

BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends

P.O. Box 30152, Bethesda, Maryland 20824

301-986-8681 • e-mail: bethesdafrm@igc.org • www.bethesdafriends.org



Bethesda Friends Meeting Newsletter *December 2015*

A Guide to What's Inside!

- 1) [Query: Meetings for Business](#)
- 2) [December Calendar](#)
- 3) [Social Concerns Box](#), p. 2
- 4) [Religious Education for Children](#), p. 2
- 5) [Events](#), pp. 2 - 5
- 6) [Into the Future](#), pp. 5 - 6
- 7) [Committee Notes](#), pp. 6 - 8
 - a. Advancement & Outreach
 - b. Ministry & Worship
 - c. Nominating
 - d. Stewardship & Finance
 - e. Religious Education for Children
 - f. Child Care
 - g. Peace & Social Justice
- 8) [Meeting Notes](#), pp. 8 - 12
- 9) [Peace & Social Justice 2015 Annual Report \(Draft\)](#) pp. 12-13

Query for December: Meetings for Business

Are our Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business held in the spirit of worship, seeking the guidance of God? In what ways do we each take our right share of responsibility in the service of the Meeting?

December 2015 Calendar

Meeting for Worship is at 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. every First Day (except for the first First Day of each month, when Meeting for Business is held at 9:15 a.m.).

5	Sat	10:00 a.m.	BYM Junior Young Friends Conference, Stony Run
		10:30 a.m.	Christmas Celebration Orchestra Rehearsal, Groome Bldg
6	Sun	9:15 a.m.	Meeting for Business

		11:00 a.m.	Christmas Celebration Rehearsal, Multipurpose Rm., G. Bldg.
		12:15 p.m.	Special Holiday Book Sale, Literature Table
		6:30 p.m.	WPH Potluck: Tom Fox, Reflections and Lessons Learned
9	Wed	8:00 p.m.	AIM Action for Children First & Housing, Silver Spring
12	Sat	10:00 a.m.	FMW Shoe Box Project: A Service Opportunity
		2:00 p.m.	Quaker Book Group at the Bethesda Library
13	Sun	11:00 a.m.	Christmas Celebration Rehearsal, Groome Building
		12:15 p.m.	Potluck & Special Holiday Book Sale
		12:30 p.m.	ARE Committee Meeting, Teachers' Lounge Annex
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light
		8:30 p.m.	January Newsletter Deadline
14	Mon	8:00 p.m.	Committee Night
16	Wed	7:30 p.m.	Christmas Celebration Orchestra Rehearsal, Music Room
19	Sat	9:00 a.m.	BFM Service Day: A Wider Circle
20	Sun	9:30 a.m.	Advancement & Outreach Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		9:30 a.m.	Christmas Celebration Orchestra Rehearsal, Music Room
		10:00 a.m.	Christmas Celebration Dress Rehearsal, Groome Building
		12:00 noon	Christmas Celebration, Groome Building
22	Tues	8:00 p.m.	Candlelight Meeting for Worship
29	Tues	1:00 p.m.	Reflections Hike at Friends Wilderness Center

The Social Concerns Box

A Wider Circle is the recipient for the Social Concerns Box in December. 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. In one year, A Wider Circle furnished the homes of more than 13,300 children and adults and delivered more than 400 educational programs. They also recycled more than three million pounds of furniture and home goods. More than 10,000 volunteers came to serve at A Wider Circle in 2013, including members of BFM three times that year.

In October, the Interfaith Housing Coalition, which provides homes and services to homeless families in Montgomery County, was the recipient. A combination of 25 children and their parents walked through the Edgemoor neighborhood on October 18 to highlight the issues of homelessness in the midst of our communities. The walkers' donated \$165, and an additional \$265 was retrieved from the BFM collection box. In the Meeting's budget is an additional contribution of \$700, for a total of \$1,130. These funds will be matched by the Cafritz Fund. The Interfaith Housing Coalition expressed appreciation for our continuing support of their walkathons for the homeless. This was the 13th year we have participated.

