

Interchange

Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

HEALING THE LAND & SPIRIT

DAVID HUNTER, BYM CAMP PROPERTY MANAGER

REPRINTED FROM WINTER 2022-2023 THE [FIRECICLE](#), A PUBLICATION OF BYM CAMPS



Friends plant chestnut trees to restore the native canopy at Catoctin Quaker Camp, Fall 2022

The scope of the charcoal and iron industry on Catoctin Mountain is hard to imagine today. With axes and cross cut saws, laborers clear cut an acre of land every day to make enough charcoal to keep the Catoctin Furnace running. Each year the furnace required 11,500 cords of wood to make 18,000 bushels of charcoal to fuel the furnace and make 1000 tons of crude iron. Over 2500 acres of land was clear cut every 30 to 40 years, for more than a century.

Repeated clear cutting does a great deal of harm to the forest and the effects of repeated clear cutting are still visible in our forests. Repeated clear cutting radically reduces the number of species in the forest community and creates an even-aged forest, susceptible to disease and unable to grow and thrive over time.

Knowing about this period in Catoctin Mountain's history inspires me to redouble our efforts to be good stewards of the forest at the camps. Increasing diversity and resilience in our forests becomes as important as building a diverse and resilient community at our summer camps. Continuing to plant new native species, bring patches of light on to the forest floor and remove non-native, invasive species are all great ways to redress harmful practices of the past in the forests.

But the industry at Catoctin Furnace was not just fueled by environmental exploitation and devastation. It was also fueled by the exploitation of humans and the devastation of families, as the large majority of the workforce was enslaved people, along with

a few free black people and indentured servants. Living conditions on the mountain were horrendous, nutrition was poor, and the average life expectancy was 43 years. How to heal the injuries inflicted onto the land feels hard but clear.

How to heal the injuries caused by exploitation of enslaved people and other workers seems more challenging. This year I have been a little adrift as to where to begin. Reflection and quiet

prayer have opened to me a simple place to begin: gratitude. I have cultivated gratitude for all of the labor that has been given on the mountain. We can still travel across the bridges made of Catoctin iron and many of the tools forged from it are still serving a purpose. The battle of Yorktown was won with cannonballs forged at the Catoctin Furnace. Much of that labor was not given willingly, but we must acknowledge that without the many who labored and fought this country would not be what it is today.

Gratitude is only a place to begin the real work of healing, and we know that struggle is long and hard and complicated. The work of healing will be accomplished through deep listening, loving discussion and faithful action. Our camps offer a great place for this work to happen. Over the years we have learned to forge camp communities where we can strive and struggle together, accomplishing great things, while still leaving plenty of time for laughter, joy, and celebration. I feel profound hope knowing that our camps offer such rich possibilities for change and healing.

Among the many other things that I feel deep gratitude for are the people who recognized the potential in our camps and for those who continue to support them today. I am grateful for the staff, counselors, parents, and campers willing to engage in the often difficult and painful process of laboring together and building a blessed community each summer. Our camps provide a unique space in which we can begin to face these challenges. Together, we are creating places for spiritual growth and healing to happen.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF SIMPLICITY: LISTENING FOR THAT OF GOD AMONG GEN Z

A PERSONAL NEW YEAR REFLECTION FROM SARAH GILLOOLY, BYM GENERAL SECRETARY

Even before the Covid pandemic began, Generation Z, defined as the generation born between 1997 and 2012, was sounding the alarm on “hustle and grind culture.” My own generation, Millennials, came of age and entered the workforce right as the Great Recession was taking hold. Studies show Millennials will be the

first generation to do worse than their parents: on track to have lower lifetime wages than their parents due to the spiraling wealth gap and the lowest rate of homeownership in recorded history due to the rising cost of housing and the exploding costs of higher education. It is no wonder, then, that my generation gave birth to the gig economy

and amplified messages that glorified being busy and overworked. Anything to earn the next dollar to feed our families and pay back those student loans. When we burnt out before middle age, consumer culture offered expensive wellness products and hot baths as the antidote to our aching bodies and spirits being crushed by “the grind”. But young people, especially younger Millennials and Gen Z, are giving rise to a new culture – the culture of “less,” a culture I see as a rising spirituality of simplicity.

You have likely encountered this emerging culture. Whether it’s a business article fretting about “Quiet Quitting” (young people doing the work they are contracted to do but not more) or the deeply nourishing content of The Nap Ministry, which reminds us that rest is a tool of resistance, the times are once again changing. This is not to say that young people are lazy. Not at all. Rather, younger people are looking around and saying “no” to an extractive culture that celebrates the sacrifice of one’s body, family, spirit, and community to overwork and over commitment.

