

# BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

*Religious Society of Friends*

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## May 2016 Newsletter, Website version

### May 2016 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 9:00 a.m. and Meeting for Worship at 11:00 a.m.).

1	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business: Child care is provided
		11:00 a.m.	Qkr Values & Leadership: Worship & Service: Casey Trees
		6:15 p.m.	WPH Potluck & Dialogue: "Making a Killing"
8	Sun	9:30 a.m.	ARE: Bill Dietrich's Spiritual Journey, Music Room
		11:00 a.m.	Qkr Values & Leadership: Worship & Classes
		12:30 p.m.	Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light at Jane Coe's House
9	Mon	8:00 p.m.	Committee Night for M&W and S&F
13	Fri		BYM Spiritual Formation Retreat, Kearneysville WV
		7:00 p.m.	BYM Jr Young Fds Conference at Shiloh Quaker Camp
		8:30 p.m.	June Newsletter Deadline (301-320-5083)
14	Sat	10:00 a.m.	Family Camp Weekend: Catoctin Qkr Camp (301-774-7663)
		10:00 a.m.	Friends Wilderness Center Work Day, WV
		3:00 p.m.	BFM Book Group at the Bethesda Library
15	Sun	9:30 a.m.	Religious Education Committee, Teachers' Lounge Annex
		9:30 a.m.	Advancement & Outreach Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		9:45 a.m.	Friendly Eights Committee, Science Room

		11:00 a.m.	<b>Qkr Values &amp; Leadership: Worship &amp; Meal Preparation</b>
		12:30 p.m.	<b>Adult Religious Ed. Committee, Teachers' Lounge Annex</b>
		12:30 p.m.	<b>Pastoral Care Committee, Teachers' Lounge</b>
22	Sun	9:15 a.m.	<b>Peace &amp; Social Justice Committee, Teachers' Lounge</b>
		9:30 a.m.	<b>ARE: Understanding Quaker Decision-Making</b>
		11:00 a.m.	<b>Qkr Values &amp; Leadership: Worship &amp; Classes</b>
		12:30 p.m.	<b>Environmental Sustainability Group, Meeting Room</b>
		1:30 p.m.	<b>BFM Service Day at A Wider Circle</b>
		7:30 p.m.	<b>Experiment with Light at the Nielsen-Jones's house</b>
27	Fri	7:00 p.m.	<b>BYM Young Friends Conference (Location TBD)</b>
29	Sun	9:30 a.m.	<b>ARE &amp; A&amp;O: Experiment with Light</b>
		11:00 a.m.	<b>Qkr Values &amp; Leadership: Playground Supervision</b>
		12:30 p.m.	<b>Coordinating Gathering</b>

### **Query for May: Outreach**

**As the way opens, how do I share Friends' principles with others? In what ways do I make everyone, including newcomers, feel welcome in meetings for worship? How can I find ways to encourage a sense of community within the Meeting?**

### **Social Concerns Box**

The May Social Concerns box is for the Literacy Council of Montgomery County, an adult literacy organization that has been serving Montgomery County for 52 years. The Literacy Council teaches functional literacy skills to 1,500 adults through one-on-one tutoring and classroom instruction. Each year, over 700 trained volunteer tutors provide basic literacy and ESL instruction to approximately 900 adult learners, and 600 additional learners participate in intensive ESL classes. There are typically over 100 adults on the waiting list for services. Contributions help support LCMC's free and low-cost programs, and enable program expansion so that more Montgomery County residents can improve their English literacy and, thus, their lives. For details: 301-610-0030 or [www.literacycouncilmcmd.org](http://www.literacycouncilmcmd.org) Stacey FitzSimmons (301-951-1820), a LCMC volunteer and former Board member, can tell you more.

In February, we raised \$399 for Hunger Relief in Montgomery County. Recipients include Bethesda Help, Bethesda Cares, Manna Food Center, and Sheppard's Table.

### **Religious Education for Children in May**

1st: First Day School: Quaker Values and Leadership Let Your Life Speak Service Activity: 11:00 a.m. Cene Ketcham from Casey Trees will be coming to meet with the children (all ages welcome), talk about the work of Casey Trees, and lead the children in a tree identification activity. Casey Trees is a nonprofit organization in Washington DC, whose mission is to restore, enhance, and protect the tree canopy in the nation's capital.