Religious Education for Children

The program begins at 11:00 a.m. with children attending the first 15 minutes of Meeting for Worship with their parents.

The program for December is as follows:

Dec. 6: Pageant Practice

Dec. 13: Pageant Practice (not individual classes)

Dec. 20: Christmas Pageant

Dec. 27 & Jan. 3 No classes. However, sign up for child care for K-5th on those dates by December 15. Older children are encouraged to worship in Meeting.

A sign up sheet for parent and Meeting volunteers is posted on the BFM bulletin board. We invite you to join the RE committee, parents, and Meeting volunteers to help make the RE Quaker Leadership & Values program meaningful for children growing up in our Meeting. Are you interested in co-teaching meetings for learning for 4th/5th grade or 6th to 8th grade children? The Religious Education Committee is looking for volunteer teachers who will share teaching responsibilities twice a month. We are also looking for substitute teachers.

Events

5th to 6th: Junior Young Friends Conference

The second Conference for 6th-8th graders will be Saturday to Sunday, December 5 to 6, probably at Stony Run Friends Meeting in Baltimore. It goes from 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, to 11:30 a.m. Sunday, and costs \$40. The phone number during all events is 301-5000-BYM. JYFs should bring a change of clothes, toiletries, sleeping bag, pad, and anything others might enjoy, too, such as a game, musical instrument, or sports equipment. For details:

http://www.bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/jyfs/

Future conferences are:

March 19-20 location TBA

May 13-15 at Shiloh Quaker Camp

August 1-7 at Annual Session

5th, 16th, & 20th: Christmas Pageant Orchestra Rehearsals

Christmas Celebration Orchestra rehearsals are:

- Saturday, December 5, 10:30 a.m. to noon (Groome Building multipurpose room).
- Wednesday, December 16, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. (Music Room, in the basement of the SAM Building, across the courtyard from Meeting).
- Sunday, December 20, 9:30 a.m. (SAM); then 11:00 a.m. "dress rehearsal" (Groome Building multipurpose room); noon performance.

6th: Meeting for Business

On the agenda for Meeting for Business this month are reports from Nominating (final), Advancement & Outreach, and Fellowship & Hospitality. All who come to Meeting for Worship are welcome to attend and participate. Please come if you can, at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, December 6, in the meeting room.

6th/13th: Holiday Book Sale

The BFM book table staff will hold a special holiday sale in the meeting library at the rise of the 11:00 a.m. meeting for worship on Sunday, December 6, and at potluck on Sunday, December 13. We will offer a variety of specially selected new titles for both children and adults that we hope will delight the eye and engage the imagination. Please stop by the table if you can. You may find a holiday gift for a friend, a family member, or even yourself.

6th: WPH Potluck & Dialogue

F(f)riends are invited to a potluck and Quaker dialogue at William Penn House on Sunday, December 6, at 6:30 p.m. Those who knew Tom Fox and his mission in Iraq will talk about their reflections on having known him and lessons learned. Bring a dish to share; family members and friends

are always welcome. WPH is at 515 East Capitol Street SE. WPH is an alcohol and tobacco-free facility. For details: 202-543-5560, byron@WilliamPennHouse.org Also see: www.WilliamPennHouse.org

9th: AIM Action for Children First & Housing

Come to an Action in Montgomery meeting with Montgomery County officials at St. Camillus Catholic Church (1600 St. Camillus Drive in Silver Spring 20903) on Wednesday, December 9, at 8:00 p.m. AIM is planning a mass meeting of as many as 1,000 supporters to show County officials that its members want them to support funding to provide quality after-school programs to five under-served, low-income neighborhood elementary schools; more funding for affordable housing in the county; and approval of a development plan that would allow more affordable housing in the proposed redevelopment of the Westbard Shopping Center in Bethesda. For details: www.actioninmontgomery.org

12th/13th: FMW Shoe Box Project

For many years, Friends Meeting of Washington has filled thousands of shoe boxes (now cake boxes) with items which are especially useful for the homeless in DC. The Shoebox Project has been going for more than 20 years, following a leading by the Peace & Social Concerns Committee. These boxes (about 1200 per year) are distributed at DC shelters and other organizations that serve homeless people. Boxes will be assembled the weekend of December 12 and 13. It has become an amazing undertaking and there are a number of ways for you to help. One way is to help assemble the items on Saturday, December 12, any time between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., at Friends Meeting of Washington, 2111 Florida Avenue, NW, near the Dupont Circle Metro.