Many of us woke up to this revival of Simplicity during the Covid pandemic. When we were no longer commuting, no longer shuttling ourselves and our kids to a dozen “engagements” each week – we began to settle into quieter days. We had more time to sleep in and to read books. More time to bake bread. More time to celebrate the miracle of the seasons changing just outside our own windows. More time to revel in the glory of the simple act of sitting on a friend’s porch with a cup of hot tea on a cold day. Perhaps even more time to sit in prayer or silent worship.

As the Covid pandemic evolves from an acute crisis to a chronic one, I am holding onto the Spirituality of Simplicity. I am re-reading early Friends’ writing on how worldly distractions drown out the still, small voice of God (though I won’t be giving up fiction novels or music!) But I am also looking to the voices of young people and the truths they continue to reveal about overwork and over commitment. Earlier this winter, the BYM staff spent three days on retreat. We did good, hard work – discussing and making commitments about how to improve the systems and processes of our servant leadership to BYM. But we left plenty of time for simpler things – for starting at an easy hour, for a walk in the woods under the blazing full moon, for making Christmas wreaths from castoff tree trimmings, for taking a dip in the healing waters of Berkeley Springs. May this winter – and the entire year ahead – be a time of ease and simpler things for us all. We are that of God, too precious to lose to the grind.



THE GOLDEN RULE PEACE SHIP

BECCA GARDENER, BYM WORKING GROUP ON US MILITARISM AND WAR

Ship ahoy! The Golden Rule Peace Ship will be docking in the Chesapeake waters of Washington D.C., Annapolis, and Baltimore this spring! She is famous for setting sail in 1958 for the Enewetak atoll in the Marshall Islands to protest U.S. atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons on the atoll. The publicity sparked by the arrest of her Quaker skipper Albert Bigelow and his crew on the way to Enewetak Atoll by the U.S. Coast Guard precipitated world-wide awareness and alarm about the toxic effect of above-ground nuclear weapon testing and the eventual ban on this type of testing.

The Golden Rule visit to our Chesapeake harbors in late April to early May is part of her “Great Loop” voyage from Chicago, down the Mississippi, and around the coast to Maine and back again. Her mission: to spread the word about the need for nuclear disarmament at every port of call. Since her salvage from the bottom of Humboldt Bay, CA in 2012 and her loving restoration by Veterans for Peace, this 30’ ketch continues to sail on missions of peace around U.S. waters.

Among the groups who are making plans for welcoming the Golden Rule and spreading her message are Pax Christi, Veterans for Peace, Peace Action, Homewood Meeting of Baltimore, Friends Meeting of Washington, and BYM Peace and Social Concerns Working Group on U.S. Militarism. Keep your scopes set for events and actions to include City Council Resolutions of Welcome, a Zoom discussion of Quaker skipper Albert Bigelow’s book “The Voyage of the Golden Rule: An Experiment with Truth” (available on Kindle for \$3), and numerous talks and get-togethers with the Golden Rule crew around our region. All aboard for the welcoming festivities in honor of this historic ship!

The Golden Rule crew welcomes volunteers, opportunities to speak at First Day School, hosting invitations, donations and good music gatherings!

