

BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends

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A Guide to What's Inside!

[Queries](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Social Concerns Box](#)

[Children's Summer Program](#)

[Events](#)

[Committee Notes](#)

[Hospitality in July & August](#)

[Helping Refugees Group](#)

[Meeting Notes](#)

Bethesda Friends Meeting Summer Newsletter July and August 2017 Web Version

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 2017 Calendar

Meeting for Worship is held at 11:00 a.m. every First Day. The meeting room is also available at 9:30 a.m. for those desiring a smaller, quieter Meeting for Worship, except on Sunday, July 16, when Meeting for Business is held at 9:00 a.m. We have a worship group in Boyds the second Sunday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

July 2 to 8			Friends General Conference, Niagara Falls NY
July 8	Sat	2:00 p.m.	Quaker Book Group, BFM Library
July 9	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Pastoral Care Committee, Teachers' Lounge
		12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering
July 12	Wed	7:30 p.m.	Ad Hoc Committee on Digitization, Teachers' Lounge
July 16	Sun	9:00 a.m.	Meeting for Business
July 23	Sun	7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light

July 31	Mon	2:30 p.m.	BYM Retreat, Hood College, Frederick MD
August 1 to 6	Tues/Sun		BYM Annual Gathering, Hood College, Frederick MD
August 6	Sun	7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light
August 12	Sat	2:00 p.m.	Quaker Book Group, BFM Library
August 13	Sun	9:30 a.m.	ARE: Spiritual Coffee House, Music Room
		1:00 p.m.	Library Committee
		8:30 p.m.	September Newsletter Deadline
August 25	Fri		Gathering of Friends of African Descent, Philadelphia PA
August 27	Sun	12:30 p.m.	Coordinating Gathering
		7:30 p.m.	Experiment with Light

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

The Social Concerns Box

The Social Concerns Box for July is Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR). Friends World Committee for Consultation organized RSWR in 1967 with a mission statement that reads: God calls us to the right sharing of world resources, from the burdens of materialism and poverty into the abundance of God's love, to work for equity through partnership with our sisters and brothers throughout the world. Right Sharing of World Resources is a Quaker micro-credit organization that supports grassroots income-generating projects in developing countries, led by women, many of whom are making less than a dollar a day. In 2015, RSWR was able to give grants totaling \$215,000 to fund 43 groups, which supported 1,257 women to start small businesses in India, Kenya and Sierra Leone. RSWR continues to provide Friends the means by which we can examine our life of plenty, to provide a practical outlet to assist and empower some of the poorest people in the planet (some of whom are Quakers), and to come to a deeper understanding of economic discipleship as part of our individual and corporate life as a faith community. The RSWR web site has many educational resources for youth as well as adults. For details: www.rswr.org

The Social Concern Box for August is 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 the homeless, people in recovery, ex-offenders, public welfare recipients, and recent immigrants. It provides continuing support for up to two years. China Jessup and June Beittel have been involved in different ways. For details, see www.jubileejobs.org

In May, the Literacy Council of Montgomery Country received \$209.

Children's Summer Program

For children K-6th, there will be supervised play on the playground. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to Meeting for Worship. At 11:15 a.m., children will meet in the Meeting House foyer. At 12:20 p.m., children will come back to the foyer to join their parents. Supervision will end at that time.

For children 6 months through pre-K, child care will be available in the Child Care room from 10:45 a.m. to 12:20 p.m.

Usually, both groups will share time together outside. When the weather is not conducive to being outside, children will usually be in the Groome Building Lower School classroom.

One adult volunteer is needed each Sunday to assist the paid staff. Can you volunteer one or more Sundays this summer? Please sign up [here](#).

Events

First Steps in Becoming a More Diverse Community

Beginning on June 18 and continuing through the end of September, all who attend a Meeting for Worship (no matter how often you have been to our Meeting) will be invited and encouraged to answer two questions on a post card as they are led (or to decline to answer either question). Bethesda Friends Meeting is interested in including a diversity of people in our meeting activities, especially young adults (ages 18 through 35) and people with various racial and ethnic identities. The first question is worded as follows: “We understand that race is a social construct and that all human beings share a common ancestor; nevertheless, how would you describe your racial and/or ethnic identity?” The second question is worded as follows: “Are you between the ages of 18 and 35 inclusive?” The cards will be collected in a box on the credenza and will be anonymous. Thank you for your participation in this first stage of the endeavor. This has been seasoned by an An Hoc Committee, which welcomes all comments, in the full understanding that this is only a first step in our communal reflections on the opportunities and challenges of becoming the diverse community we wish to be.

