

ANNAPOLIS FRIENDS NEWSLETTER — December 2013

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
- Early meeting for worship (weather permitting outdoors) at 8 a.m. on 2nd, 4th, and 5th First Days
- Meditation study group meets at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings in the main meeting room
- NOTE: The deadline for submitting newsletter items is the 20th of the month

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

DECEMBER 8: 8 a.m. Early Meeting for Worship; 9:15 a.m. [Meeting for Learning](#): Clearness Committees; 11 a.m. Meeting for Worship

DECEMBER 15: 9 a.m. Committee Meetings; 11 a.m. Meeting for Worship; 11:40 a.m. Children's Christmas Program

DECEMBER 22: 8 a.m. Early Meeting for Workshop; 9:15 a.m. [Meeting for Learning](#): Advent Christmas Carols; 11 a.m. Meeting for Worship

DECEMBER 24: 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship for a half hour then a half hour of singing carols. Fresh and mulled cider will be served. Friends are asked to share some cookies if they feel led. If you have questions contact the Elsbrees at [410-647-3591](tel:410-647-3591).

DECEMBER 29: 8 a.m. Early Meeting for Workshop; 11 a.m. Meeting for Worship

CARE OF THE MEETING HOUSE: Outreach

QUERIES FOR TWELFTH MONTH: THE ENVIRONMENT

Am I concerned for the responsible use of natural resources and their nurture for future generations? Do I try to avoid wasteful consumption and pollution? Do I seek to preserve the beauty and balance of God's world? Do I honor the life of all living things, the order of nature, the wildness of wilderness, the richness of the created world? Do I seek the holiness which God has placed in these things and the measure of Light which God has lent them? (Faith & Practice, p. 41)

HOLIDAY MARKET

Dear Friends,

There are lots of ways you can help with Holiday Market.

- DONATIONS

This is the perfect time to simplify your life by donating new or gently used items that you no longer need (or perhaps never needed). We will accept housewares, books, jewelry, Christmas items, toys, craft supplies, music, tools, gardening supplies, artwork, etc., Because Holiday Market is indoors and space is limited we don't generally take clothing, although we can handle accessories. We will start accepting donations December 1, the first day prior to market, or earlier by individual arrangement, if needed.

- SOUPS

At this year's Holiday Market we will once again be offering delicious homemade soups and assorted Great Harvest breads for lunch, so please consider bringing your favorite soup to share. If you could please let me know what you will be bringing, that will help the planning process. By about 12:45 p.m. if soups are still available, we will start offering them for take-out sale in larger quantities.

- BAKED GOODS

Baked goods such as cookies, candy, pies, and cakes provide welcome additions to our menu and for take-away sales, so if you like to bake, here's your chance to contribute. Please bring baked goods early on Saturday, or earlier by arrangement.

- CRAFTS

We will have a craft table (in addition to the children's table), so if you like to knit, crochet, or do some other craft, please bring your items. These make great Christmas gifts, especially when the purchaser can enclose literature on the causes we are raising money to support.

- PAPERWHITE NARCISSUS BULBS

We will have both loose bulbs as well as bulbs that have already been potted up and started. These also make great gifts, a welcome bit of springtime for someone special, even for yourself.

- AFGHAN RUGS, SHAWLS, AND JEWELRY

Fahima Vorgetts will be bringing her handmade Afghan rugs, shawls, jewelry and other items. Proceeds from the sale of these items will go to her 501(c)(3), the Afghan Women's Fund (<http://afghanwomensfund.org/>). Again, great gifting opportunities!

- SORTING

If you have a gift for organizing, we need your help starting Wednesday, 4 December. Those who are available in the afternoon can help at Marcia Oy's house around 2:30 p.m. with loading and transporting Nancy Jo's donations to the meetinghouse, then around 3:15 p.m. we hope to start setting up the tables, tablecloths and labels at the meetinghouse, so that full-scale sorting/set-up can begin by 5:30 or 6 p.m. Wednesday evening. Sorting opportunities will continue Thursday and Friday evenings, so we are ready to go bright and early Saturday morning. If you can help, please let me know when, either by email or signing up on the clipboard at circle.

- STAFFING

We can always use help at Market answering people's questions, carrying items out to cars, etc., so if you would like to help in this way, plan to grab an apron and dive in.

