

**FRIENDLY
CONNECTIONS**



State College Friends Meeting

**February 2017
Newsletter**



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

If your gift includes words, images, or just honest thoughts, please send them to the Newsletter email address: SCFMNewsletter@gmail.com

Announcements

► **Black Moshannon Retreat.** We have rented cabins Friday afternoon, Feb. 24 through Feb. 26 for our annual Friends Winter Camping trip. PLEASE let us know as soon as possible if you plan to attend the retreat and which night(s) you plan to stay!

If you plan to come, please send names of all participants (including friends you are bringing) and ages of anyone under age 18. Please include your e-mail and telephone. Contact Sunny at <mailto:suncst@gmail.com> suncst@gmail.com or [814-769-1400](tel:814-769-1400).

► **Rise-Up Singing.** The singing on Jan. 15 was so much fun, we decided to continue on the 3rd Sunday each month. The next singing will be held on **Feb. 19, 4-6 pm**. Let's get together to sing old familiar songs from the best songbook ever. Join us, bring a friend or two and your songbook if you have one. EVERYONE is welcome. Spread the word.

► **Fundraiser for Interfaith Human Services. Lasagna Dinner** (meat & vegan), **Thurs., Feb. 9, 5:30-7 pm**, State College Friends Meeting. Dinner is free, donate what you can!

► Interfaith Initiative Centre County Events

- “OF MANY” – Film Screening and Interfaith Discussion Panel

DATE: Monday, **February 6**, 7:00 pm

LOCATION: Foster Auditorium, Penn State

A free screening of the short film "Of Many", followed by an interfaith panel from campus faith leaders from the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian traditions. The panel will be moderated by Dr. Moses Davis, director of the Multicultural Resource Center (MRC) at PSU

- HOW WE ARE PROMOTING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION – Borough of State College & State College Area School District Town Hall

DATE: Thursday, **February 9**, 6:00 pm

LOCATION: State College Municipal Building, Rm. 201

MODERATOR: Carlos Wiley, Director, Paul Robeson Cultural Center

Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Meetings for Business

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

QUERIES
QUERIES

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

Meetings for Business

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



QUERIES QUERIES

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 2017) – “The Fire This Time” by Jesmyn Ward

For this 2016 book, *The Fire This Time*, author Jesmyn Ward*, after the 2012 killing of Trayvon Martin, invited other African American writers to share their thoughts. In her introduction, she calls it, “A book that would reckon with the fire of rage and despair and fierce, protective love currently sweeping through the streets and campuses of America. A book that would gather new voices in one place, in a lasting, physical form, and provide a forum for those writers to dissent, to call to account, to witness, to reckon.” Among those writers is Carol Anderson, whose essay “White Rage” makes some of the same points as her book by the same title, cited in our December “Thinking about Race” column.

“Protests and looting naturally capture attention. But the real rage smolders in meetings where officials redraw precincts to dilute African American voting strength or seek to slash the government payrolls that have long served as sources of black employment. It goes virtually unnoticed, however, because white rage doesn’t have to take to the streets and face rubber bullets to be heard. Instead, white rage carries an aura of respectability and has access to the courts, police, legislatures, and governors, who cast its efforts as noble, though they are actually driven by the most ignoble motivations.”

*Ward’s novels to date are *Where the Line Bleeds* and *Salvage the Bones*, which won the 2011 National Book Award. Her 2013 memoir, *Men We Reaped*, has won multiple awards.

