

ANNAPOLIS FRIENDS NEWSLETTER — August 2012

CALENDAR

- Meeting for worship: 11 a.m. on First Days
- First Day School for children: 11 a.m. (Joining meeting for worship from 11:45 a.m. to noon)
- Nursery care for our youngest: 11 a.m.
- Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business: 1st First Day of month at 9 a.m.
- Adult religious education: As noted in calendar below

NOTE: Early Meetings outdoors on second, fourth, and fifth First Days

AUGUST 5: 9 a.m. Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business; 11 a.m. Meeting for Worship; 1 p.m. Potluck lunch

AUGUST 12: 11 a.m. Meeting for worship

AUGUST 19: 9 a.m. Committee Meetings; 11 a.m. Meeting for Worship; Newsletter items deadline: please email!

AUGUST 26: 11 a.m. Meeting for Worship

CARE OF THE MEETING HOUSE: Pastoral Care

QUERIES FOR EIGHTH MONTH: OUTREACH

Do you as way opens, share Friends' principles with non-Friends? Do you witness to your Quaker faith by letting your life speak? Do you make non-Friends welcome in your meetings for worship? Do you find ways to encourage their continued attendance? (Faith & Practice, p. 40)

NOTE: No MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS held during seventh month, so no minutes are provided this month.

AFM PICNIC AND SWIM

Enjoy your Quaker community in an afternoon of picnicking and swimming on August 26. The picnic area is under trees and swimming is in an artesian fresh waterpool adjacent to the Severn River. Also, badminton will be set up for games and a kayak is available for Severn River shoreline exploration. In the past, conversation has been the main ingredient.

Veggie burgers and the other kind will be available to grill and lemonade provided. You will bring the sides and salads. The date is set so that kids in Quaker camp can attend and the Philadelphia people of our sister school are also invited.

Mark the date: August 26 after Meeting for Worship at Ben Oaks Community Picnic Area. Park alongside picnic area--just beyond the pool on Severnside Avenue or at pool parking lot.

Directions from the Meeting House: Route 50 West to 97 North. Exit #10 Millersville, Severna Park. Bear right off the exit (before the light), go south on the Access Road-Veterans Hgwy. Turn left at the light, West Benfield Road and go about a mile. Turn right onto Severnside Road, and drive past the pool. Turn right onto Severside Avenue. Park beside the picnic area on Severnside Avenue just beyond the pool. For GPS direction, you can use my address (one block after you pass Severnside Road): 402 Ben Oaks Drive West, Severna Park, Maryland 21146.

For more information, call Tricia R. at 410-987-8675.

DISCUSSION ON JOHN WOOLMAN

By Pat Schenck

Every time I read John Woolman's Journal something new jumps out at me. This rich document of his spiritual life keeps on giving! A discussion group on his journal will be held September 9 and 23, October 14 and 28.

The journal is not an autobiography. He makes only passing mention of events such as his marriage, birth of children, and so on. Rather, it is the story of his attempts to live his life in obedience to the Spirit.

He writes about his decision to simplify his life by giving up a profitable retail business in order to be less rushed and distracted from his relationship with God. He relates the experiences that helped him understand the wrongfulness of holding people in slavery. He describes his meaningful worship with Indians.

What has struck me most is his struggle to obey his call. For example, he was hesitant to share his concern with respected elders in the Meeting who held people in slavery. Perhaps I responded especially to these passages because of the difficulty I have had talking about my opposition to war with people who considered supporting wars the patriotic thing to do. He shows us how often he had to struggle and pray to do the right thing.

Once he overcame his resistance, John Woolman approached slave owners in a way that can be instructive to all of us, with respect, love, and persistence. What a role model!

If you want to read an abridged or updated version, that is okay. The version in Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings (edited by Douglas Steere) is a good choice (not Quaker Spirituality-Abridged, and be sure it's the Douglas Steere version). The version in The Quaker Reader (edited by Jessamyn West) is shortened more than I like, but if your reading time is limited, that's an option. As always, if you haven't read it, I won't lock the door against you, but please, do yourself the favor of reading it. I suggest you read the first four chapters for September 9.

There are copies in the library of the original work as well as the two anthologies mentioned above, and they can be ordered from QuakerBooks.org or Amazon.com. Check both sources and compare prices.

PARTNER ENRICHMENT GROUP: WE CHANGED OUR NAME, PLEASE JOIN US

The Couple Enrichment Group is now the Partner Enrichment Group (PEG) and we meet the third First Day each month at 12:30 p.m. in the Classroom. Our next session begins September 16 and we are inviting new partners to join us. All are most welcome as we practice a very deliberate communication style both in the larger group and privately. In our first session we will share this method to make sure all understand and can practice its potency.

You may think we are partners in distress. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Instead, we are five strong partnerships of varying duration and type. All are seeking to communicate more powerfully with our partners, to deepen our understanding of one another, and to enrich our relationships. Actually as Quakers, we see ourselves as a community within AFM built on mutual trust and caring.

