some exercise outside, 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

13th: Quaker Book Group

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly, in the BFM Library from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. on the second Saturday of the month. Newcomers are always welcome (even if you have not read the book!). We read a mix of books by Quakers, books about Quakerism, and books that speak to Quaker values and concerns. The group is managed through an online mailing list to share announcements, summaries, and thoughts about the readings. The book for April is Elaine Pagels, *Why Religion?* To join the group contact Leslie S. (see Directory).

14th: ARE: William Penn & Equality

On Sunday, April 14, at 9:30 a.m., in the Music Room (basement) of the SAM Building, Deborah Haines of Alexandria Meeting will discuss William Penn and equality. She has led many well-received ARE discussions in the past. By way of background, when William Penn first arrived in the new colony of Pennsylvania in 1682, he quickly put in place a system for organizing settlement of the land. He ordered his surveyors to move outward from Philadelphia, creating contiguous townships consisting of small farms laid out along either side of a central road. William Penn's townships have received little attention from historians, but they were just as much an expression of religious values as New England's famed village centers. Come learn more about how the egalitarian Quaker concept of community shaped the landscape of southeastern Pennsylvania in the seventeenth century, and helped lay the foundations for American democracy. If you want to schedule child care for the session, please contact Marion H. (see Directory) by April 7.

14th: No Potluck at BFM

Because of the wonderful food being served at Spring Fling on Sunday, April 28, there will be no potluck at BFM on Sunday, April 14. (We need to have kitchen staff for the later event.)

14th: Up-County Worship Group

Live up-County? Lucille Harrigan and Lowell Christy would welcome our attendance at the Up-County Meeting for Worship at Lucille Harrigan's home at Breezy Hollow Farm (19701 Bucklodge Road, Route 117) in Boyds MD at 11:00 a.m., the second Sunday of the month. Worship is followed by a potluck lunch, so please RSVP to: Lucille H. (rharrigan11 [at] gmail.com)

14th: Holy Land Film Series

The Peace & Social Justice Committee is one of the sponsors of a film series on Voices from the Holy Land, which will be shown on April 14 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Islamic Center of Maryland, 19411 Woodfield Road, in Gaithersburg.

The movie on Sunday April 14 is “The Occupation of the American Mind.” It is described as a “stunning exposé on how propaganda drives public opinion and, in turn, our understanding of reality. Here’s the story of how American perceptions of the Middle East ... are engineered: from focus group to talking points to mortar fire.” (Douglas Rushkoff, Media Theory, CUNY, and Media Commentator, CNN). For details:

www.voicesfromtheholylnd.org or

Adileh Sharieff at asharieff [at] icomd.org

16th to 22nd: Purchase Silent Auction Items Early from the On-Line Buy It Now Sale

Our Silent Auction part of Spring Fling (see below) includes a wide variety of interesting services, delicious food offerings, and unique material items. Each year, some items from the Silent Auction are selected for a special opportunity called “Buy-it-Now.” This gives you advance notice of some special offerings, and the chance to bid on them before the day of Spring Fling. The list of possibilities will be sent out by email the second week of April. If you have an item or service or talent to offer for the Silent Auction, contact Stephanie K. or Lydia A. (see Directory).

21st: 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, April 21.

26th/27th: Shalem Institute’s Gerald May Seminar

Ron Rolheiser will talk about “Spiritual Wisdom from the Deep Wells of Christian Mysticism – Principles for Living a Mystically-Driven Life.” He is a specialist in the fields of spirituality and systematic theology. In addition to having a regular column in the *Catholic Herald*, he is the author of several books, including *The Holy Longing: Guidelines for a Christian Spirituality*; *The Restless Heart: Finding Our Spiritual Home in Times of Loneliness*; *Forgotten Among the Lilies: Learning to Love Beyond Our Fears*; and *Bruised and Wounded: Struggling to Understand Suicide*. Mysticism is the best kept secret within our spiritual and ecclesiastical circles. But, alongside Scripture, it is a very rich source of insight and revelation from which to draw guidance for our journey. We were once loved and caressed by hands far gentler than any we’ve met in this world. The original kiss of God still lies in our souls. How do we retrieve it? How do we live our lives by it? How might we live a more mystically- driven life? The Friday night lecture is from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. and the Saturday Workshop is from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It will be at the Unitarian/Universalist Church of Rockville, 100 Welsh Park Drive in Rockville. For details:

<https://shalem.org/programs/shortterm/gerald-may-seminar/>

27th: Antiracist Bookfest

The National Antiracist Book Festival, the first book festival of its kind, celebrating the importance of antiracism and social justice in the written word, will be hosted by American University’s Antiracist Research and Policy Center on AU’s campus on Saturday, April 27. Along with nationally renowned writers, journalists, poets, and scholars who have recently published critically acclaimed books, the festival will include workshops for aspiring writers with leading literary agents and book editors. It will take place at the American University’s College of Law, 4300

Nebraska Avenue, NW, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Most panels are ticketed events, raising funds for AU's Antiracist Research and Policy Center. To register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/national-antiracist-book-festival-tickets-58283302928>

28th: Spring Fling for Ramallah Friends School

Details for all events are at http://www.bethesdafriends.org/spring_fling.aspx

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." The school is a real beacon of hope in a troubled land, and they are immensely grateful for our support. Spring Fling, which engages scores of us, is built around four main activities, all of which welcome volunteers, donations, and customers.

The activities are:

- Silent Auction: This wide array of donated goods and services includes many kinds of items, such as household goods, jewelry, art work, photography, gift certificates to restaurants or theaters; services such as gardening consultations, handyman services, music lessons, homemade food or baked items; social events such as dinner and/or discussion in your home, a wine and cheese gathering, or a film and discussion in your home. We even have had the donation of time at someone's vacation home.

- Middle Eastern Buffet. To donate food, please go to

http://www.bethesdafriends.org/spring_fling.aspx

- "White Camel" Rummage Sale. Donations of items for sale should be brought to BFM on Saturday, April 27, between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. so we have a chance to price them.

Note: Any child attending Spring Fling receives a \$5 gift certificate to the White Camel Sale.

- Perennial Plant Sale. Plants will be available for 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, check with various coordinators to see where the need is greatest.

- If you can't come to the event, you can donate via the Social Concerns Box for April.

Details for all events are at http://www.bethesdafriends.org/spring_fling.aspx

Into the Future

May 7th to 17th: In the Footsteps of St. Francis and St. Clare: A Pilgrimage to Assisi

Margaret B. of BFM is leading a pilgrimage to Assisi from May 7 to 17, which she describes as follows: Can you imagine entering a sacred space of beauty and deep spiritual inspiration? How would it feel to step away from the fast-paced life and immerse yourself in a timeless world of rolling hills, cobblestone streets, and inspirational art? Come with us to the awe-inspiring town of Assisi where pilgrims have sought wisdom for centuries. Experience the culturally-rich birth-place of the thirteenth-century saints Francis and Clare, and walk in their footsteps through the beautiful landscapes of Umbria and Tuscany. As you journey to the sacred sites where the saints sought clarity and spiritual sustenance, you may find your connection to the divine grow stronger and see your own life with renewed vision. Open yourself to the possibilities of transformation as you draw on the natural beauty of this land and the spiritual imprint left by the saints. Following the example of St. Francis at San Damiano, we will also explore the use of art in our own contemplative practice. The pilgrimage pace will be relaxed, allowing for spacious moments of solitude and contemplative silence, as pilgrims draw from a deep well of spiritual nourishment. Each day we will ground ourselves in prayer and reflection. We encourage pilgrims to bring a musical instrument, art supplies, a journal, or anything else that nurtures the soul. Contemplative practices will help us reach inward, so that we

might be more deeply touched by the beauty and inspiration of this sacred land and its culture. Pilgrims will stay in a convent of Franciscan sisters in the historic center of Assisi. For details: <https://shalem.org/programs/pilgrimages/assisi/>

June 30th to July 6th: Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering

The FGC Gathering this year will be at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa. The theme is “Peace in our Hearts, Justice in the World.” The Gathering is a chance to be together with over 1,200 Friends. There are many opportunities to address spirit, mind, and body. Look up the program for this year at www.FGCCgathering.org You can enjoy lots of activities: singing, dancing, good food, and good conversation. You really ought to go to a Gathering at least once. Early registration for the Gathering opens April 1. There are both half-gathering and part-time attender options for adults. Financial aid is available. Due to a generous donation, there are no program fees for children and high school students and more scholarships for families.

By way of background, Friends General Conference nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers. The work of FGC can be summarized into three areas of endeavor:

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- Help meetings deepen Quaker worship and practice
 - Support a loving Quaker community
 - Support Quaker outreach

FGC is a volunteer-led association of regional Quaker organizations, primarily in the United States and Canada. Founded in 1900, FGC has grown from a voluntary organization of seven yearly meetings, created to hold a “general conference” every other year, to an association of fourteen yearly meetings, supplemented with regional groups and individual meetings. FGC continues to sponsor an annual Gathering of Friends. FGC seeks to use resources effectively with a concern for simplicity and openness. It is funded through the support of Quaker meetings, individuals, and foundations. FGC is a 501(c)3 organization. For details, see: www.fgcquaker.org If you would like assistance with expenses, please contact the Pastoral Care Committee.