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting. Contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

**STATE COLLEGE FRIENDS MEETING
MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS**

First Month 8th, 2017

Meeting began with silent worship and a reading of the Queries from Baltimore Yearly Meeting on Meetings for Business:

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

One Friend responded that during her early years at Meeting, when her family had little money, she remembers older Friends being kind and reassuring her it was ok not to contribute financially. The older Friends said it was their turn and “our turn would come later.” We need to reassure younger Friends that it’s more important they come than give.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

RE Announcements were added and Worship and Ministry will not give a report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Outreach Committee

Polly Dunn reported. Baltimore Yearly Meeting has sent a survey asking for a summary of what we are doing for outreach. Friends began listing things we do:

- Cooking workshops held this fall
- Showing the documentary “Before the Flood” to the community
- A radio interview about Quakerism
- Interactions with Friends School
- Posting a sign while doing holiday bell-ringing
- Allowing several outside groups to use Meeting facilities for free
- One of the Meeting’s spiritual formation groups went to Interfaith Initiatives TAISE (a singing group)
- Connections to local groups, such as Park Forest Preschool and Interfaith Human Services, with Meeting members serving on boards
- Putting up a poster and selling soup to voters
- Support of Alternatives to Violence program

Other ideas were presented on things we could do:

- A Questions and Answers sit-down with newer attenders

- Have a “newcomers corner” in the social room, with literature and someone to talk with newcomers
- Give out “Faith and Practice” sooner to attenders (now given when people join)
- Join “Out of the Cold.” The numbers of homeless are increasing and the garden level is now suitable. It would require a coordinator.
- Some local churches are trying to coordinate a more welcoming environment for African-American families in town, in hopes of retaining more people.

The Meeting then discussed how to pick which local organizations we should contribute to financially. Contributions were made to five organizations last year, and this year some others have been suggested such as Friends School, the Third Way Collective, or the refugee family we hope to bring to town. A small group will look at the list, and look at which dinners to schedule. In response to questions about whether the Meeting still has a leading to support outside groups, several Friends responded positively. The Meeting used to give a small amount to many organizations but several years ago decided to give a larger amount to fewer organizations. The organizations for whom we did a fundraising dinner also expressed appreciation for the outreach and publicity as much as the money.

Claudia Wilson, Katy Lumley-Sapanski, Lynne Grutzeck, Polly Dunn, and Kerry Wiessmann volunteered to serve on the committee to review which organizations to include.

Kerry Wiessmann presented ideas on how the dinners could occur this year. She suggested that four dinners would be a reasonable amount. People can do the same job for each dinner, such as make the salad. Kerry is willing to find people to do the jobs. The first dinner needs to be scheduled for February. Meeting approved a dinner for Interfaith Human Services during the next month.

Peace and Social Action (Committee of the Whole)

Selden Smith reported that the documentary “Before the Flood” will be shown at the Meeting House at 7:00 p.m. on January 26th. Childcare will be provided, though children ages 10 and above could watch the movie. Several groups, such as other peace churches, and Interfaith Power and Light will be co-sponsors. One Friend requested that the local United Nations group be included as a co-sponsor.

Meeting approved asking the local UN group to co-sponsor the documentary.

Kerry Wiessmann reported several upcoming events. On Monday, January 9th, there will be a community forum at Foxdale on “Moving Forward with Inclusion.” The same evening there will also be a meeting of the State College Borough, where a resolution will be considered that states the borough will not participate in finding illegal immigrants. On February 14th there will be a Valentines party for everyone at the Meeting House. There will be activities, games, and food. This will be a safe place for LGBTQA people to enjoy themselves.

Claudia Wilson announced that starting on January 15th there will be a Rise Up Singing group gathering at the Meeting House. It will be every third Sunday from 4 to 6 p.m.

Claudia also announced a teach-in at the Immigration Center on campus on January 12th. It will be at 4:30 at the Law School. It will focus on immigrants and their rights.

Campbell Plowden reported that the Alternatives to Violence program has been functioning, but at a “low key” level. They did one workshop at McKeen prison at the end of last year and are planning another. They need interested people to join AVP. Pennsdale Meeting now has an official AVP chapter, and Denise DeGeorge announced she is joining that group.