Topics we have covered this past year are: Expressions of Love; Using our Time; Managing Conflict; Understanding How Friendships with Others affect the Partnership; Communicating Based on How Our Parents Communicated; Money and Financial Decision-Making; Discussing Retirement and End of Life Decisions. Our September 2012 topic is Our Partner's Strengths.

For more information, please contact Karen Pell at rise of Meeting for Worship, call [443-319-5327](tel:443-319-5327), or email kpell851@comcast.net.

LIGHT HOUSE ANNOUNCEMENTS

RUN FOR SHELTER

The Light House is holding a Run for Shelter on September 30 at 7:30 a.m., and because one of the events is a half-marathon--not something to venture on without training--I am sending this along as an early notice (luckily, there's also a 4.2-mile fun race). The neighborhood is Quiet Waters/Hillsmere.

Details are here: <http://www.active.com/running/annapolis-md/annapolis-run-for-shelter-at-quiet-waters-park-2012> (Don't be misled by the url--this event replaces the very successful Ride for Shelter that was held for several years.)

Neither event is inexpensive, but the cause is very worthy. If 4.2 miles seems like a long way, please consider volunteering--we need help, and there is a contact listed on the web page. (Anyone who runs shorter distances but might like support to increase your mileage may contact Phil at pcaaroom@gmail.com.)

PUMPKIN PATCH

The Pumpkin Patch will be held through October 31 at its usual location, St. Martin's Lutheran Church at the corner of Spa Road and Hilltop. Our Meeting will staff the patch on Wednesday, October 17.

I am a couple months away from looking for volunteers, but the reason I am sending this now is that the organizers are asking local congregations to donate handmade crafts to be sold at the Pumpkin Patch. Some examples are knitted items, jewelry, fall-themed decorative items, and painted photo boxes.

If you are interested in donating items to be sold at the Pumpkin Patch, or if you have questions, please contact the organizer Christy Sample, at christy.sample@gmail.com or 410-897-2478.

Thank you,
Peter

SCHOOL OUTREACH

PHILADELPHIA

Lise Cheney, our partner teacher in Philadelphia, will be teaching math and science this year in the third grade. She will have 50 students. We have worked to target the most needed items (*), but if you see something else you think would be good for a third grade class, please feel free. Below are this year's requested items. If an item lacks an asterix it is a lower priority, but still useful if the price is great:

Composition Books, wide rule*; Spiral Notebooks, wide rule; Lined Paper, wide rule; 2013 Calendars; Pocket Folders, plastic*; Pocket Folders, paper*; Pencils, No. 2*; Crayola Markers, broad, 10-pks*; Expo Dry Erase Markers, black*; Eraser Caps; Games; and Puzzles.

SILVER SPRING

Jenn McKeown's school in Silver Spring is targeting backpacks this year. Grades span pre-school through second grade, so a range of sizes would be good.

If you would like to help by shopping, please place purchases in the collection bins in the large classroom. If you would prefer to leave the shopping to the bargain hunters amongst us, financial donations would also be greatly appreciated and can be given to Ruth Slavin or Cairn Krafft, or left in the CREC mailbox so we can bundle them together to give to AFM treasurer, Joel Rodkin. Checks should be made payable to AFM, with schools project in the memo. Thank you for your support, it means so much to the teachers and children we are able to help!

Cairn & Ruth, CREC

THRESHOLD CHOIR OF ANNAPOLIS

Threshold Choir is a women's choir with a ministry to enjoy and benefit from community singing of beautiful a capella, soul-inspiring lyrics, and then, eventually, to bring small teams of two or three to minister through song to those in the Annapolis community who are sick or dying, upon request.

We are going to be meeting at AFM on the second and fourth Friday evenings at 6 p.m., with light snacks from 7:30 to 8 p.m., and then if some want to continue visiting, we/they will move to the Balt Coffee up the street. I hope to have us meet on the fifth Friday as well, when they occur, but I need to check the calendar for those.

For more information, contact Nancy Jo Steetle or me, or go on the web to see the national web site (www.thresholdchoir.org) and some videos of singers on YouTube.

Say it ain't so with the Threshold Choir.

BYM THINKING ABOUT RACE GROUP: RACE OBLIVIOUSNESS

Excerpt from "Racial Healing: Confronting the Fear Between Blacks & Whites"
By Harlon L. Dalton, 1995 (pp. 109-110)

"Why do most White people not see themselves as having a race? In part, race obliviousness is the natural consequence of being in the driver's seat..."

"Whatever the reason, the inability or unwillingness of many White people to think of themselves in racial terms has decidedly negative consequences. For one thing, it produces huge blind spots. It leaves them baffled by the amount of energy many Blacks pour into questions of racial identity... It blinds Whites to the fact that their lives are shaped by race just as much as are the lives of people of color. How they view life's possibilities; whom they regard as heroes; the extent to which they feel the country is theirs; the extent to which that belief is echoed back to them; all this and more is in part a function of their race.