Committee Notes

Fellowship & Hospitality

We thank Fellowship & Hospitality for providing refreshments at the rise of Meeting and for assisting with the preparation and serving of Spring Fling lunch in April. The committee oversees hospitality after Meetings for Worship, and potlucks on the second Sunday of most months, although direct responsibility rotates monthly among all committees. F&H also provides hospitality for special occasions, such as memorial meetings.

Pastoral Care

A Request for Volunteers. Would you like to get more involved in the life of the Meeting? One way is to sign up to occasionally help the Pastoral Care Committee tend to the needs of those in the BFM community who might need a ride, a visit, or another type of tangible help. If you’d like to be on our list of occasional volunteers, please let the weekly Friendly Ear know. When the need arises, someone from Pastoral Care will contact you to see if you are available. If not, we’ll try to reach you the next time. It’s a great way to get to know people you might not otherwise meet, and a great service to the Meeting.

How is Our Couple Doing? The life of our Meeting includes a Couples Enrichment Group, a confidential safe space where people learn and practice the skills of active listening and communicating with your partner. It's not couples therapy. It's an opportunity to be part of a community of people who mutually nurture healthy partnerships. For more details: Jillaine S. or Tia D. (see Directory).

Ministry & Worship

At a recent Meeting for Worship, many people reflected on having attended the memorial meeting celebrating the life of Ted Hawkins. A Friend recommended a 2005 essay titled "Always Go to the Funeral" by a young lawyer about what her father always said to her. It is a powerful reminder of the importance of taking time for small loving acts such as attending a memorial service. You can listen at: <https://www.npr.org/2005/08/08/4785079/always-go-to-the-funeral>

While she speaks about the benefits of such acts for other people and your community, we were reminded in Meeting Sunday of the very real benefits for oneself: coming to know others better, being given opportunities to reflect on one's own life choices made and to be made.

Stewardship & Finance

BFM received only 37% of its annual fundraising budget by December 31, 2018, the halfway point of our fiscal year. This is well below the usual 50% or more at mid-year. Contributions from members of the BFM community account for 97% of BFM's annual income. This large shortfall is cause for serious concern. If it continues, we will have difficulty meeting BFM's operating and philanthropic budgets for this fiscal year. If you have already made your contribution to BFM for 2018-19, we thank you again.

If you have not yet made your contribution, we look forward to thanking you soon. You may deposit your check in the donation box at the meetinghouse or send it to
BFM Asst. Treasurer (see Directory for postal address)

You can also give online at www.bethesdafriends.org or through your own bank. If you have any question about your contribution, you may contact BFM Treasurer at [treasurer \[at\] bethesdafriends.org](mailto:treasurer@bethesdafriends.org) in complete confidence. Thank for considering this concern for the financial state of the Meeting.

Meeting Notes

Peace Notes

April is Genocide Prevention and Awareness Month. Everyone can be a part of genocide prevention by being aware of where there is potential for genocide in the world and writing to their Congressional representatives to ensure that they know that we care. You can track where there is risk for genocide through the Early Warning Project:
<https://earlywarningproject.usmmm.org>

Through the hard work of groups like FCNL, this January the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act got signed into law. According to FCNL, the law "requires training for Foreign Service Officers in violent conflict and atrocities prevention and mandates reporting from both the Department of State and Director for National Intelligence on U.S. government efforts to prevent and respond to atrocities. These are critical tools that are needed to ensure the U.S. government is able to more effectively prevent atrocities and genocide."

It will take the work of citizens to make sure it is being applied effectively.

Thinking About Race

“Black and Blue”

All my life through I've been so black and blue
I'm white inside, but that don't help my case
Cause I can't hide what is on my face
I'm so forlorn. Life's just a thorn
My heart is torn. Why was I born?
What did I do to be so black and blue?
I'm hurt inside, but that don't help my case
Cause I can't hide what is on my face
How will it end? Ain't got a friend
My only sin is in my skin
What did I do to be so black and blue?
Tell me, what did I do?
What did I do? What did I do?
What did I do? What did I do?
What did I do? What did I do?
What did I do? Tell me, what did I do to be so black and blue?
What did I do to be so black and blue?

- Louis Armstrong, 1929, words by Harry Brooks and Andy Razaf. Music by Fats Waller. You can see it and hear it sung by Louis Armstrong at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LDPUfbXRLM>