8th: First Day School: Quaker Values and Leadership Classes. 11:00 a.m. Children K-8 attend Meeting for Worship in the Meetinghouse with their parents for the first 15 minutes and then attend class.

15th: First Day School: Quaker Values and Leadership Let Your Life Speak Activity: Bethesda Men's Shelter Meal Preparation. On Sunday, May 15, children and adults will cook an entree for the Bethesda Homeless Shelter supper from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

22nd: First Day School: Quaker Values and Leadership Classes. 11:00 a.m. Children K-8 attend Meeting for Worship in the Meetinghouse with their parents for the first 15 minutes and then attend class.

29th: Playground Supervision.

## **Events**

### **1st: Meeting for Business**

Please come if you can, at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 1, to Meeting for Business in the meeting room. All are welcome to attend and participate. It is an opportunity to meet worship-fully and for business in a special way. On the agenda this month are the first reading of our budget for the fiscal year beginning on July 1 and reports from the Pastoral Care and Library Committees. A de-tailed agenda will be e-mailed before May 1. Please note that childcare is provided for children up through age 11.

### **1st: William Penn House Potluck & Dialogue**

F(f)riends are invited to William Penn House for potluck and Quaker dialogue on Sunday, May 1, at 6:15 p.m. There will be a special screening of Brave New Film's "Making a Killing: Guns, Greed and the NRA". We will be starting the film at 7:00 p.m., so potluck will start at about 6:15 p.m. Bring a dish to share; family members and friends are always welcome. WPH is at 515 East Capitol Street, SE. For details: info(at)WilliamPennHouse.org, 202-543-5560.

### **8th: ARE: Bill Dietrich's Spiritual Journey**

The Adult Religious Education Committee has asked Bill Dietrich of our Meeting to give a talk on "My Spiritual Journey: The Impact of Quakerism on my Life." Spiritual Journeys are occasional talks sponsored by ARE to give us insight into how some of our members have come to embrace Quakerism, what influenced them most, and how they see Quakerism in their personal and spiritual development. The session will take place on Sunday, May 8, at 9:30 a.m. in the Music Room (Lower Level) of the SAM building at Sidwell Friends Lower School.

### **8th: Potluck: Please Bring a Dish to Share**

Please join us for potluck at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, May 8. We gather in the Groome Building multipurpose room for feast and fellowship. Your contribution of a dish to share with others adds greatly to the occasion.

### **8th/22nd/29th: 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.

The third gathering will be at the Meeting on Sunday, May 29, at 9:30 a.m. in the Music Room. This session is sponsored by the Adult Religious Education and Advancement & Outreach Committees as a way for people who are fairly new to Meeting to have an opportunity to deepen the experience of Meeting for Worship and to reflect on it with others. Those unable to participate in the evening sessions also appreciate having a more convenient time and place.

### **13th to 15th: Spiritual Formation Retreat**

Do you yearn for spiritual deepening? Are you longing for growth in a community of seekers who support one another on our individual journeys? Have you felt a nudge to greater intentionality in your spiritual practice? If so, the Baltimore Yearly Meeting *Spiritual Formation Retreat on Dance of the Spirit: Wholeness, Co-Creativity, and Community* is for you. The spring retreat will offer many opportunities for nurture, refreshment and fun. By engaging our creative selves, we will explore the “stepping stones” that led us to this moment in our individual journeys. We will celebrate the gifts present within us and in our Meeting communities. We will practice being deepening spiritual companions to one another. We will be restored by the beauty of nature along the woodland trails of our beautiful retreat center. Come for refreshment, come for fellowship, come to share and learn with friends. It will be at Priestfield Retreat Center in Kearneysville WV from Friday evening after supper, May 13, to Sunday, May 15. [Please register here as soon as possible:](#)

### **13th to 15th: Junior Young Friends Weekend**

The next Junior Young Friends (6th to 8th grade) conference will be May 13 to 15 at Shiloh Quaker Camp. JYFs should arrive on Friday evening, and leave at 12 noon on Sunday. JYFs are encouraged to bring a sleeping bag, cushion, pillow, clothes (including a bathing suit), flashlight, toiletries, and anything they think will help build community: games, music, or sports equipment. Personal electronics are discouraged. This year's theme is Sense of Self.

