

Annapolis Friends Monthly Meeting (AFM)  
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MfW wAtB)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Month, 1<sup>st</sup> Day, 2020  
(03/01/2020)  
Meeting Minutes

Present: Martha B. (clerk), Ellen M. (recording clerk), Phil C., Barb T., Sheila M., Cairn K., Canby R., Silvia O., Elise A., Pat S., Ted R., Peter M., Sky E., Nan E., Jack H., Jean C., Jeanne W., Mary B., Will C., Wes J., Minette C-S., Amy K., Larry M., Mary D., Sue P., Dot W., Jennifer D-L., Kim F., Margaret C., Ruth S., Amy S., Christina F., Marcia O., and Ria H.

9:00 am Opening: We began with centering silent worship and the 3rd Month Queries from Baltimore Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice (revised 2001) were displayed on the screen for review and consideration. The clerk welcomed all and presented the proposed agenda.

Agenda Items:

1. Chesapeake Quarterly Report:

- a. On behalf of Ministry and Worship (M&W) Committee and as the AFM representative to the Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting, Canby R. provided a report about the events and discussions from the recent Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting that was held at the Little Falls Meeting in Fallston, MD on February 16, 2020. Eight Meetings were represented. See the attached detailed report to learn more about the efforts.

2. Quaker Spring Market Causes:

- a. On behalf to Quaker Spring Market, Cairn K. expressed gratitude to those who submitted ideas as to the possible beneficiaries for the Quaker Spring Market that will be held on May 2, 2020. Through their discernment process and out of the eleven (11) suggested causes, the following were selected (see attached report for greater detail):
  - i. First \$250 will go to the Young Friends for their discernment.
  - ii. 75% will be split between the following three external causes:
    1. Anne Arundel County Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services towards the retirement of school lunch debt.
    2. Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) in honor of the memory of Carol Brantley, an AFM member and who passed in 2018.
    3. South Sudan Hope Network, works to provide hope to those whose lives have been affected by war and devastation.
  - iii. 25% designated for the internal cause will be provided to Muslim Voice for Peace and Reconciliation (MVPR). The founder and director of MVPR, Samuel "Sam" Shropshire, is member of AFM who is sojourning in Saudi Arabia. MVPR is a group of Muslim men and women promoting world peace, human rights, compassionate justice and religious reconciliation.
- b. Friends were asked to add the May 2<sup>nd</sup> date to their calendars, along with the preceding weekend (April 25, 26) that will provide many opportunities for helping. Please stay tuned for more details on ways to help.

### 3. Ministry and Worship (M&W):

- a. Spiritual State of the Meeting (SSoM): On behalf of the Ministry and Worship Committee, Elise A. expressed thanks to all who participated and those who took notes on February 16, 2020 for deep listening and attention to the queries that were presented. Elise read the 2019 SSoM for the first time (see attached detailed report). Friends were invited to comment. A friend shared that the report was exceptionally inspiring. Friends enthusiastically embraced the SSoM report and it will be submitted to Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) on or before April 15, 2020. Friends felt that there was no need for a second reading; however, any additions from Young Friends will be incorporated into the report prior to submitting to BYM. The paragraph from the children will be shared verbally at the April 5, 2020 MfW wAtB. The queries for the SSoM were as follows:
  - i. How do we nurture healthy vocal ministry? How do we nurture ministries of other kinds and affirm one another's gifts? How can we improve the way in which we recognize and speak to one another's gifts?
  - ii. What paralyzes us or prevents us from answering our call? What fears do we experience? Which fears drive us and which fears create obstacles?
  - iii. Do we have the courage to create space for our human fallibility and vulnerability? In what do we find that kind of courage?

