



FRIENDLY CONNECTIONS

State College Friends Meeting

January 2014
Newsletter



*State College Friends Meeting
611 East Prospect Ave.
State College, PA 16801
Phone (814) 237-7051*

Happy New Year

From the Editors

The beginning of the New Year -- tucked in the darkest pocket of the seasons -- inspires dramatic revelry in reaction, but also contemplation and consideration in tune with the somber days in the deep of winter. At any age, there is still the sense of a “brand new” start and improvements and changes that can be made in the coming year, despite all the missteps of the past. Our resolutions center around giving to others with the talents and skills we have, and the things we have that are no longer used or needed. These are the plans in mind and heart right now, in the coldest, stillest part of the year – and as we wait for the snow to stop, the temperature to rise and the days to lengthen, we hope this giving will grow and expand through our lives, touching others and perhaps inspiring them, in the coming days of the New Year.

As always, we welcome your input and gifts of news or contemplative writings. Please accept our sincere wishes for a blessed and **Happy 2014!**

Your editors, Deryn Verity and Marianne Stevens



Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Meetings for Worship

Are meetings for worship held in expectant waiting for Divine guidance? Are Friends encouraged to share spiritual insights? Are special gifts of ministry recognized and encouraged?

QUERIES

Do you come to meeting with heart and mind prepared? Are you careful not to disturb the spirit of the meeting by late arrival or in other ways?

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Meeting for Worship

Are our meetings for worship held in stilled, expectant waiting upon God?

As we worship is there a living silence in which we are drawn together by the power of God in our midst?

Is the spirit of our worship together one that nurtures all worshipers?

How does our Meeting respond when the vocal ministry seems inappropriate, or when the meeting for worship is consistently not gathered?

Do I faithfully attend meeting with heart and mind prepared for worship, clear of any predetermination to speak or not to speak, and expecting that worship will be a source of strength and guidance?

Does worship deepen my relationship with God, increase my faithfulness, and refresh and renew my daily life, both inwardly and in my relationship with others?

Have I experienced in worship that direct leading to listen or to speak, and have I been faithful to my own experience?



*Report from
Meeting with
Concern for
Business
Twelfth month,
2013*

**State College Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Concern for
Business
Twelfth month one, 2013**

Meeting opened with silence at 9:00. Queries from both BYM and PYM were read by Selden Smith. The agenda was approved by Friends.

AVP

Campbell Plowden reported that it has been an amazing year for AVP. While over the years support from the prisons waxes and wanes, during this year the warden has been great and 6 workshops have been held. The warden is moving to Washington DC to head the programming for the prison system, there is hope that this will lead to something positive for AVP. The coming year there will be workshops in both English and Spanish. Financial help in excess of the Meeting support is needed to continue this work.

Finance Report

Kerry Wiessmann reported for the committee:

It has come to the committee's attention that some checks have not been deposited in a timely manner. Betsy agreed to deposit checks weekly when possible. Betsy will pick up an ATM card form to make it possible for her to do the deposits during off hours. Betsy reported that members/attenders have responded favorably to Michael's letter requesting money for charitable contributions. She is keeping track of that separately from the usual contributions. The Alternatives to Violence Project requests \$4,531 from the Diana Spanier Peace fund. Finance Committee recommends the Meeting approve this request. This is in addition to the \$500 line item already provided to AVP. The RE Committee is once again planning its winter retreat February 7, 8 and 9 and all members and attenders are invited. The finance committee recommends that the \$900 rental for the cabins be covered by the Ferguson fund. Improvements to the hearing system may be made from the Norma White Fund. Finance Committee recommends that business meeting approve this. Finance committee presents a 2014 budget for approval. A few changes were made since first presented in November.

1. The income from rentals more accurately reflects the actual anticipated income based on last year's income.

2. The Oral History Project requested \$300 for new work on this project, rather than the \$150 that had been budgeted.
3. Contributions to Friends Organizations is separated out from Helping Those in Need. They were originally in one category called Helping Others.
4. This budget does not reflect maintaining a \$5,000 surplus, because the anticipated contributions line item was decreased.

Selden kindly represented our budget in the form of pie charts for ease of understanding our financial expenditures.

Friends suggested giving AVP the difference needed to balance their fund for this year and that AVP look for sustaining funding. Friends approved this action. \$3200.00 will be taken from the Diana Walker Spanier Fund.

Friends approved funds from the Ferguson fund to pay for RE winter camping trip.



Friends approved funding for the hearing system from the Norma White fund.

Friends approved the 2014 budget as printed.

Building & Grounds

Larry Greenleaf reported for the committee:

Many thanks to the committee members and Friends who helped with pot luck and refreshments during November!

There was discussion by the committee to organize a work party or hire outside help to reclaim the Friendly Woods. This task would include 1> Remove unwanted trees and broken branches. 2> Remove the playhouse. 3> Remove weeds and brush piles. Further discussion was scheduled for the December meeting.

Lynne Heritage has repaired the problem with one of the shades in the Meeting Room.

