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November 2021 Calendar

Sunday Meeting for Worship is held at 11:00 a.m. in a hybrid format. Most friends participate via Zoom. Some friends participate in person outdoors at the Sidwell Friends Lower School. (See guidelines under events.) Unless otherwise indicated, all of the other following events are virtual.

2	Tues	7:00 p.m.	Comparative Religions Study Group (every Tuesday)
3	Wed	8:00 p.m.	Mid-Week Worship (check in by email every Wednesday)
6/7	Sat/Sun		Junior Young Friends (Middle Schoolers) Conference
6	Sat	4:00 p.m.	Committee Day: Nominating Committee
7	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business (All invited)
		3:00 p.m.	Walkathon for the Homeless
11	Thurs	6:00 p.m.	Committee Day: Child Care Committee
13	Sat	1:30 p.m.	Quaker Book Group
		8:30 p.m.	December Newsletter Deadline
14	Sun	9:30 a.m.	Exploring & Deepening Our Quaker Faith & Practice
		9:30 a.m.	Committee Day: Religious Education
		12:30 p.m.	Friends & the Environment Conversation
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light (via e-mail/phone, Zoom sharing)
17/18	Wed/Thurs		FCNL's Quaker Public Policy Institute
19 to 21,	Fri to Sun		FCNL's Annual Meeting
19/21	Fri to Sun		Pendle Hill: Friends' Decision-Making & Clerking
20	Sat	1:30 p.m.	Spiritual Formation Group
21	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Committee Day: Pastoral Care
		9:15 a.m.	Committee Day: Ministry & Worship, Stewardship & Fin.
		9:30 a.m.	Committee Day: Outreach & Communications
26 to 28,	Fri to Sun		Young Friends (High Schoolers) Conference
28	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Peace & Social Justice Committee
		1:00 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light (via e-mail/phone, Zoom sharing)

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

Query for November: Meetings for Worship

In what ways do I prepare my heart and mind to receive the power of God's presence and love? How does worship deepen my relationship with God? How is this inspiration carried over into my daily life? Are our meetings for worship held in expectant waiting for Divine guidance? How do activities of our Meeting find their inspiration in worship? In what ways does worship uphold Meeting activities?

Social Concerns Box

A Wider Circle is the recipient for the Social Concerns Box in November. It is a local non-profit organization that assists individuals and families moving out of shelters to more stable living situations. A Wider Circle also offers intensive courses on job skills, financial planning, stress management, nutrition, and parenting. Its mission is to end poverty. Anyone in need of help can find it there. Each year, A Wider Circle furnishes the homes of more than 4,600 families (through donated items), helping to create the stability and dignity that everyone deserves. After A Wider Circle receives or picks up your donated item, it only takes about 24 to 48 hours for it to find a new home. They serve more than 3,000 individuals each year through their Professional Development Center. Earlier this year the BFM Ad Hoc Racial Justice Committee selected A Wider Circle as one of the 'Support Racial Justice' grant recipients for its new Family Success Center in Ward 8 of the District of Columbia. For details: <https://awidercircle.org>

The September Social Concerns box for the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund received \$16,696.92.

Religious Education for Children

The Religious Education Committee is still anticipating the start of First Day School classes, but we don't know when it can be done safely, following all Covid-mandated protocols and any guidelines set by Sidwell Friends School. In the meantime, we have organized the Walk-a-thon for the Homeless on Sunday, November 7, at 3:00 p.m. (See below for details.)

Events

2nd/9th/16th/30th: Comparative Religions

In November, the Comparative Religions group will concentrate on Hinduism, using the Great Courses lecture series: Religions of the Axial Age. We will meet once a week by Zoom on Tuesdays, at 7:00 p.m., for a half-hour lecture with an additional half-hour discussion, skipping the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. A group of 8 to 10 has been meeting, and we greatly enjoy the fellowship as much as the lessons.

3rd/10th/17th/24th: Mid-week Worship

Over-zoomed? Join BFM Friends' "low tech" email mid-week worship on Wednesdays from 8:00 to 8:30 p.m. Each of us worships in our homes without video or audio. While some simply join in spirit, those wishing to touch base with the others receive emails at the start and end of worship. At rise of meeting, email participants are invited to worship-share via reply-all with the evening's email group.