Contact: Helen Jaccard, VFP Project Manager at
206 992 6364

vfpgoldenruleproject@gmail.com

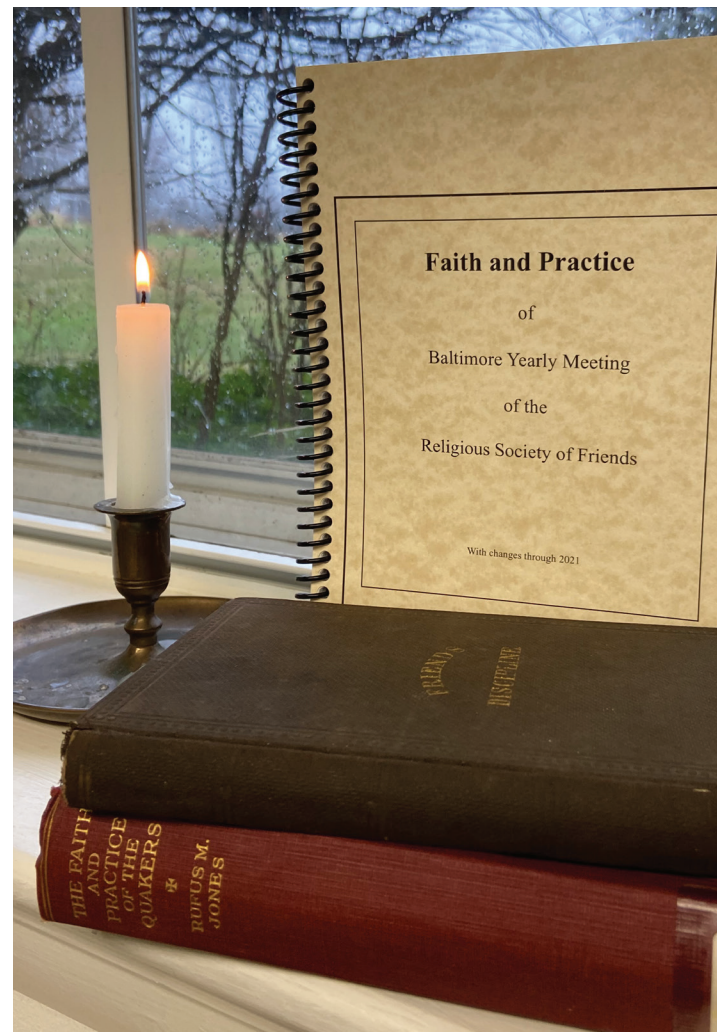
See them on Facebook or the Web at
vfpgoldenrulepeaceboat.org

BYM COMMITTEE DISCERNING CHANGES TO FAITH & PRACTICE

BYM FAITH & PRACTICE COMMITTEE

The Faith and Practice Committee has been working diligently to revise two sections of BYM Faith and Practice for presentation at the June Interim Meeting: The Quaker Experience and Meeting for Worship. These sections have been sent out to clerks of all monthly meetings as well as BYM committees and working groups with a request for group seasoning and responses by March XX 2023. By the time the Interchange is published, the Faith and Practice Committee will have held two listening sessions on Zoom for those who are unable to participate in another group discernment process. We have tried to reflect the diversity of belief and experience within BYM while retaining the centrality of what the first Friends discovered. Everything that is included has been prayerfully considered and seasoned. The two draft sections are available on the BYM Website. We welcome and encourage feedback.

Groups are requested to send comments to us via F&P Read and Comment Form (preferred method to facilitate tracking of responses) or via email at fandp@bym-rsf.org.



QUAKERS & SOCIAL MEDIA: SHARING IDEAS & RESOURCES

BYM ADVANCEMENT & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Many of us know the experience of telling someone we're a Quaker and being met with looks of confusion or shock that Quakers still exist! Often, those curious about Quakerism don't know where to find more information. In response, some Friends within Baltimore Yearly Meeting have been sharing and answering questions about Quakerism on social media platforms.

How are people in your Meeting sharing their faith experience and helping others learn more about our faith, practice, and communities? How do you want to be doing so? BYM's Advancement and Outreach committee would love to hear about and share your work, as well as serve as a resource. You can contact us at: BYMAandO@gmail.com.

MAKING PEACE AND THE PEACE TESTIMONY

GRETA KIRK MICKEY, GUNPOWDER FRIENDS MEETING

Since the outbreak of war between Russia and Ukraine I have read numerous articles examining whether the Peace Testimony remains relevant in our times. As someone who carries a leading to work for world peace my unequivocal answer is yes. Here's why.

The first understanding is that none of Friends testimonies are stand alone. Simplicity, Peace, Equality, Community, Integrity; they are all intertwined. Together, they lead us to a way of life that defines us as Quakers. If we each seek peace – not just an absence of war or violence, but that deep internal peace that our practice brings - then we are better able to live into each of our other testimonies. We are called to an immersive practice. A practice that defines the way that we live our lives and interact within the world. Our inner peace is at the core. We live in a world where crisis intervention is all too frequently the model on a global, community, and even on a personal level. We often wait until the very last minute, when there is almost no hope of rectifying a problem; when it has reached a crisis point, to address it. This makes us feel hopeless and from that place of hopelessness, we question the possibility of ever finding our way to peace. When we are truly at peace within ourselves and seeking equality for all, strengthening our community relations, and living from a place of deep integrity, and simplicity then we also have the wisdom and strength, the grace and discernment to listen and see and feel the early seeds of unrest, and to act.

When we are at peace within ourselves, that peace begins to radiate outward to our families and friends, our communities and even throughout the world. In 2008 I was blessed with a call to do peacemaking within the country of Georgia. Friends in Georgia had asked New York Yearly Meeting for help with refugee aid and conflict transformation skills. I was then serving New York Yearly Meeting as Peace Concerns Coordinator. It was within that capacity that the yearly meeting asked me to consider carrying the work in Georgia. After much prayerful discernment, I was led to say "yes".