12th: Quaker Book Group Meeting

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly, normally on the second Saturday at 2:00 p.m. at Bethesda Public Library (not at Meeting). This month's meeting is scheduled for Saturday, December 12. Newcomers are always welcome!

13th: Experiment With Light Session

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. Firsttime participants find the process quite easy to follow and, often, richly rewarding.

This is an invitation to a session on Sunday evening, December 13, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

19th: BFM Service Day: A Wider Circle

On Saturday, December 19th, please join BFM's Peace & Social Justice Committee in our third annual volunteer day as part of A Wider Circle's Holiday Giving Program, called Hope for the Holidays. A Wider Circle (AWC) is a non-profit organization that assists individuals and families transitioning out of shelters to more stable living situations by providing "basic need items" such as furniture. During the month of December, AWC seeks to make the holidays a time of joy for these families by providing new holiday gifts to them.

Please join us to help assist clients in selecting new holiday gifts in the section of AWC's warehouse that is transformed into "The North Pole" for the month of December. We will then help wrap these gifts. Individuals and families are welcome! Students are especially welcome to help and can get SSL (student service learning) hours for volunteering here. We are planning to volunteer from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. A Wider Circle is at 9159-C Brookville Road, about half way between Silver Spring and

Bethesda, near Grubb Road and East-West Highway. See www.awidercircle.org for details about the organization.

If you are unable to join us but would like to contribute, please consider donating money to the December Social Concerns Box. Or you can take new toys and other items to AWC's North Pole (the earlier in the month, the better)! Needed items (new) for the Holiday Program are games, books, dolls, and more; hats, gloves, and scarves; body lotion, soaps, and other personal care items; gift cards; and kitchen items, towels, blankets, and sheet sets.

20th: BFM's Christmas Celebration

This year's Christmas Celebration, which is a continuation of Meeting for Worship, will be held on Sunday, December 20, at approximately 12:00 noon. At the appropriate time, F(f)riends will be led from the Meeting room into the Groome Building. The First Day School children will present a play. Our orchestra will accompany carols and play Bach's Christmas Oratorio and the overture to Mendelssohn's Elijah. All are welcome. Because there will be an unusually large number of people coming, your contributions of refreshments and goodies will be greatly appreciated.

22nd: Candlelight Meeting for Worship

Please mark your calendars for our annual Candlelight Meeting for Worship at 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 22. During the last 25 years (at least!), Friends have come to appreciate, in the midst of non-stop holiday activity and anxiety, this peaceful hour together. From infants to teens, oldsters and youngsters, all are most welcome. This is a refreshing way to celebrate the season, so please join us.

29th: Friends Wilderness Center

On Tuesday, December 29, the Friends Wilderness Center invites us on a Reflection Hike at a time when the days are beginning to get longer, the holiday peak has passed, and the New Year is approaching. Come fill your lungs with crisp mountain air and your heart with hope and optimism for the coming year. Please see www.friendswilderness.org

FWC is just 1.5 hours from Bethesda on a 1,400-acre tract of land which backs up to the Appalachian Trail in West Virginia.

