

FRIENDLY CONNECTIONS

State College Friends Meeting

FEBRUARY 2015
Newsletter



*State College Friends Meeting
611 East Prospect Ave.
State College, PA 16801*

Phone (814) 237-7051

Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Meetings for Business

Are meetings for business held in a spirit of worship, understanding and forbearance?

QUERIES

When direction seems lacking, is this seen as a challenge to a more prayerful search for truth?

Do we humbly set aside our own preconceived notions as to proper action, seeking instead Divine guidance as to the right course?

Is the Meeting aware that it speaks not only through its actions but also through its failure to act?

Do you participate regularly in meetings for business, discharge faithfully your committee responsibilities, and assume your share of financial support of the Meeting?

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Is our meeting for business held in the spirit of a meeting for worship in which we seek divine guidance? Are we careful to keep in the spirit of worship each of the

QUERIES

concerns that emerge, whether of nurture, of Spirit, of social concerns, of property, or of finance?

Are Meeting decisions directed by prayerful consideration of all aspects of an issue and are difficult problems considered carefully with patient search for truth, unhurried by the pressures of time?

How do we respond if we notice the meeting has lost an understanding of the presence of God? Do we recognize that we speak through our inaction as well as our action?

Do I regularly attend meeting for business and in a spirit of love and unity? If unable to attend, how do I attend to my responsibility?

Do I consider prayerfully the many concerns that are lifted up on any issue, acknowledging that the search for truth in unity involves what God requires, being open to

personal transformation as the community arrives at the sense of the meeting?

THINKING ABOUT RACE (February 2015) - Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform

Through MAJR legislative initiatives in 2015, let's make a difference in:

- Alternatives to incarceration (mediation, restorative justice, diversion)
- Screening of low-risk offenders for more effective corrections
- Prisoners' employment and rehabilitation resources
- Pre-release support for jobs and re-entry services at detention centers
- Employer incentives for post-release job placement
- Awareness of collateral consequences re: guilty pleas
- Second Chance--shielding records for misdemeanors
- Parole Board final decisions for "lifers with parole"

The Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform, MAJR (www.ma4jr.org), is promoting 8 bills in the 2015 MD General Assembly, bringing together legislation under one umbrella from varied organizations: Annapolis Friends Peace and Justice Center, Job Opportunity Task Force, MD Restorative Justice Initiative, Uniform Laws Commission. Alliance partners include interfaith groups, churches, Quaker meetings, and criminal justice reform organizations such as: Committee of Concerned Citizens, Maryland CURE, Out for Justice, People for Change, Friend of a Friend, Interfaith Action for Human Rights, and the Community Conferencing Center.

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaisons at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting for publication in their newsletter or other means of dissemination. The WGR 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.

Quaker Life Book Discussion Group for 5th-8th graders and interested adults: Wednesdays Feb. 18, Feb. 25 and March 4 from 6:30-8 pm at the State College Friends School, with soup and bread beforehand. The book is *Habibi* which you may borrow from the School.

SPECIAL INTERFAITH COFFEE HOUR – Second Abrahamic Table – Wednesday, February 11, 7:30 – 9:30 pm (Wednesday, February 25, 7:30 pm, in case of snow).

WHAT: Representatives of Judaism, Islam and Christianity discuss a subject of mutual interest from various faith perspectives; audience discussion period follows.

SUBJECT: “Sacrifice”

WHERE: Congregation Brit Shalom (620 E. Hamilton Ave, State College)

PANELISTS: Bishop Charles Holland (State College First Ward, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints); Bekir Aksoy (President, Golden Generation Foundation); Rabbi David Ostrich (Congregation Brit Shalom)

SPONSORED BY: Congregation Brit Shalom, Turkish Cultural Center & Interfaith Initiative Centre County

A FREE EVENT – DELICIOUS REFRESHMENTS TO BE SERVED!

**Meeting for Worship for Business
Minutes
First Month, 11th, 2015**

The Meeting opened with a period of silent worship. The Clerk read the PYM query on the state of our Meetings for Worship and Friends spoke to the query out of the silence. One Friend spoke to her sense that most of us were more faithful to the charge to listen than we were to speak – and thus, we are deprived of the wisdom of many among us who tend to suppress the messages which are given them. Another Friend shared that recently she spoke at a Memorial service, and realized that she was “out of practice.” Another Friend spoke to the confusion that many feel about whether a message is “from God” or from themselves. One Friend mentioned a recommendation which came out of the workshop on sharing our differences, was need for further discussion/workshops among us about speaking in Meeting for Worship.

