

## **A Guide to What's Inside!**

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### **Query for July: Young People**

**How do we provide young people with explicit guidelines in Quaker faith and practice? In what ways do we honor that of God in children and young people? How do we share our deepest beliefs with children while leaving them free to develop as the spirit of God may lead them?**

### **Query for August: Peace**

**What does it mean to live “in virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars?” What can I do to create a more peaceful and just world? As we work for peace in the world, how are we nourished by peace within and among ourselves? How are we serving as instruments of reconciliation and love?**

### **July/August 2020 Calendar**

**As we all know, these are challenging times in which the future is murkier than usual. For the time being, the Meeting House remains closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ad hoc COVID-19 Committee will be working during the summer to discern a plan for eventual reopening. In the meantime, there have been creative responses to continuing Sunday Meeting for Worship at 11:00 a.m., Tuesday online Bible Study, committee meetings, and other activities via Zoom. We have a stay-at-home mid-week worship on Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m.**

<b>June 28 to July 4</b>			<b>Friends General Conference (via Zoom)</b>
<b>July 5</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Online Bible Study (via Zoom)</b>
<b>July 11</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>1:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Quaker Book Group (via Zoom)</b>
<b>July 12</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Coordinating Gathering, Meeting Room (via Zoom)</b>
<b>July 19</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Meeting for Business (via Zoom)</b>
		<b>7:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Experiment with Light (via e/mail/phone)</b>
<b>July 22</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>2:00 p.m.</b>	<b>BYM Pre-Annual Sessions Workshops (via Zoom)</b>
<b>July 24</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>BYM Pre-Annual Sessions Workshops (via Zoom)</b>
<b>July 28</b>	<b>Tues</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>BYM Retreat (via Zoom)</b>
<b>July 28 to August 2</b>			<b>BYM Annual Gathering (via Zoom)</b>
<b>August 8</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>1:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Quaker Book Group (via Zoom)</b>
<b>August 9</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>12:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Spiritual Coffeehouse (via Zoom)</b>

		<b>2:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Library Committee (via Zoom)</b>
<b>August 13</b>	<b>Thurs</b>	<b>8:30 p.m.</b>	<b>September Newsletter Deadline</b>
<b>August 16</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>7:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Experiment with Light (via e-mail/phone)</b>
<b>August 23</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>9:15 a.m.</b>	<b>Peace &amp; Social Justice Committee (via Zoom)</b>
<b>August 30</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Coordinating Gathering (via Zoom)</b>

### **The Social Concerns Box**

The Social Concerns Box for July and August is for Jubilee Jobs, which since 1981 has placed nearly 25,000 people into marketplace employment. Work for sustenance, dignity, and hope describes the common goals Jubilee Jobs shares with those in need, including those who are homeless, in recovery, ex-offenders, public welfare recipients, and recent immigrants. It provides continuing support for up to two years. See [www.jubileejobs.org](http://www.jubileejobs.org) to learn more and to volunteer.

To donate to the Social Concerns Box or to make a general contribution to the Meeting, please go to: [www.bethesdafriends.org](http://www.bethesdafriends.org) and clearly designate that your contribution is for the social concerns box or is a general contribution. If you prefer, you may send your check, made payable to Bethesda Friends Meeting, to Assistant Treasurer, Bethesda Friends Meeting, 4413 Chalfont Place, Bethesda, MD 20816.

In the May Social Concerns Box, the Asylum Assistance group received \$125.

### **Events**

#### **June 28th to July 4th: Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering**

The FGC Gathering this year will be virtual during the week of June 28 to July 4. The theme is “Sink Down to the Seed Sown in the Heart.” Look up the program for this year at: <https://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering>

#### **July 5th: Online Bible Study**

A Bible Study class using Great Courses lectures on Understanding the New Testament began in February. On the first Sunday of July at 1:00 p.m. we will meet by Zoom to discuss the lectures of the previous month. On the first three Tuesday evenings of July at 8:00 p.m. there will be a Zoom meeting with a new lecture. The dates are July 7, 14, and 21. Lecture notes will also be distributed. Please join anytime.