Pre-registration is required one week in advance of the conference or until the 35-person maximum is met. After that, JYFs will be placed on a waiting list and registered as space permits. For details, Jossie Dowling ([youthprograms\(at\)bym-rsf.org](mailto:youthprograms@bym-rsf.org))

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### **14th/15th: BYM Family Camp Weekend**

Individuals and families are invited to come and enjoy the Catoctin Quaker Camp for any part of the weekend of May 14/15 you can manage. A program coordinator will plan camp-type activities for Saturday and Sunday morning, as well as Saturday afternoon and evening. These may include things like playing in the creek, a crafts project, or hiking around one of the most precious places on earth. There will also be plenty of work projects to do. Work projects offer people with all kinds of skills the opportunity to enjoy some meaningful and satisfying work. We will enjoy meals together, have time to explore, and even spend some time around a camp fire in the evening. Come and enjoy a camp experience, give the gift of your time, participate with children in activities, and find yourself rejuvenated. For details: David Hunter ([davidhunter\(at\)bym-rsr.org](mailto:davidhunter@bym-rsr.org)).

### **14th: Friends Wilderness Center Work Day**

On Saturday, May 14, there will be a fun and work in the wilderness day from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. or when you need to leave. What better way to spend a beautiful spring day than sharing the fellowship, work, and Sheila Bach's great cooking as we help with chores around the cabin and in the yard at the Friends Wilderness Center. To allow for accurate meal planning, you are requested to RSVP to Sheila to let her know you are coming for work and partake in a free lunch. There are jobs for everyone, so bring out the whole family, your neighbors who need some fresh clean air, and your co-workers who will feel better for being in the wilderness. If you have teenagers, or have one or more down the street who need hours for community service work, bring them along. Here is a list of a few of the things that need to be done: wash windows; split wood; stack wood on porch; clean up trail to tree house and area around tree house; and walk trails to clear branches.

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. Going there provides a wonderful opportunity for hiking,

camping, and communing with nature, in addition to special programs such as these. If you need directions or have questions, please contact Sheila Bach. The website is <http://www.friendswilderness.org>

### **14th: BFM Book Group**

The Quaker Book Group meets monthly, normally on the second Saturday at 3:00 p.m. at Bethesda Public Library (not at Meeting). We will be in one of the two study group rooms in the rear of the Library. Newcomers are always welcome (even if you have not read the book!). By joining the list serve, you can participate in the online discussions, read the post-meeting summary, and help choose the next book. <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/bfm-book-group>

### **22nd: ARE: Deepening Our Understanding of Quaker Decision-Making**

On Sunday, May 22, at 9:30 a.m. in the Music Room, the Adult Religious Education Committee, in consultation with the Ad Hoc Committee for Opportunities for our Future, will be presenting a session in which those gathered will explore more deeply the process of Quaker decision-making, so that we may be more grounded and open to the leadings of the Spirit as we move forward on deciding where to locate our Meeting.

### **22nd: BFM Service Day at A Wider Circle**

The Peace & Social Justice Committee is planning a community service volunteer day for BFM participants at A Wider Circle in Silver Spring, on Sunday, May 22, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. A Wider Circle is a non-profit organization that assists individuals and families transitioning out of shelters to more stable living situations. Please join us to help organize furniture, house-hold items or children's items (toys and furniture) in the warehouse, or to assist with administrative tasks. Individuals and families (children must be at least 5 years old to volunteer) are welcome! A Wider Circle is located at 9159-C Brookeville Road, Silver Spring. See <http://www.awidercircle.org>

### **22nd: Environmental Sustainability Group**

BFM's Environmental Sustainability Group is exploring actions that Friends can take to address global climate change. On Sunday, May 22, please grab a snack at coffee hour and join us at 12:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room to discuss next steps that we can take re: climate, both as individuals and as a meeting. ESG plans to continue convening at the rise of meeting once monthly through the summer.