Mid-Week Meetings for Worship

The small group that has been meeting for worship on Wednesday evenings has decided to suspend those meetings during July and August and to reconvene after Labor Day on September 6, at 7:30 p.m.

July 2nd to 8th: Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering

The FGC Gathering this year will be at the Niagara University, Niagara Falls NY. The theme this year is “Ripples Start Where Spirit Moves.” The Gathering is a chance to be together with over 1,200 Friends. There are many opportunities to address spirit, mind, and body. Look up the program for this year at www.fgcGathering.org You can enjoy lots of activities: singing, dancing, good food, and good conversation. You really ought to go to a Gathering at least once. There are both half-gathering and part-time attender options for adults. Financial aid is available.

By way of background, Friends General Conference nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers. The work of FGC can be summarized into three areas of endeavor:

- Help meetings deepen Quaker worship and practice
- Support a loving Quaker community
- Support Quaker outreach

FGC is a volunteer-led association of regional Quaker organizations, primarily in the United States and Canada. Founded in 1900, FGC has grown from a voluntary organization of seven yearly meetings, created to hold a “general conference” every other year, to an association of fourteen yearly meetings, supplemented with regional groups and individual meetings. FGC continues to sponsor an annual Gathering of Friends. FGC seeks to use resources effectively with a concern for simplicity and openness. It is funded through the support of Quaker meetings, individuals, and foundations. FGC is a 501(c)3 organization. [For details, see: www.fgcquaker.org](http://www.fgcquaker.org)

[Return to Top](#)

July 8th/August 12th: BFM Book Group

The Quaker Book Group has been meeting monthly, normally on the second Saturday at 2:00 p.m. at Bethesda Public Library (not at Meeting). Because the library will be undergoing renovations in coming months, the meeting place will be in the Bethesda Friends Meeting Library. Newcomers are always welcome (even if you have not read the book!). For details: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/bfm-book-group>

July 9th & August 13th: Up-County Worship Group

Live up-County? There is an Up-County Meeting for Worship at Breezy Hollow Farm in Boyds MD at 11:00 a.m., the second Sunday of the month.

July 9th & August 27th: Coordinating Gatherings

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, July 9, and another on Sunday, August 27, both at the rise of Meeting.

July 16th: Meeting for Business

On Sunday, July 16 at 9:00 a.m. Bethesda F(f)riends will consider various business items. How the Spirit will lead us in discernment of issues both large and small is part of the mystery that is the Religious Society of Friends. All who come to Meeting for Worship are welcome and encouraged to participate in our worship. On the agenda are the annual reports of the Book Table and Religious Education Committees and William Penn House. We will also hear a report on the June 17 BYM Interim Meeting and the archivist. The ad hoc Committee to Nominate the Nominating Committee will be bringing its recommendations for persons to serve on the Nominating Committee. Child care up to age 12 is provided.

July 23rd & August 6th & 27th: Experiment with Light

How do we quiet our brains enough to hear the still, small voice within us? How might we deepen our experience of meeting for worship? Experiment With Light is a meditative and centering practice based upon Rex Ambler's book *Light to Live By*, which describes early Quaker meditative habits and translates them into a highly accessible process of clearness and understanding.

We will be meeting on Sunday evenings, at 7:30 p.m. on July 23. The sessions in August will be on Sunday, August 6, and Sunday, August 27. Please come if you can!