### 4. Peace and Social Concerns (P&SC):

- a. AFM Minute on A Call to Oppose Lethal Drone Use (see attached): On behalf of P&SC, Phil C. introduced the draft Minute and the BYM requested format that includes three-parts: (a) factual background for the Minute, (b) the Minute itself, and (c) the actions that are planned with regards to the Minute.
- b. Peter M. read the AFM Minute.
- c. Friends expressed thanks and gratitude for those who developed the Minute.
- d. A suggestion was made to consider adding the dehumanizing killings that occur within the U.S. because the Minute as written focuses on international drone use. It was noted that the issues are not only international military actions, but the use of a robot killing such as the one that occurred in Orlando, FL and other dehumanization within the U.S. Another Friend suggested that the Minute be revised and written to be more active and less passive. It was acknowledged that the Minute is lengthy and will need to be abbreviated for use in the newspaper or when sending to representatives in Congress.
  - i. Phil noted that the group who drafted the minute were seeking Meeting support for 3 requests:
    1. Approval of the concepts framed in the Minute and support for continued work. Friends expressed unity on the concept and continual work of the committee with regards to this Minute.
    2. Approval to send a letter to the editor promptly. Friends expressed unity for the Committee to send letters to the editor.
    3. Approval for P&SC to reach out and speak on behalf of AFM to develop a forum on this topic. Friends expressed unity for the committee to reach out and speak on behalf of AFM while developing a forum.
  - ii. Friends were encouraged to continue bringing ideas and concepts to the committee as they work towards fully developing the Minute and any actions related to the Minute.

## 5. AFM Change Group:

- a. On behalf of the AFM Change Group, Phil C. handed out a draft “Declaration as an Anti-Racist Faith Community” for AFM (The AFM Declaration). The AFM Declaration was written in the BYM format for Minutes, including three sections: background, minute, and recommended action. The Declaration includes queries for Friends to bear in mind and actions to engage in (see attached). For the past six months, the Change Group has been developing and revising this AFM Declaration based on the BYM Declaration that had been approved at BYM Annual session in July 2019. The Change Committee brought forth the AFM Declaration with the recommendation that it be adopted by the Meeting.
  - i. The clerk thanked the committee for their work on the development of the Minute. A Friend expressed thanks and acknowledged that the group put a lot of effort into the Minute, especially Phil’s diligence applied to editing and revising; an “extraordinary effort”. Another Friend expressed concern that the portion of the George Fox quote in the recommended action section was incomplete and misrepresented its intent. Several other friends expressed the value of including the full quote in the document. Another Friend was reluctant to include a long quote.
  - ii. A friend suggested that the wording be adjusted to humanize the people who were captured and enslaved. They are not slaves, as in not human, but are people who were enslaved.
  - iii. Friends were in unity with the Minute and Queries. Friends strongly recommended that a more complete reference to the Fox quote be incorporated into the Declaration before fully adopting it. There was not unity on how or if the full quote should be included. One Friend requested to be recorded as standing aside.

Closing: Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business ended without the opportunity to review the minutes for items 4 and 5. Those in attendance are asked to review the final items for accuracy and completeness on this DRAFT version. The Recording Clerk received feedback and the minutes were finalized and brought to 2th month MfW wAtB. The revised meeting minutes from the 3<sup>rd</sup> month were approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M., Recording Clerk

### ATTACHMENTS:

- Chesapeake Quarterly Report
- Quaker Market Committee Report 3rd month 2020
- 2019 SSoM Report
- AFM Minute on A Call to Oppose Lethal Drone Use
- AFM Minute a Declaration as an Anti-Racist Faith Community

February 16, 2020

Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting,  
Little Falls Friends Meeting, Fallston, MD  
Canby Robertson, AFM Representative

Beautiful sunny day, the event hosted by Little Falls Meeting with great welcome to all.

