

# Bethesda Friends Meeting Newsletter for January 2020

A Guide to What's Inside!

Queries re Our Spiritual State  
Calendar  
Social Concerns Box  
Religious Ed. for Children  
Events  
Into the Future  
Committee Notes  
    Nominating  
    Pastoral Care  
    Ministry & Worship  
Meeting Notes

## Queries for January: What is the Spiritual State of Our Meeting

**In the life of our Meeting, how are our deliberations and actions loving, caring, and Spirit led? Does our life in the Meeting leave us feeling loved, cared for, and led by the Spirit? What challenges us to be loving, caring, and Spirit led? How might there be more actions that are loving, caring, and Spirit led?**

### January 2020 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 opportunity for worship, except on the first First day of the month, 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., and a worship group meets in Boyds the second Sunday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

|       |         |            |  |
|-------|---------|------------|--|
| 4     | Sat     | 2:00 p.m.  | Wedding  |
| 5     | Sun     | 9:00 a.m.  | Meeting for Business: All are Invited to Participate!                                      |
|       |         | 11:00 a.m. | First Day School: Worship & Classes  |
|       |         | 12:30 p.m. | Nominating Committee, Teachers' Lounge   |
| 11/12 | Sat/Sun | 10:00 a.m. | Jr Young Friends Conference, Gunpowder Frds Mtg.   |
| 11    | Sat     | 1:30 p.m.  | Quaker Book Group in the BFM Library   |
| 12    | Sun     | 9:15 a.m.  | Transformative Conversations about Race, Groome Bldg.                                      |
|       |         | 11:00 a.m. | First Day School: Worship & Supervised Play  |
|       |         | 11:00 a.m. | Parenting in a Challenging Time  |
|       |         | 12:30 p.m. | Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share  |
|       |         | 7:30 p.m.  | Experiment With Light  |
| 13    | Mon     | 8:30 p.m.  | February Newsletter Deadline   |
| 15    | Wed     | 7:00 p.m.  | BYM Camp Enrollment Opens, see:<br><a href="https://bymcamps.org">https://bymcamps.org</a> |
| 19    | Sun     | 9:00 a.m.  | Committee Day: Ministry & Worship; Pastoral Care   |

|           |              |                   |   |
|-----------|--------------|-------------------|---|
|           |              | <b>9:30 a.m.</b>  | <b>Committee Day: Outreach &amp; Communications &amp; S&amp;F</b> |
|           |              | <b>11:00 a.m.</b> | <b>First Day School: Worship &amp; Classes</b>                    |
| <b>23</b> | <b>Thurs</b> | <b>5:00 p.m.</b>  | <b>Registration for BYM Women's Retreat Ends</b>                  |
| <b>26</b> | <b>Sun</b>   | <b>9:15 a.m.</b>  | <b>Peace &amp; Social Justice Committee, Teachers' Lounge</b>     |
|           |              | <b>9:30 a.m.</b>  | <b>Religious Education Committee, Teachers' L. Annex</b>          |
|           |              | <b>11:00 a.m.</b> | <b>First Day School: Worship &amp; Multi-Age Activity</b>         |
|           |              | <b>12:30 p.m.</b> | <b>Coordinating Gathering, Meeting Room</b>                       |
|           |              | <b>7:30 p.m.</b>  | <b>Experiment With Light</b>                                      |

### **Social Concerns Box**

The Social Concerns Box in January is for CCAN, the Chesapeake Climate Action Network. Our friend Travis is once again taking the plunge into the Chesapeake Bay on January 25 to support CCAN. This will be his eighth plunge, so please join the fun, contribute via the Social Concerns Box or the website: (<https://us-p2p.netdonor.net/2883/polar-bear-plunge/travis-plunge>) CCAN has only a few paid staff (and a lot of volunteers), yet they do an impressive amount of organizing, lobbying, and legal work to promote the vital switch to clean energy, and related programs. Travis says he knows that jumping in the river seems whacky. But when 300 people go in together, it is very spirited and purposeful, even joyful! And he and his family are so persuaded of the value of CCAN's work that they are regular plungers. You are welcome to join the day by joining his plunge team and/or volunteering to help on the morning of January 25. This is about protecting the home of all life. Please support the effort.