#### **Meetings for Worship**

Zoom meetings for worship from 11:00 a.m. to noon continue. Simultaneously, Friends who wish to worship in other settings should do so knowing that others are sharing in worship. At noon, all are welcome to open the BFM list serve and share their messages, joys and sorrows, and announcements. To join the Zoom Meeting for Worship, simply click on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/444918914?pwd=ZDh2NVZTOUpmeDhFUGZvanY2dGpGUT09>

You do not have to have downloaded Zoom to join; click on the link and you will see a box that says, “Open with Zoom,” and “Allow.” Click on “Allow.” Then you will be prompted to “open with computer video;” click on that. Then you will be prompted to “open with computer audio;” click on that.

You can also join the Zoom Meeting for Worship by telephone (without video): dial 301-715-8592. When prompted for the Meeting ID, enter 444 918 914 followed by #. You will be prompted to enter your unique participant ID. Press # to skip this step and join the meeting. If you get a busy signal, please keep trying; it simply means someone else is dialing in at the same time.

## **July 11th/August 8th: Quaker Book Group**

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly, in this case, via Zoom, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. on the second Saturday (July 11 and August 8) 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 invited to share announcements, summaries, and thoughts about the readings through an online mailing list.

## **July 12th/August 30th: 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 1:00 p.m., probably via Zoom, on Sunday, July 12; and another on Sunday, August 30.

## **July 19th: Meeting for Business**

On Sunday, July 19 at 9:00 a.m. Bethesda F(f)riends will consider various business items via Zoom. 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. On the agenda this month are a report from the Book Table and the ad hoc Committee to Nominate the Nominating Committee.

## **July 19th/August 16th: 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 the summer, on Sunday, July 19, and Sunday, August 16, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. People will listen to the prompts on their own at their own homes. There will be a phone call or e-mail reminder at about 7:15 p.m. followed by a phone or e-mail check-in at about 8:30 p.m. If there is a change, the information will be available in the weekly bulletin.

## **July 22nd & 24th/July 28th to August 2nd: July 22nd, July 24th, July 29th to 31st: Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions**

Annual Sessions, normally held in early August, have been canceled as an in-person gathering. Instead, there will be a variety of virtual/online opportunities for Friends to meet together via Zoom. The theme this year is "Courage, Faith, and Hope to Love Across Our Differences." Half of the workshops will be held early, on Wednesday, July 22 (from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.), and Friday, July 24 (from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.) Others will be on Wednesday through Friday, July 29 to 31. The "opening retreat" will be on Tuesday, July 28, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and will be led by Margaret Benefiel of our Meeting. For details, see: <https://www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession>

BYM Camps have been canceled for the summer but are available for rental by groups of no more than eight. For details, see: [www.bymcamps.org/summer-cabin-rentals/](http://www.bymcamps.org/summer-cabin-rentals/)

## **August 9th: Virtual Spiritual Coffeehouse**

On Sunday, August 9, at rise of meeting we will continue with the Zoom session and create space for the spirit to speak to the community at a Virtual Spiritual Coffeehouse. During this time you are encouraged to share writings, poems, artwork, music, photography, and anything else (your own or that of others) that speaks to your spirit. Offerings are encouraged but not required.

## Committee Notes

### Pastoral Care: Holding People in the Light

The Pastoral Care Committee would like to extend two invitations to people at BFM related to holding others in the Light and being held in the Light. The invitations are to become a part of informal spiritual support groups. We have had some experience with this in earlier years when a member was undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer and when another member and her family were dealing with her brain tumor.

Recently a new group has formed in support of someone coping with pancreatic cancer and treatment. The daily centering and focusing of healing light on Brian and Tia has been deeply moving and helpful to them and to the group.

The success of the group raises further questions:

1) Are there others in the Meeting who would like to be held in the Light on a daily basis? If you feel such spiritual support would be helpful, please let someone on Pastoral Care know, either your personal friendly ear or the clerks of Pastoral Care. We have already had one response to this invitation, with a new group forming to hold an additional person in the light.