- About 40 people attended morning program of MfW and MfB.
- After MfW, MfB opened with Clerk Janet Abrams asking for a 5 minute silence. Phil Caroom was introduced as new CQM Recording Clerk. Tim Keck, retiring Recording Clerk is moving to Alaska.
  - Business:
    1. A "Nuts and Bolts" Committee has been established to help plan future CQMs. It is hoped that there will be at least one person from each Monthly Meeting to join N&B.
    2. Nominating Committee:
      - a. Three Monthly Meetings have no members on the "Nuts and Bolts" Committee. Request for volunteers
      - b. Request to fill Assistant Recording Clerk position to assist Phil
    3. Rebecca Pickard is moving to a position at BYM.
      - a. She will be working on a "Pay-as-a-Led" Sub Committee. The goal is to move away from charging a fixed fee to attend annual session to a "pay-as-led approach to encourage those who can't afford to attend. The goal is to attract a younger and broader attendance. The committee is beginning research on the change and is asking for feedback from Monthly Meetings before June, 2020. They hope to implement by 2020 or 2021.
    4. Roll Call of attending Monthly Meetings:
      - a. Annapolis:
      - b. Gunpowder: working on a clear Meeting mission statement to carry forward. They are reshaping the First Day School. Working on Spiritual Formation Retreats They are having "Music with Friends" evenings for people to listen or play
      - c. Homewood:

Meetinghouse is 100 years old this year  
Second Thursday evening they offer "Experience with Light workshop  
Arts Working Group, coffeehouse, art exhibits of member's work  
Peace and Justice holding discussions on "How to be AntiRacist."  
Green Committee - goal to be 100% solar  
Workshop on the "Nature of Plastics."  
February: Clerking Workshop and Discussion  
April: Spiritual Workshops - lots of 30 and younger attending
      - d. Little Falls:

Spiritual Formation Group starting  
They donate books to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders at local elementary school and volunteer to read to them.  
They sent Valentines Cards to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders this year.  
They host "One Woman Act" programs as living biographies.  
Hold a summer evening concert in July, always well attended

## Hosting a employee from FDA to discuss Vaping

### e. Patapsco:

Hold one-on-one Spiritual Formation Meetings with all members and attenders.

Spring retreat planned

Adapted their sound system for the hearing impaired

Volunteer at "Our Daily Bread Kitchen.

Have mounted a Smart TV on the wall to play Quaker Speaks Discussions once a month

### f. Pawtuxet:

40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of current Meeting (3 meetings founded in total, current founded in 1980)

Printed a bumper sticker: "Quakers Here"

Replaced "Queries" at MfB with "Quaker Speak" video

Volunteer for Homeless groups.

### g. Sandy Spring:

Hosts Potluck after every meeting

Held Art Exhibit of Members and Immigrants

Peace and Justice working to end ICE contract in county, trying to bring more awareness to students of Sandy Spring School to immigration issues.

### h. Stony Run:

Working to be more inclusive to attract immigrant families

Working on meeting vision statement

Harford Friends School is closing – using the facilities to open a new school based on an agricultural tradition, sustainers of land

- Friends General Conference Gathering 2020, hosted by BYM will be held at Radford University in Virginia over July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. More information at [fgcgathering.org](http://fgcgathering.org)
- Simple potluck meal followed MfB.

- Afternoon Program: about 30 people attended.  
Quaker Voice of Maryland (QVM) presented.  
See attached report by Jeff Soulen.

## Report to PFM regarding CQM at Little Falls Friends Meeting on 2/16/2020 – Jeff Soulen

Event was hosted warmly, with smooth logistics and ample delicious food, by Little Falls

About 40 people attended the morning program of MfW, MfW/B, and simple meal

- many wonderful things are going on at many meetings
- many wonderful Friends had a chance to meet and deepen their relationships with each other; fellowship was so enjoyable that it was hard to get people back into the meeting room to start programs on time

About 30 people attended the afternoon program, an update on activities of Quaker Voice in MD

The group is working hard to get up to speed:

- has consulted w/a similar group in NC that is a few years ahead of us
- solicited input from individuals and Clerks of all Meetings in MD re priority issues – a minority of those contacted responded
- based on responses received, selected 4 major issues to focus on: Gun Violence Prevention/Peace Building, Climate Justice, Immigration Civil Rights, Criminal Justice & Prison Reform; is coordinating with other groups working on these issues
- has identified 1 or more 2020 bills to lobby for in each of the 4 areas
- is expanding <https://www.quakervoicemd.org> to be an increasingly valuable resource

Time was spent in group process addressing how involvement w/QVM could strengthen community in our meetings, how QVM can be helpful to meetings; and practicing “elevator pitches” that might be delivered to legislators, either in person, over the phone, or in writing. 3 to 5 calls, each taking about 2 minutes, can often sway a legislator to vote as asked! QVM is happy to coach anyone who would like to try!