August 1st to 6th: Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Session

Baltimore Yearly Meeting will gather from August 1 to August 6 this year at Hood College in Frederick MD. The theme is "Growing Towards Justice - Acting on Faith." Beyond the horrific headlines and news from the streets of our cities and rural areas, we must look carefully and recognize the many roots of this crisis. What are the causes? What actions can we take together to help change lives - as a people of faith, concerned citizens, organizers, advocates, and volunteers? How can we use our lives and power to take away the occasion of violence, the waste of young lives, the injustice that

plagues our communities? There will be a plenary on Tuesday evening on Ending the School to Prison Pipeline; on Wednesday there will be an intergenerational workshop on nonviolence; and on Friday, Shan Cretin, General Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee. One big change in yearly meeting is that all children from birth through 8th grade can attend at no cost - for free! [You can learn more about workshops and interest groups](#) in the Spring Interchange which will be coming out very soon.

August 13th: Spiritual Coffee House

On Sunday, August 13, at 9:30 a.m., the Adult Religious Education Committee will host a spiritual coffee house during which all participants are encouraged to share writings or poems (their own or others'), art work, music, photography, and anything else that speaks to your spirit. Weather permitting, it may be outside on the patio. Otherwise, it will be in the Music Room (basement) of the SAM Building, across the patio from the Meeting House.

August 25th to 27th: Gathering of Friends of African Descent

The Fellowship of Friends of African Descent will gather August 25 to 27 at Chestnut Hill Meeting, 20 East Mermaid Lane, Philadelphia PA. For details, see: <http://www.fofad.org/>

Committee Notes

Hospitality in July & August

We thank the Peace & Social Justice Committee for providing hospitality at the rise of meeting in July. The committee promotes peace and social justice and encourages others in Meeting to participate in a wide variety of peace and social justice activities. Advocacy, education, vigils, and financial support of community groups are among the ways the committee does its work, as well as through its liaison with the American Friends Service Committee, Friends Committee on National Legislation, the Quaker UN Office, and other likeminded groups. It meets on the fourth Sunday of the month (September through June), at 9:15 a.m., in the Teachers' Lounge. Visitors are very welcome!

We thank the Pastoral Care Committee for providing refreshments at the rise of Meeting in August. The committee is concerned primarily with the well-being, both physical and spiritual, of individuals within the Meeting. The committee receives, considers, and recommends Meeting action on membership applications; arranges clearness committees for membership, marriages, and personal concerns; responds to ill, troubled, or needy Friends; assists individuals who have a death in the family; offers need-based financial assistance for attending Quaker camps, participation in a Quaker activity, or personal emergencies; and provides a Friendly Ear each week at the rise of Meeting to hear concerns and questions about personal issues, BFM, or the Society of Friends. The committee also links each of us with a "personal friendly ear" who is in touch at least once a year and is always available to respond to concerns.

Helping Refugees Group

Bethesda Friends Meeting is in active preparation to support a refugee family through Lutheran Social Services (LSS). So far sixteen people have volunteered to be part of the BFM Helping Refugees Group (HRG). Additional volunteers would be most welcome.

In May at Meeting for Business, the Meeting approved sponsoring a refugee family under the umbrella of Lutheran Social Services (LSS) at Level 2. This level involves working directly with a family but without requiring any specific financial commitment, such as rent. We are expected to furnish and stock an apartment, welcome the family to their new home, and commit to providing additional support in areas of our choosing. To help defray potential out-of-pocket expenses, the Social Concerns Box for June was designated as a contingency fund for the refugee family.

In June, the coordinators attended a training program by LSS and met with the HRG members to finalize our commitment regarding the areas and tasks we are willing to help the family with in partnership with LSS (who provide the family with a case manager and job developer). Once we have returned the Commitment Form, LSS will set up a two-hour meeting at our Meeting House (or alternative place in our area) to train the volunteers in HRG. After the HRG volunteers' training is completed, there will probably be a five to six month wait until we meet the refugee family under our sponsorship. For background, see [Social Action](#) and the [Refugee Support Report](#).

Meeting Notes

Peace Notes

“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.” Aboriginal activists group, Queensland, 1970s.

Summer Peace Query: How do we work alongside those on the margins? How do we recognize all that we have to learn from communities on the margins? How do we help to amplify their voices?

Deepening Our Caregiving Skills

Friends Meeting of Washington has sponsored four workshops designed to deepen our caregiving skills on topics such as setting boundaries in care giving, responding to predatory behavior, family systems approach to pastoral care, and helping those experiencing grief or loss. Would you like to join the effort of exploring what kind of training we need and how to go about getting it?

[Return to Top](#)