6th/7th: Junior Young Friends Conference

From Saturday, November 6, at 11:00 a.m., until noon on Sunday, November 7, Junior Young Friends (6th to 8th graders) will gather at Richmond Friends Meeting (COVID permitting). The youth program of Baltimore Yearly Meeting sponsors a series of weekend retreats for 6th to 8th graders (Junior Young Friends or JYFs). JYF conferences or "cons" are held at different Quaker Meetinghouses throughout the school year. Cons are a fun way to see friends from other Meetings or camp, make new friends, and retreat from the pressures of pre-teen life, while still developing skills around living in community and having a lot of fun.

Sunshine Klein, the BYM Youth Programs Manager, and Ana Phillips, the JYF Assistant, facilitate these weekends. When registration is open, the link will be on the following site: https://www.bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/yutes/

7th: Meeting for Business

On Sunday, November 7, at 9:00 a.m. Bethesda F(f)riends will consider various business items at its Zoom Meeting for Business. 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 Library Committee and the auditors. Please join us if you can.

7th//14th/21st/28th: Meeting for Worship

Bethesda Friends worship together each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. Friends can participate remotely via Zoom, or meet in person outdoors on the Sidwell Friends Lower School campus.

Participating in worship via Zoom. People wishing to join Meeting for Worship remotely can do so via Zoom. Use the contact us form in order to get the Zoom link.

Outdoor worship. Friends are invited to gather in person for Meeting for Worship under the breezeway or tent between the Manor House and the Groome Building on the Sidwell Friends Lower School campus. The following COVID rules apply to those attending in person:

- You must be vaccinated against COVID-19.
- You must wear a mask and maintain social distancing.
- You must self-screen based on COVID symptoms or exposure. You may not attend in-person Meeting for Worship if you have a fever, have COVID symptoms, have tested positive for COVID, or have been exposed in the past 10 days to an individual testing positive for, or displaying symptoms of, COVID.
- You must sign in on a simple sign-in sheet.
- You must notify BFM promptly if you have a positive test after attending in person. BFM will provide notice to others who attended the same meeting of the COVID case (but will not identify the person testing positive).

Playground Supervision is available for children ages three years and up during outdoor Meeting for Worship on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. Two paid childcare providers will supervise play at the upper playground. Children should wear masks and bring their own water bottles.

7th: Walk-a-thon for the Homeless

On Sunday, November 7, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., we continue the meaningful tradition of supporting the Interfaith Works housing program (<https://www.iworksmc.org/>) with our annual Walk-a-thon to Help the Homeless, an important demonstration of our Quaker faith and activism. All are welcome to join us for a socially-distanced and masked walk. We will start at the bottom of the driveway at the corner of Edgemoor and Beverly for the safe, outdoor event.

13th: Quaker Book Group

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly, via Zoom from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. In November, it meets on November 13. The book will be *The Light of their Consciences: The Early Quakers in 1646-1666 in Britain* by Rosemary Moore. 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.

14th: Exploring and Deepening Our Quaker Faith & Practice

Do you sometimes wish you could have a deeper conversation with others about their experience in Meeting for Worship? Are you curious about what draws people to Quaker Meeting, and about how their Quaker faith and practice informs their lives? Would you like to feel a deeper connection spiritually to others in the Meeting?

Ministry & Worship is hosting an hour-long discussion of Quaker faith and practice on the second Sunday of the month. The November session will take place on November 14, at 9:30 a.m., via Zoom. We will watch a short video from Quaker Speak entitled “Quakers and the Still Small Voice.” Then we will share our responses to it. These sessions are intended for those new to the Meeting as well as for those looking to deepen their experience and their sense of connection with others. For the Zoom link, use the contact us form.

14th: Friends & the Environment

At the rise of meeting on Sunday, November 14, the Zoom session will continue for those interested in discussing the topic of Friends and the Environment. This is just two days after world leaders conclude their critical climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland. People from BFM’s Environmental Sustainability Group will provide an update on the important work that Friends have undertaken on climate and other environmental issues across the country and around the world. Then the group will discuss ways that the BFM community might address climate and related environmental challenges.

14th/28th: 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 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. All are welcome to participate. First-time participants have found the process quite easy to follow and richly rewarding.