The Agenda had not been printed out so was read and additions were solicited. With the addition of an item by Cambell Plowden regarding AVP and prison work, and Kersey Bradley regarding his work in prison, the agenda was approved.

AVP and Prison work: The Meeting was told of a valued AVP leader, who had recently been released, and had been taken back to prison and would not be eligible for Parole for another four years. He asked for the Meeting to hold this gentleman in the Light. Future financial support may be requested so visitation of this gentleman might that continue while he is in a prison a significant distance away.

A member noted that the issue of prisons, mass incarceration and the prison industry is a crucial concern related to many of our testimonies and suggested that we as a meeting take some action, e.g., at least writing a minute. However, at this time, no one was lead to take leadership on this, and given that we do not currently have a Peace and Social Action committee to take it on, it would be tabled for the present moment. However, a meeting member has offered to organize and lead a book discussion group on *The New Jim Crow*; it is hoped that people might come forward from this group and might provide ways in which we can act in the near future.

Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds:

Larry Greenleaf reported that a committee meeting was held December 13, 2014, and attending were Kathy Drapco Klein, Kersey Bradley, Lance Lehman, Kerry Wiessmann, and Larry Greenleaf.

The committee had asked Gil Morrison to attend. Gil was being considered as a Project Manager to oversee the renovations in the garden level classrooms. Gil shared a brief history of his experiences including: running his own business, consulting and currently working with the Borough in the Housing Transition and First Time Home Buyers programs.

After meeting with Mr. Morrison, the committee members in attendance agreed to offer him the job.

As a follow up note: Mr. Morrison has accepted the responsibility and has agreed to have a proposal of how the work will proceed and an estimated cost by the end of January 2015.

We discussed a letter received from Sun Direct stating that the price of solar cells had dropped about 10% and agreed to contact the other bidders.

As a second follow up note; Envinity said that they would work with us on price since they were very interested in the project.

Progress continued on the content of the new East Prospect signage.

The next Building and Grounds meeting will be held Jn 12, 2014 at 6:30 pm in the social room.

Treasurer Report:

Connie Wheeler distributed and presented two reports: 2014 Budget vs Actual (spent monies) along with a

Balance sheet of Assets and Liabilities, as of December 31, 2014, (reports attached)

Committee Clerks have been asked to send in their budget requests for this year, and discern whether there were ways to minimize budget needs, since our contributions were 10,000 less than budgeted for 2014 and are not expected to increase in the next year.

Cambell Plowden noted that AVP had not needed to draw down on Meeting allocated funds since they had received monies elsewhere and they were sufficient to cover expenses. Some of these external monies remain and will be used next year. Unfortunately, due to recent/current inability to run groups at couple of the prisons, the expenses for AVP have been less also,

Clarification was asked regarding the Payroll Services item, which exceeded the amount budgeted. It was explained that in prior years some of these expenses were put in a different payroll account. The 2015 budget has corrected this.

The Meeting minuted their appreciation to Connie Wheeler and Kerry Wiessmann for the extensive work involved in caring for our finances, and for providing us with these reports.

Memorial Committee:

Laurie Jeffreys noted that the flowers on the mantel were from Peg Doms' Memorial Service. The Memorial Minute was read and will be forwarded to Friends Journal.

Margaret "Peg" Doms Memorial Minute

Peg Doms joined Friends late in life, but you might think she had been a Quaker long before joining Meeting, as her interests and activities paralleled those of Friends throughout her life. Born Margaret Taylor on August 5, 1920 in Bluffton, Indiana to Albert Hoyt Taylor and Emma Hickman Taylor, she was called "Peg" by family and friends. She grew up in Washington, D. C., attended college at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and graduated with a BA in American Institutions and a BLS (Bachelor of Library Science). While there, she met Keith Doms, a fellow student, whom she married a few years later on April 1, 1944.

While living in Concord, New Hampshire, where Keith began his career, Peg organized a Welcome Wagon program with heavy emphasis on community life. A few years later, in Midland, Michigan, Keith and Peg started a family. While raising their two sons in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia—and afterwards as well—Peg contributed many hours of volunteer time. She organized a pioneering series of inter-racial dialog groups in Pittsburgh in the 1960s which entailed monthly gatherings in homes; she instructed school children about the natural world at Schuylkill Valley Nature Center in Philadelphia, PA; and

she taught English as a Second Language for visiting Chinese scholars in Philadelphia in the 1980s. In addition to teaching, Peg and Keith provided a home for several scholars over a period of about five years, and involved them and many others in various activities and travels to introduce them to life in the U.S. She later applied her familiarity with Chinese language and culture to lead a delegation of American librarians for a six-week tour of China and other Asian countries.