Gary reported on the progress with the upgrade of our current amplification system in the Meeting room. We agreed that the cost of a new "loop" system and a portable microphone and amplifier should be paid for with the Norma White Fund. Gary will meet with one more potential supplier this month.

Painting of the kitchen ceiling and walls continues.

It was determined that the kitchen light that was removed in order to paint the ceiling should be replaced with a more efficient one. Lance will arrange for the purchase.

The Building and Grounds Committee meetings are held on the second Monday of the month. The next scheduled meetings are **Monday, December 9 and January 13 at 6:30 P.M. in the social room of the Meetinghouse.** Your support is greatly appreciated.

The agenda for the August meeting will include: 1> Continued painting of kitchen walls. 2> Future clean-up projects. 3> Update on current projects.

Friends expressed concern regarding the removal of the playhouse. This item will be put on hold until it can be considered more fully.

Worship & Ministry

Ann Sidone reported for the committee:

Microphone and Hearing System Update

Gary Fosmire and Ann Sidone met with Phil Reigh, who works for the same company that provided the Meeting's current system. Phil checked the current system and found that most of the receivers still work. However, the system is 20 years old and newer receivers are available. Gary has asked for a quote for different system upgrades to update our accessibility, and has met with Finance Committee who approved moving ahead. Worship and Ministry would like to ask for permission of the Meeting to proceed using some ballpark figures that Gary will present.

Foxdale Meeting for Worship

Worship and Ministry and Religious Education would like to have Meeting for Worship at Foxdale on December 22nd. The RE play will be at the rise of Meeting. We have decided not to ask for coffee after Meeting since there was often a lot of coffee left over. Does the Meeting approve of this date?

Getting Foxdale Residents to Meeting for Worship

The Committee is looking into the possibility with Rich Lysle, the Executive Director of Foxdale, to have Foxdale staff bring residents to Meeting. We are in the beginning stages of figuring this out and will keep the Meeting updated.

Correspondence

Thank you notes were received from Inter Faith, Food Bank and Park Forest Day Nursery School.

Minutes from eleventh month were approved by Friends. Next MWWCB will be first month five, 2014.

Meeting closed with silence.

Attending;

Kerry Wiessmann, Larry Greenleaf, , Lynne Grutzeck, Michael Grutzeck, Martin Melville, Polly Dunn, Yuri Plowden, Aileen Querry, Campbell Plowden, Gary Fosmire ,Laurie Jeffereys, Mary Haight, Cy deVries Selden Smith, Peg Hansen

Respectfully submitted,

Peg Hansen, recording clerk

Selden Smith, clerk

Friends: Here is a short piece spoken during worship at the FGC travelling ministries workshop:



We have known for some time that light extends on either side of the visible spectrum. Only a small part of the electromagnetic radiation out there is visible to us. The enlightenment and rationalism posited that the only reality that exists is that which is empirically provable or directly observable, positing essentially that "the only light that is real is that which can be seen." Thus, since they couldn't raise people from the dead or conjure miracles, these things had to be the imaginations of those first-century Christians who claimed to have observed them.

Reality extends to either side of that which we can see and touch. As the current flows over rocks in the bottom of the river, the waves, swirls, eddies and boils reflect their presence. Even without being able to see the bottom of the river, we know it is there and can make statements about it, whether the rocks are rounded boulders or scaly ledges. And reality extends past that which we can observe relationally, beyond the pale. These currents are visible, too, in our lives. To some degree, we can look at another and understand why they are happy or cranky. The currents of our

lives reflect that which is otherwise not visible.

The essence of faith, then is the knowledge that the rocks are real and their presence can be observed through the eddies and swirls in Creation even though we will likely never see them with our eyes. The job of ministry, then, is to help others understand what the rocks in the bottom of the river of the Spirit look like. The rocks are real, even if they can't be seen or explained

Martin Melville



Interfaith Initiative Centre County

ITEM for Discussion and Feedback before January 5th – We have had sharing and conversation from some IICC members and friends, but your thoughts and responses are also desired.

Interfaith Initiative is considering adding the principle of religious freedom to its mission and goals statement in the following words:

a. *"We differ in our religions, but agree on the foundational principles that as human beings we are equal, that we have universal freedom of conscience, and that we are called to live together in peace."*

b. Comments and feedback about this statement are invited from all – please share your thoughts and suggestions by responding to this email.

3. BUSINESS MEETING of Interfaith Initiative Centre County – get in touch if you would like a ride!

a. Date & Time: Sunday, Jan 5th; 3:00 – 4:30 pm; (Snow date: Jan 19th 3:00 – 4:30 pm)

b. Location: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Centre County, Waupelani Drive Ext., State College

4. Next month's Coffee Hour: Wednesday, January 8, 6:30 – 8:00 pm, at Panera Bread downtown. January host: Ken Kline Smeltzer, of University Baptist & Brethren Church.