This is an invitation to two sessions. One will be on Sunday evening, November 14, and the other on November 28, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Starting at 7:30 p.m., you can follow the prompts at home and write or draw responses you have experienced during those prompts. Here is the link to the prompts:

<https://www.experiment-with-light.org.uk/modindos.mp3> There will be an email reminder at about 7:15 p.m. followed by a phone or email check-in at about 8:30 p.m. If you would like to worship-share from your meditation experience and want to join in a Zoom gathering, please use the contact us form.

17th to 21st: FCNL Quaker Public Policy Institute & Annual Meeting

The theme of the Friends Committee on National Legislation's annual gathering is "Choose Hope. Work for Justice" and will be presented on line. The meeting will take place Wednesday, November 17, to Sunday, November 21, with the Quaker Public Policy Institute from November 17 to 18, and the Annual Meeting from November 19 to 21. By meeting online, Friends who have been unable to travel to Washington, D.C. in the past will be able to participate. Here is the link for information and registration: <https://www.fcnl.org/events/annualmeeting2021>

19th to 21st: Pendle Hill Course on Friends' Decision-Making & Clerking

Pendle Hill is offering a weekend course on Zoom with Steve Mohlke on the topic of Friends' Decision-Making & Clerking. It will be from Friday at 4:00 p.m. through Sunday at 11:00 a.m. NB: The registration deadline is November 2. This is an opportunity for both new and experienced clerks of Friends' meetings and committees to meet and think together about the role of the presiding clerk. It is expected that each person will leave the weekend with new energy and enthusiasm for being a clerk, feeling well-grounded in both the theoretical and the practical. To register:

<https://pendlehill.org/events/friends-decision-making-and-clerking-participating-in-meetings-for-business-with-joy-and-confidence-2/?bblinkid=254293547&bbemailid=34008372&bbejrid=2097650338>

26th to 28th: Young Friends Conference

Young Friends conferences offer a sanctuary from the frenzied lives of the teens (high schoolers) who attend. The community has become an important stepping stone on the way to maturity and spiritual recognition. The drive for leadership that self-governance creates is of utmost importance to the community and its members. Exposure to this kind of responsibility is something that helps participants grow into more developed and more self-aware contributing members of society. The atmosphere created through many years of Young Friends' strength and wisdom is a spiritually loving and welcoming home for the members of the community. It's a place where teens have fun and where everyone is loved. When a Young Friend is at a conference, he or she is always being held in the Light. This empathetic love between peers is what initiates the celebration of community, that occurs at every conference. As participants hold hands without speaking, there is a deep connection. In the Young Friends community, participants learn to live the testimonies beyond memorizing them. There will be a Young Friends Conference the weekend of November 26 to 28,

possibly in Richmond VA (COVID permitting). Here is the link for registration: https://www.bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/yutes/yfs/yfcon.html

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 on Sunday, November 28, at 1:00 p.m., via Zoom, in preparation for the Meeting for Business on December 5.

Committee Notes

Outreach & Communications

Many thanks to the organizers of the successful game night on September 19. Great fun was had by all who came and we are looking forward to the next one. It offered an opportunity to get to know people in the BFM community better.

Youth Safety

Thanks to the work of the previous members of the Youth Safety Committee, we have brought our Youth Safety Policies up to date. Providing a safe space for young people is more than having lovely policies in place. It involves having most adults in the community take online Youth Safety Training. The following link is to a program, which only takes about an hour to complete: <https://mcpsmd.catalog.instructure.com/browse/public/volunteers> At the end, you are given a test and a certificate to show you have taken the training. That certificate needs to be forwarded to the clerk of the Youth Safety Committee.

Stewardship & Finance

In this season of giving thanks, let us remember that Bethesda Friends Meeting depends on the generosity of its members and attenders. All of the Meeting's activities – including child care and pastoral care, as well as its contributions to Quaker organizations and others – are matters of spiritual identity and shared commitment. None of it can happen without financial contributions from the people in this community of seekers. Of course, some of us have limited income, heavy expenses, or both, but contributions in any amount are always needed and deeply appreciated. Please donate as generously as possible either online at:

<https://www.bethesdafriends.org/Donate-Online-Now> or by check. Checks should be made payable to Bethesda Friends Meeting and mailed to BFM Assistant Treasurer, 3050 Military Road, NW, Apt. 834, Washington, DC 20015.