As a facilitator in the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) I carried my understanding of that work to Friends in Georgia and, over the course of three years, I made three trips to Georgia (one for ten days, one for three weeks and one for five weeks). Each AVP

workshop is three days in duration. We did back-to-back workshops throughout my time in Georgia. On my last trip I was blessed with the knowledge that I was leaving behind a cadre of young Georgians who had become gifted AVP facilitators and who were excited to carry on the work of peacemaking in their own country.

This past summer I was asked if I would speak to NYYM's Annual Sessions about the work that I had done in the country of Georgia. As I prepared my talk, I thought about my understanding of peacemaking as the planting of seeds with the clear understanding that we may never see those seeds bear fruit. I was curious to know if the work that we had done with the AVP facilitators that we had trained changed their perspectives, their way of life, in any way. I have stayed in touch with many of my Georgian friends and so I decided to reach out to them. I asked one question: Were you "able to carry anything that you learned from our time together into the way that you live and work now." The responses that I received touched me deeply.

Each person spoke of how the AVP experience opened their understanding of how they could use the tools that they already had within themselves to find peaceful ways to deal with conflict in their lives. For many it caused them to shift their career paths. Natuli was working as a bank manager and in an abusive marriage when I met her. After her AVP experience she left both her marriage and her job. Today she works with the UN as a coordinator of the UN women's project "Stop the Violence". Natuli shared that she "wanted to do more to spread peace...to show how amazing life is without violence". Others shared that they use the skills that they learned in their daily work; Davit in his work with children, Anna began working with international peacemaking organizations, Eliko remains in Georgia and heads an organization doing AVP both in Georgia and Ukraine. Tamuna shared "... AVP opened my eyes and I learned how we can reply to violence nonviolently. Thanks to [the] AVP program I started to feel the life again, started to believe in myself again, I became emotionally stable (again), and quality of my and my children's life improved. Many thanks to this program and people who work hard to bring peace in the world."

These are just a few of the people in the country of Georgia that I was privileged to meet and work with. They are the living example of what our loving and caring outreach can do. They represent a small fraction of the seeds planted in Georgia. Seeds that have sprouted, bloomed, and continue to bear fruit as they themselves plant the seeds of peace. It is an immense blessing when we are able to see the seeds that we've planted, bear fruit. As Friends, living into our testimonies can and does have the potential to change lives at home and around the world.

SUPPORT FRIENDS PEACE TEAMS IN THE UKRAINE: COMFORT TO THE DISPLACED IN THE UKRAINE

*Richard Thayer, BYM Representatives
to Friends Peace Teams.*

One gray and rainy day, Olha Lychko-Parubocha, FPT's Ukraine Coordinator, was at a camp for Internally Displaced Persons, spreading the message of peace through stories, classes, and workshops. This day she brought small presents to tell the refugees they are remembered and cared about. One woman insisted that Olha come with her. At a small basic metal shack was the woman's husband. He had suffered a stroke and could do little for himself. Caring for him added to her burdens. To make meaning and contribution, the woman had taken up knitting soft, warm things for others in the camp. She pressed a pair of knitted slippers on Olha, an expression of gratitude for Olha's work. Olha couldn't take them ... until she saw how important it was: this woman, far from home, used to caring for her husband, now only meeting his most basic needs, found dignity and a place in community making nice things for people around her. Tears came to Olha's eyes. She accepted. She knew that wearing these slippers would bring warmth to her feet, her heart, and this woman.

FPT and Olha have worked since 2014 to support internally displaced people, youth, and communities in the Ukraine. Please help extend our work to other war-torn cities. Donate online at www.FriendsPeaceTeams.org



SHINE YOUR LIGHT

*The world needs the light,
So don't dim your light,
For friends to see the light,
You must shine your light,
I am a quaker, always shining bright.*

*Have you turned on your light
Or have you hidden your light
Darkness disappears so fast
When we remain steadfast
I am a quaker, always shining bright.*

Lucy Azenga

HORRID BOARDING SCHOOLS; HEROIC HEALTH REFORM

BYM INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Tears of Separation.

The numbers are staggering. Between 1869 and the 1960s, as many as 100,000 Indigenous children resided in 367 government and church residential schools in the U.S. Quakers ran dozens of them; estimates range from 16 to 30. The harm was pervasive. Referring to parallel schools in Canada, Pope Francis stated: "It is chilling to think of determined efforts to instill a sense of inferiority, to rob people of their cultural identity, to sever their roots, and to consider all the personal and social effects that this continues to entail: unresolved traumas that have become inter-generational traumas."