QVM currently has 11 members from 5 meetings, 3 CQM meetings plus Frederick and FMWashington

Current QVM goals:

- expand their working group (meets roughly monthly, by videoconference more than in person) to include members from each meeting in CQM. For those Meetings where no one is led to join the working group, they would like an identified liaison person so they don't have to direct communications to the (already-overworked) Clerks
- have as many of us as possible contact legislators regarding the bills QVM has identified
- expand their contact list (of individuals) as rapidly as possible so they can contact and mobilize constituents of individual legislators who e.g. may be making a crucial committee vote

Current QVM asks (in increasing order of commitment):

- join their list of contacts here: <https://www.quakervoicemd.org/get-involved/join-our-contacts>
- familiarize yourself with QVM's 2020 legislative priorities here: <https://www.quakervoicemd.org/legislative-session/priorities-for-2020>, then find your elected officials here: <https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=177afa87a67746a4ac5496b2d0897fb7> and call or write them asking them to support the bills you support

- consider participating in an Advocacy Day in Annapolis for one or more of the bills; information on participation can be found here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/18O5gZU3XC5uBhgqS2jgoxEwz-pM9ofI/view>
- consider whether you are led to join the QVM working group (Susannah Rose has volunteered to be our liaison) – they would welcome you. Let them know through <https://www.quakervoicemd.org/get-involved/join-our-contacts>, also please notify Susannah Rose and/or Jeff Soulen that you have volunteered.

## Quaker Market Committee Report 3<sup>rd</sup> month 2020

The Quaker Market Committee would like to express our gratitude to all who submitted ideas for possible Quaker Spring Market beneficiaries, eleven causes in all. The ideas were thoughtful, wide-ranging and inspiring, making our discernment process even more challenging than usual. Our discernment process led us to select the following allocations for Quaker Spring Market proceeds:

The first **\$250** will be allocated to our **Young Friends** for their discernment.

The **external 75% of proceeds** will be split evenly among three causes:

- **Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Food and Nutrition Services, for the retirement of school lunch debt.** They have recommended that if we are interested in addressing poverty among local families, they could direct our funds toward paying off the debt accrued by children prior to their annual acceptance into the free lunch program. Otherwise, schools would need to pay this debt back by the end of the school year through fund-raisers and funds that could otherwise be used for enrichment activities.
- **Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN)** is the first grassroots nonprofit organization dedicated exclusively to fighting global warming in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Our donation will be made in honor of the memory of Carol Brantley, who served on the board of CCAN, believed in it enough to plunge into the icy waters of the Potomac to raise money in its support, and inspired others of our community to do the same after she became too ill to take the plunge herself. One of those plungers was our own renowned youth climate activist, Kallan, with whom Carol had a special bond. Carl Benson is working with CCAN to determine how we might best direct these funds to honor Carol's memory, ideally in a way that does not fund anti-nuclear activities, out of respect for concerns brought forward by Will Candler toward the anti-nuclear issue.
- **South Sudan Hope Network**, based in Annapolis and founded by two former "Lost Boys of Sudan," works to provide hope to those whose lives have been affected by war and devastation. Their goal is to create a collaborative network to assist with providing financial resources, while the villages provide the workers to build sustainable projects such as school buildings and wells. This work is especially important to girls in South



Sudan, positioning them for greater opportunity through the provision of schooling and training.