In November, the Social Concerns Box had \$423 for Lutheran Social Services.

### **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.

For details, please check the weekly bulletin on activities, including the annual Quaker Camp Expo and quilt making with Dot Hartley.

Jan. 5: Classes

Jan. 12: Supervised Play

Jan. 19: Classes

Jan. 26: Multi-Age activity

Parenting in a Challenging Time, session 2, will happen from 11:00 a.m. to noon, on Sunday, January 12, in the common room behind the Multi-purpose Room of the Groome Building. This session, which will build on our first session, will be another opportunity for First Day School parents (and grandparents) to share with one another their questions, experiences, and concerns as they raise their children in the light of Quaker faith and practice, and in a social/political climate that can be quite challenging. At our first meeting, parents had some ideas about how BFM could better support families. In addition, parents generated and discussed some queries, including "How do we keep our children safe without scaring them?" and "How do we help kids understand the reasons for our behavioral standards?" This latter could be continued, as we only touched on it briefly. And in the interim, another suggestion came: "How do we communicate our unconditional love, even as we set some standards for behavior and effort?" Other possible queries include: "Which of the Quaker testimonies are most relevant to you, as you raise your children?" "How do you talk to your children about some of the more troubling things that they hear about going on in the world?" Other queries

welcome! Please join us for what we hope will be a free-flowing sharing of experiences, joys, challenges, and insights. All parents (of whatever age children) are welcome.

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camping Program registration for returning campers opens on Wednesday, January 15, at 7:00 p.m. For details, see: <https://bymcamps.org> and <http://quakersdc.org/node/912>

## **Events**

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

On Sunday, January 5 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 American Friends Service Committee's DC Project, Child Care, Fellowship & Hospitality, Ministry & Worship Committees, and Friends Non-Profit Housing. All who come to Meeting for Worship are welcome and encouraged to participate. Child care up to age 12 is provided. Please join us if you can.

### **8th/15th/22nd/29th: Mid-Week Worship**

On Wednesday evenings, at 7:30 p.m., the Meeting Room is available 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.

### **11th/12th: Junior Young Friends Conference**

Middle School-aged youth are invited to Gunpowder Friends Meeting (14934 Priceville Road, Sparksville MD) on the weekend of January 11/12 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 4). For details, contact Jossie Dowling, Youth Programs Manager (301-774- 7663, [youthprograms@bym-rsf.org](mailto:youthprograms@bym-rsf.org))

### **11th: Quaker Book Group Meeting**

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly, in the BFM Library from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. 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.

### **12th: Held in the Light for Transformative Conversations about Race**

On Sunday, January 12, at 9:15 a.m., we are invited to participate in transformative conversations about race. The location will be the common area behind the Multi-purpose Room of the Groome Building. While we wish to be more inclusive and more sensitive to the social construct

of race (and other differences) at BFM, it is often uncomfortable to have honest explorations of the topic for all kinds of reasons. The BFM Diversity Change Group wishes to create a safe space to have uncomfortable conversations about our white-dominant culture, as white-majority Quakers. Please join us to learn more about how the system of white dominance works and how to get used to difficult conversations that are needed to move forward and become more anti-racist as individuals and as a community.

### **12th: Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share**

Please join us for feast and fellowship in the Groome Building at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, January 12. Potluck is a good way to make connections with people you don't know so well (newcomers and others), so please bring a dish to share and be ready to make some new friends. We have a special 'welcome table' for people who are newer to Meeting and may not know so many people but would like to know more. The Peace & Social Justice Committee is hosting a letter-writing table for Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL).

### **12th: Up-County Worship Group**

Live up-County? Our attendance would be welcome at the Up-County Meeting for Worship 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.

### **12th/26th: 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 two sessions. One will be on Sunday, January 12; the second on Sunday, January 26; both are 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 Wednesday, January 15, at 7:00 p.m., for returning campers and February 1, at 7:00 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](http://www.bymcamps.org) For details about Quaker camps, see: <http://quakersdc.org/node/912>

### **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 on Sunday, January 26, at the rise of Meeting in the meeting room.