At the March 2022 Interim Meeting, BYM adopted a Minute that urged passage of the "Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the U.S. Act." The Commission would document damage done, provide a forum for Native peoples to describe their experiences, examine past coercive government policies, and enact reforms to address similar separation problems today in adoption and foster care. BYM's Minute is a way to commemorate Indigenous youngsters who had agonizing experiences, victims, survivors, original families, and descendants. The Minute lays out the obligation of BYM and other Friends to provide detailed information about individual Native students enrolled at Quaker boarding schools.

Redress Called For.

Adoption of the Minute put BYM's anti-racism (and anti-indigeneity) imperative into action. Annapolis, Alexandria,

Gunpowder, Friends Meeting of Washington, Midlothian, Patapsco, Roanoke, and Stony Run were among the Monthly Meetings that formally approved the Minute. Several Meetings want to study Indigenous issues further. Looking back, the emphasis in Quaker and other schools on assimilation--such as required English--was a form of colonization. Adelphi, Sandy Spring, and other Monthly Meetings are starting to explore tangible means of redress--financial or otherwise--requested by tribal leaders. These could include supporting Native language or land restoration and be part of reparations discussions.

Broader Concerns

More frequently, Indigenous leaders call upon Friends and others to address here and now needs. At the request of the National Indian Health Board, BYM Indian Affairs Committee members

lobbied in winter 2022 for more predictable and secure funding for the Indian Health System (IHS), the only major federal healthcare program subject to annual appropriations. To illustrate the risk, over two-and-a-half million American Indians and Alaska Natives rely on that program and yet one government shutdown created a 35-day gap in appropriations for IHS and tribal health programs. When the campaign by hundreds of organizations for advance appropriations prevailed, the BYM Committee celebrated the "historic win."

For background on the problem, see
<https://indiancountrytoday.com/the-press-pool/ncuih-joins-nihb-over-120-tribal-nations-other-organizations-in-urgent-push-for-stable-funding-for-indian-health-service>.

COMMUNITY NEWS

ANNAPOLIS FRIENDS MEETING

BARBARA THOMAS

Nominating season for committee work has closed with a renewed sense of the opportunities post-pandemic Friends have before us. How special to speak with Friends about how their gifts and leadings may connect with the needs of our community. We said farewell to our clerk of four years, Martha Baer, with a funny skit and minute of appreciation at potluck following her final Meeting for Business, along with greetings to our incoming clerk, Karen Cunnyngnam and assistant clerk, Ellen McBride.

Peace and Social Concerns has had an amazingly active year: AFM adopted a minute on Retrospective and Restorative Justice (RRJ), calling Friends to consider both our collective history as to slavery and decimation of native peoples, as well as modern and ongoing problems of historic racism.

In April, AFM supported a gathering on the 350th Anniversary of the West River Quaker Burying Ground, the site of BYM's first Annual Meeting.

Our Afghan refugee family is housed, employed, in schools and driving.

The "Quaker Call to Action" to defend democracy from extremism has led us to post-carding to support voter turnout, participating with a neighbor African-American church offering "souls-to-the-polls" rides, and initiating "Community Conversations" around difficult topics of race & political divides together with diverse area congregations as part of a "Racial Reconciliation Collaborative."

Children's Religious Education

As we return to in-person presence, we hope to re-engage our children through interactive and fun activities focused on loving, respecting, and taking care of Mother Earth. Our Children's Religious Education Committee hopes to instill a sense of kinship with all life, recognizing the interrelatedness of all Earth processes. We are excited to draw upon the curriculum resources developed by Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) which includes 10 themes featuring suggested activities, projects, songs and readings. Already our children and adults have experienced great joy in making a collage from items collected during a nature walk and creating peanut-butter filled pinecones and other vittles as gifts for the birds, critters and plant beings in our nearby woods.

HERNDON FRIENDS MEETING

Herndon Friends continue to hold a monthly vigil at the meeting house for Peace, Justice, and Equality. Thanks to a member with technology expertise, our hybrid format for meetings has been a success, with about 40% of the participants joining via Zoom and the rest in person in any given week. As of December 2022, our policy is to require COVID vaccinations and masks are optional.

We continue to have an active FCNL advocacy team which advocates and lobbies in support of peace and social justice issues. This year included virtual lobby visits with the offices of our Senators and three Congressional representatives. The Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County, led by Herndon Friends in collaboration with seventeen other religious and secular organizations, is in the

middle of its sixteenth year of recognizing high school juniors and seniors who have done something that promotes peace. You can read the details on our website.