Campbell also announced that he hopes to visit his friend Mujaddid Muhammad in Ohio three times this year. He asked for financial and spiritual support. One Friend suggested the Meeting should name Campbell a prison minister, so Finance Committee can support him without his having to ask each year. Campbell needs up to \$120 per visit, with a maximum of \$360 for the year.

Meeting approved the concept of Campbell Plowden as a Meeting prison minister. Meeting also approved the money for Campbell to visit Mujaddid Muhammad.

Finance Committee will decide where the money should come from in the budget. Worship and Ministry is charged with helping find a support committee for Campbell.

Denise DeGeorge informed everyone that she is using a Daily Action Alert that texts actions to take every day, along with information on each issue. See Denise if you are interested in learning about this app.

Refreshments and Potluck

The current system for doing refreshments does not seem to be working. The same people end up doing the work, and many do not seem aware they are supposed to do it on their birthday month.

A discussion ensued with some Friends wondering if we should return to a sign-up sheet. Guidance would be needed to know how many to sign up to do. After discussion, Kerry Wiessmann volunteered to set up a Sign-Up Genius page that would ask people to sign up for four times a year. The program then sends a reminder close to the date you signed up to do refreshments. Yuri Plowden volunteered to periodically announce for people to sign up. The link will need to be sent on a regular basis.

Membership Transfers

The formal transfer for Bernie and Ingrid Hoffnar has been received and we welcome them as members.

A letter has been received from Richmond, VA, Monthly Meeting requesting a transfer of membership for Jules and Ellen Arginteanu. Selden Smith will respond. Several Friends asked if we had to let them leave because we would like to keep them.

Finance Committee

Kerry Wiessmann reported. Donations for 2016 totaled \$45,000, slightly higher than the budget goal of \$43,400. This year's annual appeal will go out soon, with the Meeting hoping for about \$1000 per family. The capital campaign will begin after information is received from Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Larry Greenleaf reported. The Committee approved the choice of lights for the garden level, and seven have been installed. The room appears much brighter.

Several items still need to be completed. The vinyl baseboard needs to be installed, shelving put up in the maintenance room, and the rest of the lights need to be replaced.

Friends School

Dan Hendey reported. The school had a wonderful holiday sing, with about 200 people attending. Fundraising for the new playground has gone well, with the 2/3 classroom raising over \$1000. Admissions season is starting, so spread the word about the school. The annual publication, *Friendly Voice*, has just been sent out. Fundraising is on-going.

Religious Education

Sunny Rehler had two announcements. First, five cabins have been reserved at Black Moshannon for the end of February. Please let Sunny know if you are coming or not, so they know whether to keep that many cabins. Second, all Sundays except for February 19th are now covered for RE assistants.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Johanna Jackson read the following support of a resolution being considered by State College Borough:

We, the members of the State College Friends Meeting, endorse the Resolution on Immigration Enforcement that is under consideration tonight. We applaud the proactive work to support vulnerable members of the community. We hope that the Council decides to refrain from detaining, registering, or tracking individuals based on immigration status. We stand with racial minorities, immigrants, and other vulnerable members of the community.

Signed,

State College Friends Meeting

Meeting approved the above support of the resolution.

Selden Smith announced that Baltimore Yearly Meeting has offered a power point presentation on climate change.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Minutes were approved with the addition of Bernie and Ingrid Hoffnar's names to the attendance list.

Next Business Meeting for Worship: February 5, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

Business Meeting closed with a period of worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Selden Smith, Clerk
Clerk

Margy Frysinger, Recording

Attendance:

Gary Fosmire

Larry Greenleaf

Bernie Hoffnar

Rob Nicholas

Ann Sidone

Claudia Wilson

Denise DeGeorge

Polly Dunn

Sunny Rehler

Lynne Grutzeck

Michael Grutzeck

Campbell Plowden

Yuri Plowden

Connie Wheeler

Robert Lumley-Sapanski

Katy Lumley-Sapanski

Kerry Wiessmann

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RETURN REQUESTED