- SHOPPING

Remember, proceeds will support We Care and Friends (<http://www.wecareandfriends.org/>) and Winter Relief in Anne Arundel County (<http://arundelhoh.org/programs-and-services/winter-relief>) for the external 75%, and the Nancy Jo Scholarship Fund at Pendle Hill for the internal 25%, with Fahima's proceeds going to the Afghan Women's Fund. We will have lots of great food, gift and white-elephant items for sale, so please plan to bring some friends and come and shop for a cause (9 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 7)!

- CLEAN-UP

Starting at 2 p.m. we will be boxing up the unsold items and moving them to the porch for pick-up on Monday. It always helps to have some new reinforcements at this stage, so if you're not an early riser, this might be a good time to help.

Thank you in advance for your help on Holiday Market, as we work to simplify our lives, build community, and raise money for good causes.

Peace,

Cairn and the Market Subcommittee, Beth, Careen, Jean, Kit, and Margaret

MEETING FOR LEARNING

- **QUAKER CLEARNESS PROCESS**

On December 8 at 9:15 a.m., Nancy-Jo S and the Pastoral Care Committee are presenting a program on the Quaker Clearness Process. This is be an opportunity to learn how a Clearness Committee works or you might like to be on a Clearness Committee and could benefit with reminders of the process. We will discuss the role of a clearness committee in helping us discern our path through difficult times or in pursuit of God's leading. We will not be discussing the clearness process for marriage or membership at this meeting.

- **ADVENT CHRISTMAS CAROLS**

On December 22 at 9:15 a.m., Martha O'H will lead us in a exploration of the meaning and history of Advent Carols. Last year's program was greatly appreciated and we will again be encouraged sing.

- **SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE MEETING**

In preparation for the Spiritual State of the Meeting discernment process, please begin to think about how our Meeting has touched you this past year. Committees might look over the past year accomplishments in order to bring new committee members up to date in January.

Thank you,
Patty

DECONSTRUCTING RACISM

Dear Friends,

Please mark your calendars for the next Deconstructing Racism Discussion: Saturday, January 4, from 2 to 4 p.m. in the meetinghouse library. Our group is under the care of AFM Ministry and Worship Committee. Friends gather every two or three months to talk about our recent experiences related to race and diversity. We open in silent worship, update each other on events in our lives, examine our own unaware racism, discern our individual and collective leadings for furthering equality and justice, and close in silent worship. Hope you can share in this exchange. All are welcome!

In peace,
Jean

THINKING ABOUT RACE: SUCCESS

"How is it that Minnesota is so successful in keeping white people out of prison?"

This question provides a radically different perspective on the racial disparities in incarceration rates than the one that asks why so many black and brown people are incarcerated for drug-related crimes. This racial disparity is true even though rates of use and distribution/sale of illegal drugs are about the same for white and blacks in the U.S.

It happens that Minnesota's black-to-white imprisonment ratio is one of the highest in the nation. This is what prompted some Minnesotans to ask the above question. People in Baltimore and Maryland (and every other city and state) should be asking this same question. Many answers can be found in Michelle Alexander's book, "The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness." Once we have asked the question, and begun to understand the answers, what will we then do to achieve success in keeping people of color out of prison?

The BYM 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 E at david.etheridge@verizon.net or Pat S at pat.schenck@verizon.net.

LIBRARY CORNER

"Reclaiming the Transcendent" by Thomas Gates
Reviewed by Pat Schenck

Our worship has an implicit theology: God is present, has something to say to us, and will speak to the gathered community. Our meeting for business also has an implicit theology: God has a will for our community, we can discern it, and God will give us what we need to accomplish God's tasks.

But how do we hold on to these beliefs in a way that does justice both to the scientific worldview and to our deepest spiritual intuitions? In "Reclaiming the Transcendent: God in Process" (Pendle Hill Pamphlet #422), author Thomas Gates explores these questions. He explores the idea of "Panentheism" or "Process Theology," which suggests that God is both imminent and transcendent, more a verb than a noun, and is a force that pushes us in the right direction.

This summer I invited anyone interested to discuss this pamphlet. Six of us met in the meeting library, and we found the discussion so rich that we decided to continue meeting and read one of the books the author referred to, "The God We Never Knew" by Marcus J. Borg. This book, written for a broader audience than just Friends, explores Panentheism and the implications different beliefs about God and Jesus have in our lives.

Our sharing was deep over four sessions and we found the books very meaningful. Both of them are in our library.