The **internal 25% of proceeds** will be awarded to:

- **Muslim Voice for Peace and Reconciliation (MVPR)**, which consists of an international network of volunteers and staff in more than 30 nations on all six continents. They are Muslim men and women promoting world peace, human rights, compassionate justice and religious reconciliation. They work collaboratively with inter-faith groups and other non-government organizations, seeking to be a Muslim voice of peace and reason in the midst of civil unrest and war. Sam Shropshire, a member of Annapolis Friends Meeting sojourning in Saudi Arabia, created, developed and has sustained the Muslim Voice for Peace and Reconciliation for over a decade now. Sam and Will Candler are both on the Board of Directors.

We are looking forward to **Quaker Spring Market** coming up on **2 May**, and ask Friends to add the date to their calendars, along with **Saturday and Sunday of the preceding weekend**, which will provide many opportunities for helping (e.g., Saturday: meeting work day, setting up the large tent, retrieving donations from remote storage, and unloading the rental truck and pod into the foyer, and Sunday: our big set-up day when we will gather for a simple lunch after rise of 11 am meeting and then work together to transform the meetinghouse into Quaker Market mode and start the sorting process). Please stay tuned for more details on ways to help.

## **Spiritual State of the Meeting**

### **Annapolis Friends Meeting**

On February 16 2020, Annapolis Friends Meeting held a worship sharing on the Spiritual State of the Meeting for 2019. Annapolis Friends expressed a deep appreciation for the way Spirit moves amongst us in vocal ministry. One Friend described worship as the silence of a still, fog covered lake in the early morning. Sometimes something raises its head above the water, breaking the stillness, and that is vocal ministry. It gives us a new focus, bringing us to places we didn't expect to go. Another Friend spoke of the surprising cascade of insights that can be triggered by a message when “something just clicks”: we share our Light and it can ignite other people's Light as well. “We share out of our love of those in Meeting.” And a Friend added that perhaps it has to do with “paying attention to the Holy Spirit, acting on its prompting.” Another Friend explained that she has “shifted to receive mode” because “what other people share is very significant to me”.

The queries about fears resonated with Friends in several different ways. Just as “we are afraid of the flame because it burns, fear is not always negative”. It can illuminate our challenges. A visiting Friend said that, both in public and in Meeting, there may be a fear of “claiming our spiritual practice”, instead of being proud to say “I am a Quaker”. Another Friend felt that a real challenge for vocal ministry is the fear of not being politically correct and finding the courage to go ahead and speak our truth as it is revealed to us. “The truth that comes out in vocal ministry is what guides us forward.”

Several Friends found the concept of “concerns” more appropriate than the concept of “fears”. One Friend is concerned that what holds her back is the “how”: how do you look for something, especially if you don't know what it looks like? How do you find purpose? The “how” is a moving target that keeps you constantly searching. Another Friend is concerned about the growing gap between generations. The older generation listens but doesn't understand; we need to expand our minds to be able to understand what the younger generation is saying. There is also concern around the temptation to grasp codes of conduct that create uniformity. A Friend described a commercial where a piano had been altered so that every key produced the same note. Even when played by a virtuoso, a Beethoven sonata was all one tone. Harmony and unison are two different sounds and we need different and unique tones to create harmony.

Perhaps AFM has fallen into unison in some respects and we should consider how to create more harmony. One Friend, from a conservative Quaker background, said that although he is comfortable worshipping here, he has trouble fitting into this activist community and doesn't feel needed. Another Friend spoke for many when he responded “we need you, Friend”. How can we, as a community, grow into more harmony?

Love is the opposite of fear and, as one Friend said, if we love ourselves enough, we will honor our gifts and the gifts of others. Love is about sharing communication and action. She suggested that, if we change the query to “Which loves and passions drive us?”, it

will look very different and inspire us to come from a much better place than fear. Deep leadings often come from love and passion. Another Friend asked “How can I discern leadings and summon the courage to act on them?” She described two steps: first, waiting in silence, trying to develop the discipline to hear and, then, working in community. We can listen to each other, reflect on what we're learning in life and share it with others. The loving connection between us is a very important practical way for us to move forward in our leadings.