## **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](http://www.bymcamps.org)

## **February 7th to 9th: BYM Women's Retreat**

The 2020 Baltimore Yearly Meeting Women's Retreat will be held the weekend of February 7 through February 9 at the Pearlstone Conference Center in Reisterstown MD. The theme is Diligence in Love, Overcoming Isolation. Spend time relaxing, reconnecting, and restoring your joy with workshops, chanting, worship, long walks, and delicious meals. Registration is now open through this link: <https://womensretreat.bym-rsf.net/> Registration ends January 23.

## **February 7th to 9th: See Time: A Contemplative Retreat in the Manner of Friends**

Rita Willett and Catherine Cox will be leading a contemplative retreat in the manner of Friends from Friday, February 7, to Sunday, February 9. During this retreat at Holy Cross Abbey in Berryville VA, participants will experience the distinctly Quaker way of knowing solitude in community. There will be individual time for prayer, reflection, rest, and walks in the rolling fields and woods of the Abbey. There will be opportunities to share in small reflection groups. Space is limited to 13 registrants, so register early. For details: 717-203-1642 or [www.schoolofthespirit.org](http://www.schoolofthespirit.org) Rita is a member of Richmond Friends Meeting; Catherine is a member of Goose Creek Meeting.

## **February 9th: End of Life Care: Five Wishes**

Following up on Bill Dietrich's two presentations on Living in the Gift of Presence and In the Light of Death in September and November, the Pastoral Care Committee will be hosting a session on making our end of life care wishes known well ahead of the time they might be needed. Five Wishes is a very helpful way to alert medical professionals and loved ones about what is important to you in your care. Please come to the common area behind the Multi-purpose Room of the Groome Building on Sunday, February 9, at 9:15 a.m. to learn more about Five Wishes. Copies of the Five Wishes booklet are available in the BFM Library (southwest corner, near the Pendle Hill pamphlets) or see:

<https://fivewishes.org/#>

## **June 28th: Friends General Gathering 2020**

Save the dates of June 28 to July 4, 2020, for Friends General Conference's Annual Gathering at Radford University in Radford VA. The theme is Way Will Open. Registration begins in April at [www.fgcgathering.org](http://www.fgcgathering.org) The Gathering is a great experience, especially for families. There is a flyer on the bulletin board.

## **Committee Notes**

## **Nominating**

Thank you. On December 2, Meeting for Business approved the Nominating Committee's nominations for committee members, officers, and liaisons to other organizations for 2020. The 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 2020. At that meeting, the agenda should include orientation of new members and selection of the clerk (or co-clerks) for the year, if that has not been done already. For details on choosing a clerk and other committee functions, please see the Community Resource Guide on pages 47 to 52 of the 2019 directory.

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.

## **Pastoral Care**

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.

## **Ministry & Worship**

Please be mindful of hearing-impaired Friends. The Ministry & Worship Committee 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](http://www.sidwell.edu)

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Thinking About Race**

Early in Elijah Cummings' congressional service, he wrote a letter to his father, Robert Cummings, thanking him for all that he had done for him. In 1996 or 1997, he asked for and received his father's permission to publish that letter in the Baltimore AFRO American newspaper. It was reprinted in the November 30-December 6, 2019, issue; this is an excerpt.

"You created over and over again positive visions for us. You refused to allow us to be limited to a few square blocks of Baltimore....

"I also thank you for your consistent efforts to protect us from a cruel world. Every time you would come home after working very long hours as a laborer at Davison Chemical, you would sit in

the car in front of the house for at least an hour. Whether it was 20 degrees or 95 degrees, you sat there in the car quietly. We all knew not to disturb you.

“When you got out of the car you displayed a calm and gentle smile. Some years later I asked you why was it that you always sat in the car before coming into the house. You responded by telling me that at work you were often treated badly, discriminated against, and called everything but a child of God. You said that your anger would be so great that you felt a need to calm down so that your family would not become victimized by your anger.

“I thank you for teaching us to give of our time and resources to make the world a better place to live. As children we watched as you constantly helped people in our neighborhood.”