QUAKER QUOTES FOR DECEMBER

This is the message of John Woolman: "I was early convinced...that true religion consisted in an inward life wherein the heart doth love and reverence God the Creator and learns to exercise equal justice and goodness not only toward all men but also towards all God's creatures. That...the mind was moved to love Him in all His outward manifestations." ...You cannot separate the inward experience of God from the outward obligation to live in harmony with Creation. (Marshall Massey, Uniting Friends with Nature, Friend's Bulletin, October 1985)

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God.
He was with God in the beginning.
Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him.
All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men,
A light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower.
(John 1: 1-5)

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward all.
(Luke 21:14)

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS MINUTES THIRD DAY OF THE ELEVENTH MONTH, 2013

Present were: Elise A (Clerk), Phyllis S (Recording Clerk), Mary B, Carl B, Kimberly B, Will C, Phil C, Karen C, Jennifer DM, Nan E, Sky E, Esther G, Lo H, Beth I, Wes J, Bill K, Carol K, Cairn K, Jack L, Lee L, Careen M, Marcia O, Bonnie P, Sue P, Pat S, Ruth S, Barbara T, and Joanna T.

Our Meeting began with centering worship.

Nominating Committee – Barbara Thomas presented the first reading of the 2014 slate.

The Nominating Committee presented its committee recommendations in the first reading. The second reading will be at the December Meeting for Business and, if approved, will go to Trustees for final confirmation. The committee wishes to thank Friends for being so willing to serve AFM on committees and as liaisons to various Quaker organizations. Most committees are well staffed to meet our needs for 2014; however, all committees welcome additional members--Library and Outreach especially. Pastoral Care and Hospitality need further discernment among members on clerking. Also, William Penn House needs a liaison.

Nominating committee members (Cairn K, Margaret H, Barbara T, Nancy Jo S, Bill K, and Don S) welcome your suggestions and questions over the next month. We encourage committee clerks to provide an orientation for new members by January and to invite incoming members to join a meeting prior to then.

Children's Religious Education Committee – Joanna T presented two quick requests from CREC

1. Child Welcoming: November 17
 2. Stone Soup following week
- and a formal request to hold the Children's Christmas Program on December 15, 11:40.

ACTION: Friends approve holding the Christmas Program on December 15.

Homeschooling Annual Report – Kimberly B presented the annual report. It will appear in the newsletter and as an attachment in the book of MfB minutes. Members applaud the Homeschooling Committee's effort and work, in the tradition of Quaker education.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee – Carl B presented the climate change minute. A discussion followed. Many F(f)riends suggested ways to share this information. Friends especially appreciated Will Candler's long-time leading and ministry on climate change.

A Minute on Climate Change Concerns and Policies

"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it." Psalm 24:1

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality and Stewardship are our guides in dealing with the challenges of global warming and climate change. Annapolis Friends Meeting supports sustainable relationships among the economic, environmental, and social systems—relationships which emphasize humans as interdependent with and nurturing of the environment and of each other. We believe fundamental questions on policy are spiritual and we embrace our responsibility to protect the earth's life forms and ecosystems.

Annapolis Friends Meeting advocates sustainability, conservation, and technology. We support policies leading to sustainable and equitable consumption of energy, sustainable population growth based on universal human rights, and sustainable just economic growth based on healthy ecosystems. These will require development of renewable energy solutions and deliberate action to move away from the primacy of the fossil-fuel resource consumption. The ingenuity to solve problems exists; the will to tackle entrenched interests must be found.

- Government and business are asked to give full consideration to and implement substantial fees on fossil fuels (coal, oil, natural gas) to make fossil-free energy development and use attractive and to redistribute revenue from such fees as an equal per capita "energy dividend". For example, place a fee, up-stream at the mine, well-head or port of entry on coal, oil and natural gas and use the return to both support research of renewable energy and technology development to counter negative climate effects and to help people and business meet the added cost of electricity and fuel.
- Government and business are asked to support and implement programs to conserve energy and increase technological efficiencies in the use of energy through conservation practices for an overall reduction in energy consumption. Programs should reduce energy use in residential and commercial buildings by improving insulation and passive solar systems, support public transportation, improve energy efficiency of motor vehicles, and create more compact walkable and bikeable communities.