Into the Future

Planning Ahead

For those who are already planning for the new year, Meetings for Business in the first half of 2016 will be: January 10, February 7, March 6, April 3, May 1, and June 5. For those wishing to attend a committee meeting (all committee meetings except Ministry & Worship, Nominating, and Pastoral Care are open to all), please check with their clerk/s first to confirm when and where they are meeting. Ministry & Worship and Stewardship & Finance are meeting on "Committee Night" which is generally the second Monday after Meeting for Business; ARE, RE, and Pastoral Care meet at 12:30 on the third First Day of the month; Library meets quarterly after potluck; Child Care, Fellowship & Hospitality, and Friendly Eights maintain their own schedules according to their work. Peace & Social Justice meets on the fourth Sunday, at 9:15 a.m. Coordinating gatherings will generally be at the rise of Meeting on the Sundays before Meeting for Business, except for the January Meeting for Business, which will meet electronically (January 31, February 28, March 27, April 24, and May 29).

At this time of transition of committee membership, it is very important for committee clerks to reach out to newly nominated members and invite them to the next committee meeting. It is also very important to designate the new clerks for each committee on or before January 13, so that this information can be included in the new directory and the February newsletter. For those uncertain about

taking on the responsibility of being a clerk, fear not! We have a BFM resource guide for clerks that will answer all your questions, as well as past clerks who will be happy to give guidance to you when you may need it. Note that there will also be funds available for scholarships to Pendle Hill, which often offers excellent workshops on clerking and Quaker leadership.

January 10th, 24th, & 31st: Spiritual State of the Meeting Reflections

In preparing the annual report on the Spiritual State of the Meeting, the Ministry & Worship Committee invites you to reflect on your spiritual experience in the Meeting over the last year and to share your thoughts and concerns. To help focus (but not rigidly control) this process, the committee has articulated queries that arise out of the proposed sale of the Sidwell Friends Lower School property. Friends may reflect on any or all of these queries, as they are led:

- 1: What does it mean to be a spiritual community?
- 2: What is our responsibility to one another as members of the same spiritual community?
- 3: What can I bring to the Meeting in this time of transition to support all of us?
- 4: What are the opportunities to strengthen our spiritual community, as we reflect on this transition? What is my role in identifying these opportunities?

The committee also plans to hold a variety of sessions in which people might develop and share their thoughts, specifically:

January 10: SSOM conversation tables at potluck

January 24, 12:30 p.m.: worship sharing (Meeting Room)

January 31, 9:30 a.m.: worship sharing (Music Room)

Quite apart from these planned sessions, your reflections are welcome at any time and can be conveyed in any format to any member of the committee.

The committee expresses its deep gratitude to everyone for participating in this moment of communal discernment.

January 29th to 31st: BYM Women's Retreat

The BYM Women's Retreat will be held on the weekend of January 29 to 31 with the theme of "Lighten Up: Sharing Light, Love, and Laughter." It will be held at a new location in 2016: Pearlstone Retreat Center in Reisterstown MD, about an hour from Washington. If you have never been to the Women's Retreat, ask anyone who has. It is a totally great weekend. Registration is now being accepted at www.bym-rsf.org For details, see: <http://bymwomensretreat.wix.com/bymwr>

Committee Notes

Advancement & Outreach

Hospitality. We thank the Advancement & Outreach Committee for providing hospitality at the rise of Meeting in December. A&O welcomes newcomers and visitors, helps them connect with Meeting community activities, and furthers community building activities. It also manages BFM publications, including the monthly newsletter, weekly bulletins, directory, website, BFM Service Exchange, and the BFM list serve. It hosts Getting to Know One Another gatherings and Experiment with Light sessions. A&O meets on the third Sunday of the month at 9:30 a.m. in the Teachers' Lounge.

Welcoming. Thanks to all who reach out to help people new to BFM feel at home here. If you are sitting near someone who introduces him/ herself at rise of meeting or seems to be quite new, please introduce yourself and invite them to coffee hour or potluck. Also, please invite him/her to sign the guest book on the hall table. When someone signs the guest book, we send a note of welcome. If someone indicates he/she may be coming back on a regular basis, please ask him/ her to fill out a newcomer card, so we can make a name tag and add them to the mailing list. The cards are available on the hall table and

in the newcomer packets and may be turned in to the head of Meeting or put in the Editor's pocket at the bottom of the stairs.