2) Are there people in our Meeting who might want to participate in holding others in the Light on a daily basis or who might already be doing so? As new groups may be formed in support of a particular person or family, we want to be able to let you know.

Please note that the purpose in extending these invitations is to enlarge and enhance our capacities to give and receive spiritual support. And responding to them originates in our hearts and evolves organically, not because it is something we ought to do or would be good to do or Pastoral Care says let's do it. On the other hand, the current process has been helped immeasurably by having a specific focus, by our knowing who else is in the group, by getting weekly updates, and by being able to remind one another of the time we had set aside for this.

We look forward to hearing from you in response to the two invitations: Would you like to be held in the light on a daily basis by a small group in Meeting? Would you like to be someone who is providing spiritual support to others in Meeting in this way?

### Peace & Social Justice

Writing Postcards. As we await our return to the Meeting House, we can still keep up our monthly postcard-writing initiative. If you are inclined to write a card or letter to legislators on a pressing issue, this month Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) asks us to call on Congress to address the broken American policing system by passing the Justice in Policing Act. You will find more information at this link:

[https://fcnل.quorum.us/campaign/25330/?utm\\_campaign=contacts&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=ak&utm\\_term=12779.209196.st2\\_ty](https://fcnل.quorum.us/campaign/25330/?utm_campaign=contacts&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ak&utm_term=12779.209196.st2_ty)

Here is suggested language: Please support the Justice in Policing Act to advance racial justice. This bill would ban the use of chokeholds, institute a national "necessary" use of force standard, end the militarization of civilian police departments, and implement other badly needed police reforms. Thank you for your support

Safeguarding Our Elections. At its committee meeting (via Zoom) on Sunday, May 24, the Peace & Social Justice Committee agreed to focus on safeguarding everyone's right to vote and getting everyone's vote counted. At this point, this involves supporting the work of four nonpartisan organizations that have been active in this field and encouraging others in Meeting to do so. The four organizations are:

The League of Women Voters:

<https://www.lwv.org/covid-elections-fund>

Common Cause:

<https://www.commoncause.org/responding-to-covid-19/>

The Brennan Center for Justice:

<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/dirty-tricks-eight-falsehoods-could-undermine-2020-election>

Reclaim Our Vote which focuses on minorities across the US:

(<https://actionnetwork.org/forms/reclaim-our-vote-signup>)

## **Outreach & Communications**

Those wishing to send messages to approximately 180 people in the BFM community can do so via the BFM list serve. These are for more personal messages. Messages about BFM events and other official announcements are best sent to the editor for forwarding to approximately 350 participants in the BFM community. Both can be reached through the contact information on the BFM website: [www.bethesdafriends.org](http://www.bethesdafriends.org)

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Thinking About Race**

The following is from an email that the National Museum of African-American History (NMAAHC) sent out on June 1, 2020. It includes a portal with tools for people wanting to have conversations about race, racism, anti-racism, bias and more.

“From the recent racial altercation in Central Park to the deadly shooting of jogger Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia; to acts of police brutality resulting in the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and other African Americans; to the protests these deaths have provoked in cities around the country; the rash of racially charged incidents has prompted the Museum to move up the release date of its powerful new web portal ‘Talking About Race.’

“‘Talking About Race’ provides digital tools, online exercises, video instructions, scholarly articles, and more than 100 multimedia resources tailored for educators, parents, and caregivers, as well as individuals committed to racial equality. In releasing this resource now, we hope to help individuals and communities foster constructive dialogues on one of the nation’s most challenging issues: racism, and its corrosive impact.

“Since opening the Museum, the number one question we are asked is how to talk about race, especially with children,” said Spencer Crew, NMAAHC interim director. “We recognize how difficult it is to start that conversation. But in a nation still struggling with the legacies of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and white supremacy, we must have these tough conversations if we have any hope of turning the page and healing. This new portal is a step in that direction.” Here is the link:

<https://www.si.edu/newsdesk/releases/statement-secretary-lonnie-g-bunch>