Once her sons were in college, Peg worked as a law librarian for several years. During that time, the Greater Philadelphia Law Library Association appointed her to lead a committee that established a consultancy to help private and public law libraries provide better services to their users. Throughout all of these years, Peg shared her love of gardening and birding, and was a student of natural history. One of her favorite nature areas was Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Kempton, Pennsylvania. After moving to State College to live at Foxdale Village, Peg became an active member of the State College Friends Meeting and enthusiastically engaged with the Foxdale community and her many friends there. She served on the State College Friends Meeting's Care and Concern Committee, was cochair of the Telephone Tree, and interviewed many Quakers and Foxdale residents as a member of the Oral History Project.

In her last years Peg continued to enjoy meals with her friends, walks with a companion (outdoors in good

weather), and participation in weekly Meeting for Worship at Foxdale Village. On November 3, 2014, Peg died peacefully in her sleep at her Foxdale Village home, at age 94. She was preceded in death by her loving husband of 65 years, Keith Doms. She is survived by their two sons, Peter and David, and their families. A Quaker Memorial Meeting was held at Foxdale Village on January 10, 2015.

Mark Shaw's memorial service will be held on March 14, 2015.

Worship and Ministry:

Margy Frysinger reported that Worship and Ministry Committee has been discussing the amount of "comings and goings" during Meeting for Worship. Some members of our spiritual community have found it unsettling to have so many people arrive late to Meeting, and walk in and out during Meeting.

We are not, of course, talking about First Day School children and teachers coming in during Meeting. We welcome and cherish their presence. Nor are we talking about times someone has something like a coughing problem and needs to recover.

Generally, about half the adults are arriving late for Meeting for Worship. We on the Committee recognize our own culpability. Even if we arrive on time it is easy to see

someone we want to talk with, and the next thing we know we are late for Meeting for Worship.

Some Meetings we have heard about have latecomers sit in another room. We were not comfortable with that idea because we want everyone to feel welcome. So our initial thought is that we will ask people to respect that Meeting for Worship starts at 11:00 and that having initial moments to center and settle are very important. Members of Worship and Ministry will try to be examples of being on time to MFW, and we will remind Friends when it seems necessary. We will also add a reminder note to the Bulletin, and we are adding something to the signs on the door.

We would, of course, welcome feedback from other Friends if they have suggestions.

One Friend offered that a Meeting he formerly attended, they had a “late comers’ ” entry time, when all people arriving after 11 could enter together.

We are working on ideas for workshops that build on the “Bringing Our Differences Into the Light” fall workshop. We are looking to have the first one sometime in February and will be announcing it as soon as plans are set.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Rebecca Misangyi reported that the Middling group are discussing how they might share and interact with residence at Foxdale. One resident of Foxdale noted that

just the presence of children on the grounds is gift –their presence brings a lot of energy and liveliness. She also announced the Intergenerational breakfast next First Day at 9:30. We will gather for breakfast and intergenerational games.

Interfaith Ministries Report:

Lynne Greutzeck reported that the Wishing Well Fund Raiser, in which many from Meeting participated, raised \$17,267. This money will go to support the various activities of the Interfaith Mission:

They provided direct services to 1553 people this year through their new Healing Aid and Support Finance Agency, in addition to help with prescriptions, and other aide. They also gave classes to people on managing money, decreasing energy uses and provided rep payee services for the aged, young, and those with mental illness.

Announcements:

Ramallah Friends School sent holiday greetings

The BYM Annual Women's Retreat will be held Jan 23rd-25th, and further information is available on the BYM website

Clerk Selden Smith has been in contact with Ben Widemann, who works with students at Penn State, in 3rd Way Collective. Ben would like to share with us more about the works and events.

The Conference on Religion and Psychology will be held Feb 20, 2015 on “Dreaming back to Right Relationship with the Earth.” Further information can be found on the BYM website.

There were three requests from prisoners in a Florida Penitentiary for Pen Pals. Polly Dunn and Selden Smith will announce these requests at rise of meeting, if no one is interested they will write to inform the prisoners.

Claudia Wilson attended the PYM called Meeting on Racism and returns with the intention of sponsoring a book discussion on *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander. If anyone is interested, please contact her.

Polly Dunn, Assistant Clerk

Ellen Johnson Arginteanu, Recording Clerk

Persons attending:

Mary Way

Connie Wheele

Campbell Plowden

Lynne Grutzeck

Michael Grutzeck

Becky Misangyi

Bernie Hoffnar

Kersey Bradley

Larry Greenleaf

Elizabeth Pennock

Margy Frysinger
Laurie Jeffreys
Ann Sidone
Gary Fosmire
Lance Lehman
Dorthoy Habecker

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