Ministry & Worship

What Do We Do When It Snows?! In general, there will be Meeting for Worship if the Sidwell Friends Lower School is open. To find out, check: www.sidwell.edu If the meetinghouse is open, whoever comes will hold Meeting for Worship. Those without computers can call someone else who does have one, or the school security office: 202-537-8197.

Nominating

The proposed roster of officers and committee members, effective January 1, 2016, will be presented for approval at Meeting for Business on Sunday, December 6.

Current committee clerks are encouraged to contact the 2016 nominees for their committees, welcome them to the committee, and inform them of the time and place of the first committee meeting of the new year. At that meeting, they should provide orientation for the new members, and select the clerk or co-clerks for the coming year. It is important that all clerks are confirmed by mid-January 2016 in order for committees to begin working on behalf of the BFM community.

Stewardship & Finance

S&F encourages you to support Bethesda Friends Meeting. Each year, the Meeting makes a collective commitment to provide financial support through its adoption of a budget in Meeting for Business.

In October S&F mailed the BFM community the first appeal letter for the \$118,000 July 2015-June 2016 budget. The committee will make only one other appeal for this fiscal year, yet the budget relies on donations of \$116,000. Your contributions make possible the Meeting's activities and our contributions to Quaker causes and peace and social justice concerns.

The recent appeal includes a stamped addressed return envelope for you to send a check and also a form for setting up a periodic automatic donation. Please, participate with a contribution that is generous in relation to your means. Don't let that stamp go to waste!

You also can donate online at www.bethesdafriends.org; put a check or cash in the BFM box on the hall table; or use your own envelope to send your donation to BFM Assistant Treasurer.

Religious Education for Children

On Sunday, November 1, the BFM community collected 98 adult winter coats and 22 youth winter coats, and a dozen hats and mittens/gloves. These gifts to refugees are immeasurable. In the Religious Education class that day, 11 young people discussed Quaker values of compassion, human rights, helping those in need, and equality of all people of all religions. A member explained his lifelong work with international refugees and helped frame the Syrian crisis to the children. His son was so proud to have his father co-teach the class. The children were shown maps of the Mideast, maps of refugee camps, pictures of the camps, pictures of the long walks of the 11 million Syrians of the 22 million total who have left their homes. Three children came who hadn't come previously.

The youth coats went directly to a staff member of the George Mason University Peace and Conflict Resolution Center who had started a school in Jordan at the border of Syria in one the refugee camps. A few coats had loving notes from the kids in the pockets which the teachers will translate to the Syrian children.

One family was so inspired by our Syrian refugee coat drive that they initiated a coat drive at the local elementary school. They collected 78 coats, 70 pairs of gloves, and a massive bag of school supplies. These will be flown over in December.

The adult coats went to the International Refugee Organization in Riverdale MD. Maryland receives about 30 refugee families each month. For example, this month refugees arrived alone or as a family from Syria, Iraq, Ethiopia, Burma, Bhutan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Our work inspired the Youth Coordinator of Friends Meeting of Washington, to do a coat drive. Isn't the synergy wonderful?

Child Care

Child care will be provided for children during Meeting for Worship on Sunday, December 27, and Sunday, January 3. The child care providers have said they would be available then. It is very helpful to know ahead of time if you will need child care for your child.

Peace & Social Justice

Attached to the newsletter is a list of organizations that receive relatively small contributions from our Meeting on the recommendation of the Peace & Social Justice Committee, or the Stewardship & Finance Committee, in anticipation that at this time of year some people in Meeting would make individual contributions to them. BFM contacts are in parentheses.

Meeting Notes

Quaker Motto Calendars

Quaker Motto Calendars will soon be available on our hall table. They have been produced by the Scattergood family since 1884. Please take one and enjoy it. About 30,000 are distributed each year.