"This obliviousness also makes it difficult for many Whites to comprehend why Blacks interact with them on the basis of past dealings with other Whites, and why Blacks sometimes expect them to make up for the sins of their fathers, and of their neighbors as well. Curiously enough, many of the same folk wouldn't think twice about responding to young Black males as a type rather than as individuals."

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism meets most months on the third Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 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 at david.etheridge@verizon.net.

FIRST DAY SCHOOL TAKES A BREAK FOR SUMMER

We will not have structured First Day School classes during Meeting for Worship for the duration of the summer! But we will re-convene on Sunday, September 11.

As always, parents are welcome to spend time with their children in the First Day School classroom during Meeting for Worship, reading books and using the various arts and crafts supplies, or to use our play area outside.

We only ask that anything you do use be put away neatly. As always, nursery care for our youngest members will be available on all First Days during Meeting for Worship.

Wishing everyone a joyous summer,
Joanna T. and Kimberly B.-Co-Clerks, Children's Religious Education Committee

LIBRARY CORNER

POETRY BOOKS BY JUDY SORUM BROWN

Announcing two new poetry books in the library from Judy Sorum Brown, now in the new section of the Library and, soon, to join the poetry section. Here is a sample:

Stepping Back

Stepping back
Creates the space-
For insight,
Some small flame
Of creativity,
For some new
Sprout

To push through
To the light.
the growth will
Do what's needing to be done;
Our work is to
Create the space.

“WISDOM JESUS” BY CYNTHIA BOURGEAULT

Reviewed by Suzanne Spoor

Cynthia Bourgeault's goal in "Wisdom Jesus" is to move Western Christians beyond their dualistic thinking about Christianity. She argues that what we (Western Christians) think we know about Jesus stops us from really knowing Jesus, especially as a spiritual master. This is a problem, she says, because it keeps our spiritual lives static and therefore stunted. The book is compelling and instructive, and it offers concrete methods for igniting a dynamic spiritual practice.

There are two things I especially like about this book. One is that Jesus is conceptualized as very radical and much more complex than he is usually imagined. Bourgeault uses adjectives in connection to Jesus that challenge the reader to think of him in new ways--for example, Tantric

Master. The author reveals connections between Christianity and various spiritual practices in the East, such as Buddhism and Persian mysticism, further complicating what we think we know about Jesus. The second thing I like about this book is that Bourgeault walks the reader through Bible stories that don't make much sense to someone brought up in a Western context, and she shows how her new way of understanding Jesus makes the text much clearer.

Her discussion is historically grounded. Her description of the economic, political, social, and educational context of Jesus' life sets up a foundation, and she discusses the historical importance of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi and the Dead Sea Scrolls. In addition, the growing field of Syriac studies contributes to new ways of understanding Jesus and a much, much larger concept of Christianity.

Bourgeault shows that when Christians focus their entire religious life on the knowledge that Jesus rose from the dead, they no longer seek new spiritual knowledge. This makes them deaf to the inner voice of truth.

When Christians think in dualities (as they are often taught to do), for example right/wrong, good/bad, inside/outside, they close out thousands of possibilities that can bring them closer to a higher truth. The way to those truths, she argues, is through meditation.

The last section of the book is dedicated to practical ways for starting a regular and dynamic practice of meditation, and even experienced practitioners will find her suggestions helpful. For these reasons, the book will be useful to people who are practicing Quakerism. It will also appeal to those who are trying to reconcile Catholic, Episcopal, or Protestant beliefs and traditions with Quaker practices.

QUAKER QUOTES FOR AUGUST

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:37-40, KJV)

He hath filled our meeting with his living presence and crowned our assembly with his heavenly power and opened the fountain of life unto us, and caused the stream of his love to flow freely among us and run from vessel to vessel... (Yearly Meeting of Women at York, 1688)

In the united stillness of the gathered meeting there is a power known only by experience, and mysterious even when the most familiar. (Caroline E. Stephen, 1908)

“Let me light my lamp,” says the star, “and never debate if it will help to remove the darkness.”
(R. Tagore)

What does love look like? It has hands to help others. It has feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like. (St. Augustine)

Divine love imposeth no rigorous or unreasonable commands, but graciously points out the spirit of brotherhood and way to happiness. (John Woolman)

HOW TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please submit items for the calendar and brief descriptions of events by August 19.
- Phil Caroom is the editor of the Annapolis Friends Newsletter. Please send any items for inclusion in the newsletter to him at annapolisfriendsmeeting@gmail.com.
- Friends also are asked to watch your email for announcements of meetings and to listen for announcements at the rise of meeting.
- Event and activity organizers, please also post your announcements on the bulletin board for those who do not use electronic mail!
- Announce List: announce@annapolis.quaker.org; Discuss List: discuss@annapolis.quaker.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

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