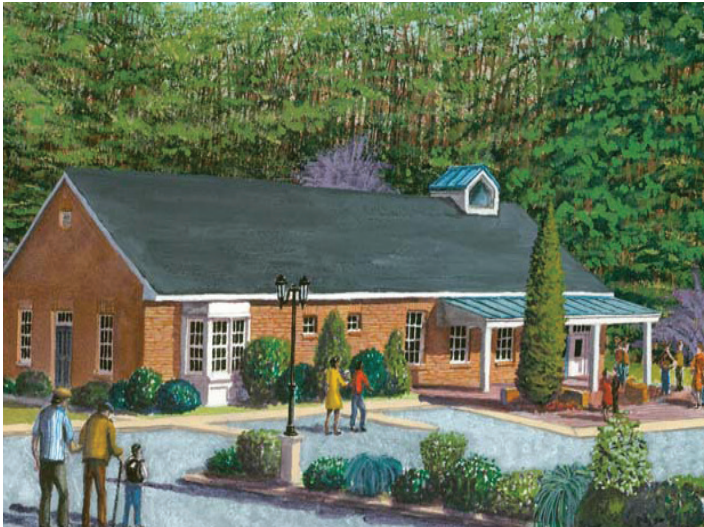
<http://fairfax.studentpeaceawards.org/>

Our Anti-Racist team has three subgroups;

- History Committee - A member has begun to do research on Native American land acknowledgment by organizations/groups, including Quaker groups, with the intent to research which Tribal Nations inhabited the land on which Herndon Friends Meeting House sits.

- Racial Healing - We held book discussions on *My Grandmother's Hands*.

- Racial Justice - A member completed Voter Registration Training by the Virginia Department of Elections and trainings by the League of Women Voters (of the Fairfax Area) and volunteered in two voter registration drives conducted by the League of Women Voters (Fairfax). All three members participated in a nonpartisan postcard campaign to encourage voter participation in the November election in Virginia. Several other Herndon Friends also participated in the postcard campaign.



PATAPSCO FRIENDS MEETING

Our members and attenders bring wisdom and information from BYM through our participation in various committees: Karen Moore participates in the Working Group on Racism and the Reparations Action Working Group. Eileen Stanzione is the Co-clerk of Ministry and Pastoral Care and the liaison to the End of Life Working Group. Deirdre Foley Citro is on the Camping Program Committee while Jim Citro is on BYM's A&O committee. Ramona is on the Supervisory Committee and with Bob Rhudy, they co-clerk a working group under the Ministry and Care Committee called Friends Helping Friends; Resolving Conflicts. Stuart Greene is on the Working Group on Right Relationship with Animals. Jean

Pfefferkorn is co-clerk of Unity with Nature. Linda Pardoe is clerk of the Stewardship and Finance Committee. We are enriched by other Friends and meetings with our participation.

Ellicott City's 250th anniversary gave Patapsco Friend's Advancement Committee something to celebrate in 2022. The founders of Ellicott City, the Ellicott brothers, were Quakers from Bucks County, PA.

Members of the A & O Committee made a presentation in July at the Howard County Historical Museum in Ellicott City on what Quakers are, our beliefs and practices. We also held several open houses at Hebron House as part of the 250th.

Our Tech team enables us to worship hybrid. Our in-person group is growing now that Covid isn't quite as serious/prevalent as it was. Hopefully Friends will continue to creep back to Hebron House, as they are comfortable.

ADELPHI FRIENDS MEETING

Greetings from Adelphi Friends Meeting! Like many Quaker Meetings, as we move away from the worst of Covid-19 we are continuing to function in dual mode: in person and online. While it is a joy to be able to serve both groups in a hybrid fashion on Sunday mornings, we are also enjoying the return in person of many of our members and attendees, including children. And somewhat surprisingly, and to our great delight, we also have an influx of newcomers most of whom come in person! We now have a reliable potluck meal after worship on Sunday.

In addition to the 10 am Sunday worship in the Meeting room, we have expanded to an in-person outdoor worship in the Memorial Garden at 8:45 am, a very small outdoor 10 am Sunday worship, a 7 pm Sunday online evening worship, and a Wednesday noon online worship (with special attention to healing). Given that before the pandemic we only had the main worship on Sunday morning, this is quite an expansion!

We are a busy community when it comes to social issues and social justice. Our Continuing Quaker Education committee is presenting a series on the Peace Testimony, the presentations of which can be found on YouTube (Adelphi Friends Meeting). Our Change Group is working on a final draft of an Anti-Racism Minute. We also Minuted our support of Reproductive Justice. Finally, a new Climate Action Working Group has been formed and we continue to support a large Afghan family that has moved to Prince Georges County.