We acknowledge the overwhelming evidence supported by research from diverse fields of science that rapid changes are occurring because of human choices and actions. Of particular danger to life on our planet is the exponential growth in the burning of fossil fuels. The extreme buildup of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and rising temperatures are degrading the earth's self-sustaining systems that foster life. As a result of global warming, we are now experiencing—and will continue to experience—significant increases in flooding of coastal areas, drought in agricultural regions, freshwater depletion in watersheds, and severe weather events worldwide. Temperature change and raising sea level negatively affect sea life and destroy habitat. Climate change on land negatively affects agriculture and significantly impacts the current mass extinction as species are unable to adjust. As the level of greenhouse gas increases the destructive effects will increase. The disruption and destruction of our ecosystems are now causing massive extinction of species and increased dangerous weather events. We can anticipate scarcity of resources, injustice, strife and violence. While science confirms that there have been significant temperature and sea level changes in the past, those changes occurred over millennia and longer thus allowing ecosystems time to adapt. What is new is that we are now making changes to the climate in decades not millennia, thereby threatening the adaptability of life, including that of human civilization. Further, these conditions and Earth's systems are interacting in ways that, if left without abatement and reduction of greenhouse gases, are predicted to range from a much more extreme climate to making the Earth uninhabitable.

Major change, especially the reduction of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, will be costly. However it will be much more costly to delay change. As conditions worsen, the extent of change required and mitigation of continuing damage will greatly increase our costs. We are living in a time of great risk and opportunity for humans. The health of our planet and human civilization rests on the interconnection of human activity with the natural world. We assert the fact that we are at one with nature, and give thanks for the beauty of Creation and the gift of life. The storms are gathering. Annapolis Friends Meeting prays that we follow our Testimonies, respect science, and listen to the inward voice urging us to act now for the future of the Earth's children.

ACTION: Friends approve the minute as written, with the understanding that the committee revise the lead sentence with "sustainability, conservation, and technology" as they feel led, consistent with our discussion.

Outreach Committee – Bonnie P led a discussion of whether our monthly potluck should be on the 1st, 2nd, or 4th First Day of each month. Outreach suggests that having potluck on the first First Day makes the day too long for all F(f)riends to attend. The hope is that making the potluck more special will help to promote community and make better connections with new attenders and visitors.

ACTION: Friends approve allowing Outreach and Hospitality to implement a change to the timing for potluck to the Fourth First Day of each month, starting in January.

Mardy B announced the GAIN meeting on November 14 will involve Judge Phil C discussing criminal justice issues in Anne Arundel County: including screening, diversion, sentencing alternatives, and reentry. Sam S will be here November 24 for the 9:15 a.m. Meeting for Learning.

Closing: These minutes were read and approved during Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Meeting closed with silent worship.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elise A, Clerk, and Phyllis S, Recording Clerk

Attachment MfB
Children's Religious Education Committee
Home Schooling Annual Status Report, November 2013
Kimberly B

The Annapolis Friends Meeting ad hoc Homeschooling Committee successfully provided oversight for the educational experiences of four families and seven students during the 2012/2013 academic year. Final reviews were joyfully completed during a swim party at the Benson's beach.

The ad hoc Committee for the 2013/2014 academic year will consist of Kimberly B, Sarah B, Mardy B, Eleni E, Denise F, Cairn K, and Joanna T. Eleni and I will continue to co-chair. The AFM program has expanded again this year. Welcoming three additional families. We will be providing educational oversight for 14 students: 7 in each Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties.

Families who choose AFM seem to be drawn by the flexibility of our program, the academic expertise of our committee, and the personal approach of our oversight. We are pleased to see the program expanding at a rate and in a manner that allows us to maintain quality interaction with our participants. Eleni and I are fortunate to have regular opportunities to interact with each of our homeschooling families on a weekly or monthly basis.

We are always discussing the children and sharing educational advice and opportunities. In some cases, we are actually teaching each other's children. These interactions have proven to be such rewarding exchanges that the committee changed our review process to formalize and encourage this personal approach. We previously required 2 paper reviews: interim and final. These required parents to complete an assessment of each child's academic process and submit it to the committee for review.

Experienced homeschooling families are now offered the option to choose (at the discretion of the committee) a personal conference instead of the interim review. The change acknowledges the character of our program and is consistent with the requirements of COMAR, which does not require a paper review but "conferences at appropriate intervals." We view the richness of our current interaction with our families as a great asset to foster and expand. We think overall this change will prove a more productive way to build community, strengthen relationships, and enhance the educational experience.

Families new to homeschooling will still complete an interim paper review, and this paper review option will be necessary for any future families that were geographically isolated and not interacting with the group on a regular basis.

Overall, it looks like an incredibly promising year. Our students are performing in orchestras and other musical venues, acting and starring in local theatre productions, excelling in scouting, competing in sports, publishing stories, creating art, learning languages,... They are an exceptional group of children, and we are honored to support their academic process.

HOW TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please submit items for the calendar and brief descriptions of events by the 20th of the month.
- Beth M is the editor of the Annapolis Friends Newsletter. Please send any items for inclusion in the newsletter to 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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