We have much to reflect upon as we grow as a community in the coming year. As a Friend put it: “the thing that has made the Religious Society of Friends so special to me over all the years is the ongoing revelation that goes out through vocal ministry and all the other things that we do, and that guides us forward in a world that's difficult.”

## AFM - CALL TO OPPOSE LETHAL DRONE USE

### Background:

On 3 January 2020, in the hours of darkness, Qasem Soleimani, an Army general from Iran, a country that is at peace with the United States, was killed by a U.S. drone near Baghdad International Airport in Iraq, a country that is torn by warfare but that is a U.S. ally. Although the attack primarily targeted General Soleimani, published reports say it also resulted in multiple collateral deaths, as drone strikes often do.

Drones have been used in warfare for almost 30 years, but their evolution has been horrifying. First used for surveillance during the Gulf War and the civil strife in Yugoslavia, since 2002 they have been employed as a favorite method of “targeted killings,” as U.S. administrations refer to them – otherwise referred to as assassinations. Other countries use drones in warfare too, but the United States has sought to legitimize their use in pursuit of this nation’s military goals.

Statistics are hard to obtain. In 2011, John Brennan, at the time President Obama’s chief counter terrorism adviser, famously stated publicly that for “almost a year” no civilian had died in U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan. With great difficulty, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism in London tries to track U.S. drone strikes and their aftermath. As of 2/4/2020 BIJ had logged 6,876 confirmed U.S. drone strikes since it began recording data in January 2004. It estimates total deaths at 8,459-12,105, and it puts civilian deaths at 769-1,725. Of those, between 253 and 397 have been children. Akbar Ahmed, an American University professor and author of “The Thistle and the Drone,” draws a horrific portrait of children in Pakistan lying in bed night after night listening to the buzz, waiting for it to fall and kill.

Quakers have stood as advocates for peace and as witness against war and violence since their beginnings more than 350 years ago. The Quaker Peace Testimony states: *"We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the whole world."*

In America and the rest of the world, Quaker meetings and other organizations have spoken out against drone warfare. This testimony has taken many different forms. In 2013, Orange Grove Meeting in southern California passed a minute opposing drone warfare. The next year, Madison Friends Meeting in Wisconsin came to unity around a minute objecting to the building of a drone support facility at Volk Field, a local Air National Guard base. Kendal Monthly meeting in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, passed a minute urging that the U.S. government put an end to ‘this secretive, remote-controlled killing’ and calling for an international treaty controlling the development and use of lethal drones. Last year, Diane Randall, the executive secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation, told a protest outside the offices of General Atomics, the company that makes the Predator and Reaper drones: “Drone strikes that include the killing of civilians is counter to people of all faiths, who find meaning in our

relationships to each other, our common humanity and God. It is time — nearly 20 years after our first lethal drone strikes — to acknowledge that this harmful drone program should end. It is immoral, unethical, and prolongs the United States in endless wars.”

In 2016, Midlothian Friends Meeting, a monthly meeting in Virginia affiliated with Baltimore Yearly Meeting, adopted a minute against drones. The drone attack in Baghdad this year adds urgency to their call. Following is an adapted version of the Midlothian minute, written in full acknowledgment of and gratitude for the Quaker process that led to its adoption in Midlothian:

Minute:

Annapolis Friends Meeting (Quakers) is deeply concerned about the proliferation of lethal unmanned aerial vehicles, commonly known as drones. We are especially troubled that the United States is leading the way for drone warfare and the dehumanizing attacks of targets on kill lists around the globe, as demonstrated recently in the January 2020 attack at Baghdad International Airport. In this incident, simple arrest would appear to have been feasible, permitting Soleimani to be brought to justice and saving the lives of noncombatants if the U.S. also would join and enforce the International Criminal court. We believe war is never a justifiable means of solving conflicts, and it only perpetuates fear, suffering, and revenge.