The **Mission of Interfaith Initiative Centre County** is to foster compassion, charity and goodwill, and to build a healthy interfaith

community by promoting respect, understanding, cooperation, and friendship among Centre County's faith communities and their individual members. Various in our experience of spirituality and the divine, we are united in our common humanity. Through interaction, sharing beliefs and life stories, we can more deeply understand each other and ourselves.

Our gatherings and programs aim to:

- *Create opportunities for dialogue between and among faiths and model healthy interfaith relations
- *Encourage and provide moral support for local faith communities – particularly those experiencing hostility or discrimination
- *Share social concerns and foster cooperation, while recognizing and respecting our religious differences
- *Discuss theologies and ideological issues in a frank, positive and respectful environment
- *Create an environment of asking and answering questions, and of learning, but not of proselytizing, converting others or making disciples.

For more about our activities, visit our website:

<http://www.facebook.com/InterfaithInitiativeCC>

**PLEASE SEND US YOUR THOUGHTS
(InterfaithInitiativeCC@hotmail.com)**



THINKING ABOUT RACE (January 2014) – Black Dolls

Excerpts from “Black Is Beautiful: Why Black Dolls Matter,” by Lisa Hix in *Utne Reader*, February 2013. The article focuses on the documentary *Why Do You Have Black Dolls?* by Samantha Knowles. The film debuted in October 2012 at the Reel Sisters of the Diaspora Film Festival in New York City, where it won the Reel Sisters Spirit Award. It was also selected for the Martha’s Vineyard African-American Film Festival and the Hollywood Black Film Festival in Beverly Hills.

“When a young child is playing with a doll, she is mimicking being a mother, and in her young, impressionable years, I want that child to understand that there’s nothing wrong with being black. If black children are force-fed that white is better, or if that’s all that they are exposed to, then they might start to think, ‘What is wrong with me?’” says Debbie Behan Garrett, author of *Black Dolls: A Comprehensive Guide to Celebrating, Collecting, and Experiencing the Passion*.

Knowles says that [doll maker Debra] Wright best sums up her answer to the question posed by the film: “I think women know

that they're beautiful ... But when you see a doll, it's such a wonderful reminder of that beauty – because somebody took the time to make a doll in your likeness.”

Among Knowles interviewees were Barbara Whiteman, a black doll collector who runs the 25-year-old Philadelphia Doll Museum where she has a rotating display of 300 of her collection of 1,000 black dolls. On Saturday, Feb. 23, 2013, Knowles' documentary screened during the Black History Month programming at the National Black Doll Museum in Mansfield, Massachusetts.

Read more at: <http://www.utne.com/arts/why-black-dolls-matter.aspx#ixzz2mcEyykDk>

The BYM Working Group on Racism meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, usually at Bethesda Friends Meeting or Friends Meeting of Washington. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.



Quintessential Quakerism, 2014

A Quakerism 101 three-part series will be held on **January 18, February 9, and February 23, 2014**, *in the meeting room at Foxdale Village.*



Quaker History and Decision-Making (January 18, 2-4pm)

Leaders **Selden Smith** and **Doug Miller** will start with a quick history:

- Distinguishing beliefs in mid-17th century England;
- The movement's popularity, persecution, and organization;
- William Penn and Quakers in America – abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, and opposition to all wars.

“There is that of God in everyone” – tenets shape the way Quakers make decisions as a group. Without clergy, how do Quakers find loving, Spirit-led unity in the face of divisive issues?

Quaker Testimonies Lived in the World (February 9 and 23, 2-5pm)

Therese Miller will lead these sessions, focusing on the testimonies as truth known through a relationship with God:

- Discerning personal and corporate concerns and leadings;
- Integrity of our inner and outer lives.

Teacher-led and peer group work with some assigned material to read before class.

Everyone Welcome

Childcare is available

Space is limited

**Register at State College Friends Meeting, 237-7051 or
office@statecollegefriends.org**

READY FOR A MID-WINTER PICK-UP?



COME IN OUT OF THE COLD

FOR A

“YOU-ALL-COME”

QUAKER SING

1:00-3:00 PM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2014

STATE COLLEGE FRIENDS MEETING

611 EAST PROSPECT

Winter 2014 Black Moshannon Family Friendly Trip

This February 7th-9th (from Friday evening to Sunday morning), we will again attempt a Friendly concurrence at Black Moshannon, with the intent to get ourselves outside and in the woods and with friends during the darkest, difficult month.

If there is snow and ice, there will be outdoor activities of wintry theme on Saturday.

If snow is sadly lacking, we will do other outdoor things. Regardless of the weather outside, there will be joyous fellowship and time for quiet communal contemplation inside.

And crafts.

And cooperative cooking of cuisine.

* * * * *

If you and/or your family want to come, please email Sam Findley (findleysster@gmail.com) with the number of people you plan to bring, and their respective names/ages. Right now, we have five cabins rented; that will host ten families. If more people want to attend, I need to talk toBlackMo ASAP about opening up some rustic cabins, so please RSVP at your earliest convenience!



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RETURN REQUESTED