As always, we will have our Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship -but this year it will be a hybrid one. As we come into this season of family, love and generosity, we wish everyone a heart that finds space for peace and hope.

CHARLOTTESVILLE FRIENDS

This fall we had a delightful day-long retreat at Tandem Friends School. We worshipped, sang, ate, and relaxed outside, and we rejoiced in seeing Friends whom we haven't seen since the beginning of the pandemic. Friends are already looking forward to doing this again next year.

We were pleased to welcome the Tandem sixth graders for a mid-week worship at our Meeting House, as a culmination of their study of Quakerism. After worship, we broke into small groups with 4-5 students with each Quaker adult present. We answered questions and had lively conversations about Quakerism and thereafter, ate lunch together.

Our youth walked together to raise money for the CROP walk, and our simple meal the Thursday before Thanksgiving raised a large amount for hunger relief. We have re-started potluck lunch on the second Sunday of the month and we held our festive holiday potluck dinner and carol singing for the first time in several years. Smaller numbers of attendees at these events reflect the persistent concerns around covid.

Our Meeting continues to struggle with balancing between the needs of those who wish to have all of us join together in person, and the needs of those for whom exposure to covid could be deadly for family members. Some feel strongly that we need to find a way to do hybrid worship and do it well; others don't like the idea of technology in the Meeting. We mask, but participation in indoor activities has been consistently lower than pre-pandemic. This has increased the challenge of finding people to fulfill the responsibilities of keeping our Meeting healthy and running well.

RICHMOND FRIENDS MONTHLY MEETING

Richmond Monthly Meeting leaves behind a year of losses, challenges and opportunities for our spiritual community. In 2022 we sadly said goodbye to four long-time members of RFM: Martha Menk, Bette Gilchrist, David Hines and Jules Arginteanu. For many years these Friends served on numerous committees and made valuable contributions to the life of our meeting. They will be remembered with gratitude and will be sorely missed. In addition, we saw the passing of two attenders: Lee Owings (a birthright Quaker originally from Pennsylvania who moved to the Richmond area with her husband 12 years ago) and Karen Kain a talented artist and counselor who spent time with Richmond Friends prior to moving to Australia several years ago. Karen was killed in an accident while visiting her mother here in the U.S.

Since March, 2022 we have greatly appreciated the opportunity to worship in person at the meetinghouse and also online on Zoom. Members with technical expertise have made this possible.

Our children are with the adults for the first 15 minutes of worship and then go to R-E for classroom and group activities. RFM is fortunate to have an enthusiastic and committed group of R-E teachers and volunteers, many of whom will continue to serve in 2023.

In spite of challenges, Richmond Meeting has thrived during the past year. Adult Spiritual Education Committee (ASE) chose the theme, "That of God in Everyone" for 2022 and offered a variety of ASE programs: a spring series of five sessions "On Being a Quaker", a summer program entitled "Drawing Silence" presented by Dash Shaw, a graphic artist, animator and filmmaker, who grew up in Richmond Meeting. Dash shared his research and process for the making of his graphic novel, *Discipline*, about a Quaker soldier during the civil war. *Discipline* was named one of the Graphic Novels of the Year by both the New York Times and the Guardian. ASE also offered a fall series on "Books that Feed my Spirit."

Peace & Social Concerns (PSC) sponsored a "Race & Culture Film series", a "gun violence program, and provided an extensive list of organizations to provide help to Ukraine. Building and Grounds had solar panels and a new HVAC system installed at the meetinghouse in 2022. Meetings for worship were held at The Clearing (RFM Retreat Center)) on numerous first days and we enjoyed spring and fall retreats in person at The Clearing. RFM's Earthcare Working Group and the Climate Change Friendly 8s group, this gave us valuable green tips and other information regarding cutting back on plastic usage.

In 2022, we learned more about Quaker history here in Virginia with field trips to the site of Cedar Creek Meeting in Hanover County (our predecessor meeting) and to Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond where a number of Virginia Friends are buried. RFM community looks forward to the coming year with hope and prayers for peace.

Workday Dates for the Spring of 2023

DATE	LOCATION	PURPOSE
Saturday, April 8, 2023	Catoctin	Get ready for HipCamp
Sunday April 9, 2023	Catoctin	American Chestnut Restoration
Saturday April 15, 2023	Catoctin	American Chestnut Restoration If Needed
Saturday April 29, 2023	Shiloh	Open camp
May 13, 2023	Opequon	Open Opequon
Saturday June 10, 2023	Catoctin	Close HipCamp and get ready for Camp!