Peace Notes

For years now BFM has been engaged in work dealing with mass incarceration and justice reform. More recently the Black Lives Matter movement has also been a part of the momentum inspiring change in these areas. For those interested in diving more deeply into discussions on race, there are two regular opportunities in the area that members of the Peace & Social Justice Committee attend. One is the Race Discussion Table every Tuesday afternoon at Potter's House, and the other is A Continuing Talk on Race held at the 14th & V Busboys and Poets on the first Sunday of every month. The River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation holds a Black Lives Matter vigil every Friday at 6:30 p.m. Several members of the BFM community have partnered with the Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (<http://www.ma4jr.org>) to speak up politically on these issues. Finally, for those who would like to read more, members of the Peace & Social Justice Committee have found the following books particularly useful: *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander (2010);

Building a Movement to End the New Jim Crow by David Hunter (2015); *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (2014); and *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015).

Green Notes

"It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?" —William Penn, 1693

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW), the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), and Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) have developed a shared Quaker statement on "facing the

challenge of climate change.” They invite all Monthly and Yearly Meetings and other Quaker organizations to join in the statement.

The statement recognizes the personal and collective responsibility to respond to anthropogenic climate change and calls for fair, sufficient, and effective international action. The text of the Shared Quaker Statement and an accompanying letter can be found at:

<http://www.quano.org/resource/2015/9/quaker-statement-climate-change>.

At last count, more than 60 Friends’ organizations worldwide have signed onto the climate change statement, including Baltimore Yearly Meeting and several individual meetings within BYM. Bethesda Friends Meeting has received a request from BYM’s Unity with Nature Committee that we consider how we might respond to the climate change statement, so the issue may come before us in the near future.

According to BFM’s most recent Spiritual State of the Meeting, “living in right relationship with nature is one of the great moral issues of our times” and “our meeting would grow spiritually and communally by addressing these environmental issues.”

Thinking About Race

Ta-Nehisi Coates’ recent book, *Between the World and Me*, is written as a letter to his 15-year-old son. From pages 90-91:

“This need to be always on guard was an unmeasured expenditure of energy, the slow siphoning of the essence. It contributed to the fast breakdown of our bodies. So I feared not just the violence of this world but the rules designed to protect you from it, the rules that would have you contort your body to address the block [“the street”], and contort again to be taken seriously by colleagues, and contort again so as not to give the police a reason. All my life I’d heard people tell their black boys and black girls to “be twice as good,” which is to say “accept half as much.” These words would be spoken with a veneer of religious nobility, as though they evidenced some unspoken quality, some undetected courage, when in fact all they evidenced was the gun to our head and the hand in our pocket. This is how we lose our softness. This is how they steal our right to smile.”

Peace & Social Justice Organizations Supported by BFM in FY 14/15:

A Wider Circle
9159 Brookville Road
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Action in Montgomery (AIM)
8900 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI)
1001 Park Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63104
(checks to Friends Peace Teams/AGLI)

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

AFSC/DC Peace & Economic Justice Project
1822 R Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Bethesda Cares
7728 Woodmont Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20814

Bethesda Help
P.O. Box 34094
Bethesda, MD 20827-0094

C & O Canal Association
PO Box 366
Glen Echo, MD 20812

CASA of Maryland
310 Tulip Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Center for Conscience & War
1830 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009

The Family Place
3309 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
245 2nd Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Friends of Ramallah Meeting
c/o Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
1515 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Quaker UN Office (QUNO)
777 United Nations Plaza, Floor 5
New York, NY 10017

H.O.P.E. Haiti
228 South Plymouth Avenue
Rochester, NY 14608

Interfaith Housing Coalition
c/o Interfaith Works
114 Montgomery Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Interfaith Works
114 Montgomery Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Jubilee Jobs
2712 Ontario Road, NW

Washington, DC 20009-2154

Literacy Council of Montgomery County
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 320
Rockville, MD 20850

Magarama II Peace Primary School
c/o African Great Lakes Initiative
1001 Park Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63104
(checks to Friends Peace Teams/AGLI- Magarama II)