### **27th to 29th: Young Friends Conference**

Calling all high schoolers! On Friday through Sunday, May 27 to 29, there will be a Young Friends Conference sponsored by BYM. The location is still being decided. 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 the BYM office at [youthprograms\(at\)bym-rsf.org](mailto:youthprograms(at)bym-rsf.org) or 301-774-7663.

### **29th: 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, May 29.

## **Into the Future**

### **June 3rd to 5th: BFM Camp Catoctin Weekend**

Our time at Camp Catoctin this year will be the first weekend in June. Come for Saturday or whenever you like. Arrive and depart any time from Friday, June 3, at 4:00 p.m., through lunch on Sunday, June 5. Catoctin Quaker Camp has 385 acres of beautiful wooded hills and a grassy meadow with a small lake for canoeing and a lovely rocky stream. An old stone lodge attached to a large camp kitchen and dining room provides a cozy place to gather. There are four cabins with electricity and 12 screened houses with bunks. There are places for tents as well. This is an unstructured potluck weekend, so please bring food for your family for the weekend and something to share for the Saturday night Italian theme meal. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Library. Friends are asked to contribute as they are able toward our rental and food expenses. The suggested contribution is \$20/day/person. Catoctin Quaker Camp is located at 12611 Tower Road, Thurmont MD 21788. [You can learn more here.](#)

### **June 17th to 19th: Silent Retreat for Friends at Dayspring**

True silence is to the spirit what sleep is to the body: nourishment and refreshment. (William Penn, 1699) Is your spirit in need of nourishment and refreshment? Come to the Dayspring Silent Retreat from the evening of Friday, June 17 to Sunday afternoon, June 19. We will keep the silence from Friday evening through worship on Sunday, enjoying the beauty of God's creation, reading, walking, resting, finding our own rhythms, listening for the Still Small Voice. The Dayspring Retreat Center is located at 11301 Neelsville Church Road, Germantown MD 20876. You can arrive any time between 3:30 and 7:00 p.m. Friday. (Dinner at 7:00 p.m.) The cost of the retreat is \$220. The registration deadline is June 10.

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## **Committee Notes**

### **Adult Religious Education**

We thank the Adult Religious Education Committee for providing hospitality at the rise of Meeting in May. ARE's mission is to foster spiritual growth and development in the Meeting. It arranges programs for both newcomers and seasoned Friends on Quaker faith and practice, Quaker history and testimonies, Bible study, prayer and meditation, and shared reflections on our spiritual experience.

What does it mean to be a healthy and vital Meeting? At the Adult Religious Education session on Growing Our Meeting, held on April 10, participants shared the following ideas about what makes a healthy and vital Quaker Meeting:

- the quality of the silence/ministry
- spirits present and in interaction
- gentle communication with one another (This is a safe place.)
- dealing with issues of the world
- lack of coercion, free of pressure
- opportunities vs expectations, gentle nudges
- love
- welcoming - both individual and as a community, being acknowledged and follow up, being seen and valued, smiling familiar faces.
- a vital First Day School is important

- having a role in th community
- growing spiritually in the Meeting - transparent spirituality
- a sense of connection and family
- that there are lots of ways to community:  
Friendly 8s, the book group, Experiment with Light, spiritual formation
- knowing one another spiritually
- diversity of perspective and “that of God” in everyone
- having a mixture of long-term and short-term people in the community.

We hope being aware of these assets within our community will lead us to ponder the following two queries:

How can we as individuals contribute to the health of the Meeting?

What steps could we take to increase the health and vitality of our Meeting?

## **Stewardship & Finance**

The Stewardship & Finance Committee is seeking your views on whether the budget for the upcoming fiscal year July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017 should consider the potential 2019 Sidwell Friends Lower School move. S&F has framed the issue as three options: 1. Do nothing, 2. Increase the savings target, or 3. Decrease expenses by reducing donations. You can view and download the S&F discussion [memo presented at the April 3 Meeting for Business here](#).