Work Day Schedule:

9:30 am – Begin work

Lunchtime – Potluck lunch. Beverages & sandwich making will be provided.

4:00 pm – Work day ends

Please dress for the weather and wear heavy soled shoes, jeans and protective eyewear. Friends under the age of 18 need to be accompanied by a Friend who is older than 18.

It is time to wake the camp properties up from their winter slumber! Come and help us get the camps ready for another fabulous Summer Camping season! Join us at the Camps for a workday this Spring!

The Great American Chestnut Restoration Project

Baltimore Yearly Meeting has received a grant to plant 100 American Chestnuts on our wooded acers! We planted 34 in the fall and we look forward to planting at least 66 more this Spring!

<https://bymcamps.org/community-work-days/>

BYM CAMP RENTALS

We know that many Friends are eager to resume hosting retreats, school trips and gatherings of families and friends at the camp properties as we were able to do in the times before the pandemic. We also look forward to seeing the camp properties used in this way again. As Friends are probably aware, we have about 2 and ½ fewer people in the office providing support for the Yearly Meetings programs and administration than we did at the start of 2020. Much of the administrative work of scheduling



and billing for the off-season rentals was done by people in these supportive roles. At this point it is clear that we will not have the administrative support we will need to resume off-season camp rentals at the camps at this time.

However, we are able to offer some alternatives: We will be offering 8 campsites at Catoctin through the fall of 2023. Each camp site will have a cabin, a picnic table, a fire pit and access to clean water, the bathhouse and the rest of the property. Friends can book then by visiting [HipCamp.com](https://www.hipcamp.com) and searching for sites in Thurmont MD. Look for listings with Catoctin in the name. They will be listed as “Mary’s cabin at Catoctin” or “Elias’ cabin at Catoctin”.

We will also be offering the Studio at Catoctin for rental on AirBnB throughout the year. Friends can book the Studio by visiting [AirBnB.com](https://www.airbnb.com) and searching in Thurmont MD and looking for “The Studio at Catoctin” We look forward to a time when we can host groups who would like to rent the entire camp soon!

FRIENDLY ADULT PRESENCE TRAINING

The Youth Programs Committee and Young Friends will be hosting a Friendly Adult Presence (FAP) training in March, 2023!

Dates: Saturday March 4th 11am - Sunday March 5th 12pm
Location: TBA

Since the location is not yet published, if your RSVP is contingent on where it’s held please RSVP maybe so that we can

keep you posted directly when the location is announced. More details will be included in the weekly announcements leading up to the event. If you have any questions please reach out to Sunshine at

youthprograms@bym-rsf.org.



Shine Your Light this Summer at BYM Camps

BYM Camps is a family of four summer camp programs spread along the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia and Maryland. Operated and stewarded by Baltimore Yearly Meeting, our four programs are unique and distinctive but tied together by a belief in the importance and value of every person. We build communities and experiences that allow everyone — campers and staff — to find their light, shine their light, grow their light, and share their light.

BYM Camps is now accepting applications for Summer 2023...

Campers!
Counselors
Family Work Grants
Kitchen Managers
Cooks
CDL Drivers (we’ll train you!)
Nursing/Medical Staff
Mental, Emotional, & Social Health Coordinators

www.bymcamps.org

Find Your Light



Upcoming Key Dates

Feb 12

Chesapeake Quarter Meeting
Gunpowder Friends Meeting

Feb 17-19

Young Friends Con
Homewood Friends Meeting

Feb TBD

STRIDE Phone-A-Thon

Feb 28

Budget Requests Due

March 1

**Deadline for Comments on Faith &
Practice Proposed Edits**

March 18-19

Jr Young Friends Con
Friends Meeting of Washington

March 25

Winter Interim Meeting
Friends Meeting of Washington
Agenda items due Feb 25th
Supporting docs due March 16

April 11

Spring Interchange Deadline

April 15

Spiritual State of the Meeting Reports Due

April 21-23

Young Friends Con
Sandy Spring Friends Meeting

May 5-7

Spiritual Formation Spring Retreat
Claggett Center, Adamstown, MD

Baltimore Yearly Meeting
17100 Quaker Lane
Sandy Spring, MD 20860
Address service requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage BLK-RT
STD MAIL
PAID
Sandy Spring, MD
Permit No. 10112

Do you want to receive the
Interchange via e-mail?
Send your current e-mail address to:
admin@bym-rsf.org

VISIT www.BYMcamps.org

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