Manna Food Center
9311 Gaither Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund
c/o Friends Meeting of Washington
2111 Florida Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008
(checks to FMW/Simpson Scholarship Fund)

Nicaragua - Escuela Barrio San Jose de la Canada
c/o 3210 Rolling Road
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Nurturing Minds/Sega Girls School
PO Box 144
Valley Forge, PA 19481

ProNica
130 19th Avenue SE
St. Petersburg, FL 33705

Ramallah Friends School
c/o Friends United Meeting
Attn: World Ministries
101 Quaker Hill Drive
Richmond, IN 47374

Right Sharing of World Resources
101 Quaker Hill Drive
Richmond, IN 47374

Rock Creek Conservancy
4300 Montgomery Ave #304
Bethesda, MD 20814

Seeds of Peace
370 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Shepherd's Table
8210 Dixon Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

TASSC: Torture Abolition Survivors Support
Coalition International
4121 Harewood Road, NE, Suite B
Washington, DC 20017

Women for Women International
4455 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20008

Peace & Social Justice 2015 Annual Report (Draft)

The Peace & Social Justice Committee (P&SJ) has as its mission to promote the prospects for peace by deepening the Meeting's engagement in peace building, social justice, and environmental stewardship, by empowering all of us as individuals to put our faith into action.

Advocacy, education, and financial support of community groups are among the ways the committee pursues its mission. We are appreciative of the many ways Bethesda Friends are involved, even if they are not formally a part of the P&SJ Committee. Last year, the committee agreed to focus the bulk of its energy on two issues: ending mass incarceration and environmental sustainability.

Ending Mass Incarceration. The committee was well-represented at most Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR) and BYM Working Group on Racism meetings and formally agreed to be a sponsoring organization of MAJR. MAJR sponsored a number of bills before the Maryland legislature in 2015; some of them became law. The most important one set up a Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council to thoroughly review current practices in Maryland and recommend best practices. We co-sponsored a well-attended forum with Cedar Lane UU on the Montgomery County re-entry program (from prison) and set up a Smart Card Fund to help returning citizens with transportation critical to finding employment. A few of us are corresponding with people who are currently in prison. We sponsored a three-session reading and reflection on the pamphlet *Building a Movement to End the New Jim Crow*.

Environmental Sustainability. Working closely with Adult Religious Education and the Yearly Meeting Unity with Nature Committee, the committee sponsored three forums: on Right Relationship with the Environment, on healthy and sustainable diets (by Margaret Fisher of Alexandria Meeting), and on how to expand efforts to address climate change (by a representative from Interfaith Power & Light). Phillip Bogdonoff organized two public workshops on carbon sequestration. We recruited 18 BFM households to the Compost Crew program (recycling kitchen clippings and other compostable materials).

Service Days. We held five service days (four at A Wider Circle and one with the Rock Creek Conservancy), thanks to the organizing efforts of Melissa Merideth and Rick Morgan.

Outreach Efforts. We have been pleased with consistent outreach efforts in the BFM newsletter with both Peace Notes (thanks to Lauren Brownlee) and Green Notes. Two special initiatives were to support housing for a homeless man in cooperation with Bethesda Presbyterian and BFM's joining the Olive Oil Ministry in support of Palestinian farmers and A Tent of Nations. We also co-sponsored a forum on Syria with Peace Action.

Special Fund-Raising Efforts. We are delighted by BFM's increasing participation in the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund. As in the past, we co-sponsored with Religious Education the

Mini-walkathon for the Interfaith Housing Coalition. We celebrated Thanksgiving in February with Dian John's delicious cooking and hosting. Our special thanks to her and her family. P&SJ representatives participated in the grantsmaking process in the spring.

New Energy & Synergy. In general, we sense a lot of new energy and synergy relating to P&SJ issues and concerns both within the Meeting and in society in general. Within the Meeting, this is especially true of the RE's new focus on Quaker Values & Leadership.