In the fall and spring each year, BFM reaches out to ask everyone in the BFM community for financial support. Because the Meeting depends on individual financial contributions for almost all its income, giving is an important affirmation of solidarity with our Friends community. Contributions, no matter what the size, are greatly appreciated. Please make a contribution to the Meeting that is generous in relation to your means. When deciding how much to give, consider the value of our Meeting to you, to your family, and to the lives of others touched by the Meeting. Our budget not only supports our own Meeting, it also unites us with our local community, with Quaker organizations more generally, and with the wider world. In addition to covering the Meeting’s direct expenses and our support for Baltimore Yearly Meeting, approximately 35 percent of our funds flow through to other charitable causes, including the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

### **There are five ways to make your financial contribution:**

- [Credit card via PayPal \(no PayPal account required\)](#).
- The contribution box (for BFM) in the Meeting House can be used for cash or checks.
- Automatic transfers from your checking account. First, decide transfer frequency (monthly or quarterly), the amount of each transfer, and the date for each transfer.
- Donated securities.

For Friends who would like to review the investments made by Friends Fiduciary Corporation, see <http://www.friendsfiduciary.org> BFM funds are invested in the Consolidated Fund. For those interested in information about sustainable and responsible investing, a good source of information is the US Sustainable Investment Forum. See <http://www.ussif.org>

## **Pastoral Care**

Friends Helping Friends: Pastoral Care Resources List. The Pastoral Care Committee assembles and sustains a confidential list of offers of help from our Meeting community. If you are a regular participant in the BFM community, con-tact the committee to express a need, either to the Friendly Ear at rise of Meeting, or through your personal friendly ear, or the clerks, Alex Bell and Peirce Hammond. Please also contact them if you want to offer your help, a referral, or your sensitive listening based on your experience. The topics below reflect the offers of knowledge and

experience received thus far from members of our community. There is a [fuller listing](#) on the BFM website.

- Health, including physical and mental health care, home and hospice care, and diet
- Family, including elders, teens, divorce, loss, and foster care
- Home Care, including downsizing/decluttering, sewing, computers, and handymen. Note: We continue to seek referrals or assistance in such areas as: carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, and small machine repair.
- Learning and Education, including tutoring, alternative education, college advice, art
- Quakerism and Spiritual Exploration, including Quaker history, ideas and terms, and Zen
- Legal and Financial Matters, including referrals and help with taxes, budgeting, and careers
- Language and Culture, including culture shock, relocation, learning French, and teaching ESL.
- The Gift of Time for driving, cooking, and care relief for family and animals.

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## Peace Notes

Last month, Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Peace and Social Concerns Committee hosted a Peace Networking Day. Friends from across BYM came together to connect around issues of mass incarceration, climate change, and community service. Those who were not able to attend can also connect with other BYM peacemakers through the "BYM Peace and Justice Exchange" Facebook page. One of the highlights from earlier this year on the Facebook page was 40 days of featured peacemakers, put together by William Penn House. Even if you don't have Facebook, you can still check out the page at: <https://www.facebook.com/bym.psc>

Thanks to Alex Bell, Stacey FitzSimmons, Marion Ballard, DJ Foster, Dylan Murray, Jean Murray, Tim Souders, Kristina Souders, Camila Fishtahler, Lauren Brownlee, Stephanie Koenig, Ruth Nielsen-Jones, Leslie Sussan, Melissa Merideth, Rick Morgan, Ross and Louise Capon, Dan White, Peirce Hammond, Ron Akins, Peter Nielsen-Jones, Doug Smith, Liz Hofmeister, and Arlene Rodenbeck for their contributions to the newsletter. **The deadline for the June 2016 newsletter is 8:30 p.m., Friday, May 13.** Articles may be sent to [bethesdafrm\(at\)igc.org](mailto:bethesdafrm(at)igc.org) or delivered to Jane's house. **Please be as concise as possible.** In general, the editor will try to publish articles as they are submitted, but space limitations, need for brevity or clarity, or newsletter style may result in modifications. Comments and suggestions are also welcome. Please check our web site: [www.bethesdafriends.org](http://www.bethesdafriends.org)