Peace & Social Justice

FCNL asks us to urge our senators and representative to support the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States Act (H.R. 5444/S. 2907).

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Christian churches collaborated with the government to create hundreds of boarding schools for Native American children. The conditions at these schools, more than 30 of them run by Quakers, were unspeakable. As people of faith, we must call on

Congress to push the Truth and Healing Commission forward. It is vital to ground our advocacy efforts in an honest history of Quakers' oppression of Indigenous people.

The bipartisan legislation would establish the first formal commission in United States history on Indian boarding schools to investigate and document policies, assimilation practices, attempted termination of cultures and languages of Indigenous peoples, and human rights violations that took place at hundreds of faith-run institutions.

Please do whatever you can by using one of the templates found at this link:
https://fcn.quorum.us/campaign/35660/?utm_campaign=contacts&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ak&utm_term=19576.209196.tRR2Du

Meeting Notes

Thinking About Race

In the summer 2021 issue of *Fellowship*, the journal of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Rev. Jason Carson Wilson, M.Div, makes the case for looking closely at what violence and non-violence mean and where, respectively, they may make sense. The article, pp. 18-20, is entitled "Rioting, Looting, and Not-Necessarily-Nonviolence-Philosophy Violation." See article at:

<https://forusa.org/what-we-do/fellowship-magazine/>

"Like Jesus, King wasn't as meek and mild as some depicted him. (The story goes that a protective Black militia was surrounding his house when Bayard Rustin came round to teach him nonviolence in 1956.) And he'd come to understand that nonviolence wasn't making everyone feel seen or heard. Most importantly, he knew that nonviolence was and is most effective when diverse coalitions put it into practice. In other words, White privilege adds power. Black people are often treated differently when walking with White friends.

"As an ordained United Church of Christ social justice minister in Washington, D.C. and Chicago, my ministry has included participating in countless marches and getting arrested in the Senate Gallery. I've seen how the presence of White allies tempers the atmosphere. Things are very different when Black people stand alone...

"Sometimes a small group of Black people riot and loot. They're speaking the language of the unheard. They deserve no condemnation. They are part of us and we are part of them. The Founding Fathers got away with this sort of thing scot-free. Rioting and looting in Boston Harbor led to our nation's formation. Without rioting and looting, this nation wouldn't exist.

"Rustin put it another way: 'When an individual is protesting society's refusal to acknowledge his dignity as a human being, his very act of protest confers dignity on him.' "

Rev. Wilson "serves as Community Renewal Society's first Bayard Rustin Fellow. Wilson is also Bayard Rustin Liberation Initiative (BRLI)'s founding executive director. Find BRLI at <https://www.angelictroublemakers.org/>

College Help for Young Friends

Are you a high school student looking for advice about college? Cathy Henderson is a retired higher education policy analyst and has been volunteering as a college counselor for over 23 years in a high school in Silver Spring. She has also offered this service for free to students in her area over Zoom during the pandemic. She has kindly offered to help out some interested young friends free of charge. If you are a junior or senior in high school who would like to learn about Cathy's services, please contact Sunshine at sunshineklein@bym-rsf.org

Pendle Hill Pamphlet

In October 2021, Pendle Hill published a new pamphlet (#471) called *Living Fellowship Needs Fresh Forms* by Daphne Clement. The Religious Society of Friends has real freedom from a prescribed form in worship. More than many faith groups, the Society has the capacity to adapt to meet the needs of the time. But change can divide us, as can confusion between personal image and real essence. Daphne Clement examines two forms of innovative Quaker fellowship: a recent experiment with daily Zoom worship and the New Lights movement in New Bedford in the nineteenth century. The story of the New Lights illustrates the tension between the authority of tradition and the freedom of continuing revelation. How can we meet each other – in spite of various differences: cultural, personal, political – soul to soul? The pamphlet responds: We can hold each other in the Light. It is the Light that is the source of living fellowship that has held our Society together these hundreds of years. It is real. It is our organizing force. You can order the pamphlet here:

<https://pendlehill.org/product/living-fellowship-needs-fresh-forms/?bblinkid=254293560&bbemailid=34008372&bbejrid=2097650338>