Some see drones as an improved method of waging war. With drone technology, “pilots” at U.S. bases use remote control to kill people who are thousands of miles away. Drones have become the preferred weapons to conduct war because they are seen as minimizing the risk to U.S. troops. However, drone pilots, like ground troops, are experiencing mental health problems and post-traumatic stress disorder. We must stand against these insidious, dehumanizing weapons with the same vigor that we stand against weapons of mass destruction.

We are also creating hostility in communities attacked by drones. Evidence suggests that the trauma of living under drone attacks causes anti-American resentment and aids in the recruitment of violent extremists. According to a former State Department official, for every drone strike, the U.S. generates roughly forty to sixty new enemies. Drone strikes have led to the death of hundreds of innocent civilians, including children. In addition, the U.S. is using drone warfare in countries where we are not at war, such as Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, the Philippines and now Iraq. [However, the drones program allows the U.S., and potentially other countries, to remain in a constant state of endless, undeclared wars of questionable legality.]

Equally important, if drones lower the threshold for war, what happens when everyone has drones? Drone technology is spreading. Friends Committee on National Legislation reports that more than 50 countries are developing drones and more than 70 have acquired various types. Experts suggest that every country will possess the ability to create or acquire armed drones within 10 years. Many mistakenly see the use of drones as a low cost – human and financial – alternative to war. But, just as the spread

of automatic weapons, nuclear weapons, internet hacking, and other military technology has become inevitable, the spread of military drones already are commonplace. Unless our policies change, the day is readily foreseeable when military drones may become as available as automatic weapons and when U.S. citizens become targets of similar anonymous and lethal attacks on our own communities by terrorist and criminals.

We call on our country's leaders to stop the international spread of drones and promote a just and peaceful world community. Our country's decision to use drones will ultimately define the type of nation and world we leave to our children. We urge our government to put an end to this secretive, remote-controlled killing and instead promote foreign policies that are consistent with the values of a democratic and humane society.

Annapolis Friends Meeting recognizes the value of every life. We are guided by the inspirational teachings of Jesus and other spiritual leaders promoting peace. We also stand by our Quaker witness against war and violence which began over 350 years ago. The Quaker Peace Testimony states: *"We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the whole world."*

#### Recommended actions:

Annapolis Friends Meeting recommends this minute be circulated to all members of the Maryland delegation to Congress and that members of Meeting ask for time to discuss them in person with the two U.S. Senators and the four U.S. representatives whose districts include Anne Arundel County. It recommends sending it as a letter to the Capital and Bay Weekly and Washington Post following up with the editors to try to secure publication. It recommends copying the minute to BYM and all BYM monthly meetings and FCNL with a call to generate similar minutes. And it recommends setting up a local forum accessible to the public at a venue such as Anne Arundel Community College, Johns Hopkins, USNA or St. Johns to discuss how drone warfare has evolved and how it is likely to evolve in the future with representatives from other faith communities and from the U.S. military, including the U.S. Naval Academy and Fort George G. Meade.

Samsung.1000.2020.DroneMinute

**Declaration as an Anti-Racist Faith Community  
Minute, and Queries adopted by Annapolis Friends Meeting (AFM)  
On 3/ \_\_\_/ 20 [6th draft]  
(Recommended by AFM Change Group)**

**Background**

Earliest Quakers resolved to see “that of God” in others and to live their beliefs including our testimony of equality. Yet, despite our own history of persecution, many Quakers over generations joined in buying and selling slaves before reaching clearness to seek abolition, education and other rights for former slaves.

Today, many Friends still benefit from systems that permit lesser educational and economic opportunities for nonwhites, *de facto* racial bias in law enforcement, and other routine discrimination in daily life. So, our faith again asks Friends to answer the Biblical call to “love thy neighbors” as ourselves.

Simply “addressing racism” is too weak. We must immerse ourselves in this concern and act. Our responses must kindly, but explicitly, acknowledge, illustrate, correct, and heal this infection that too often weakens social ties and effective citizenship. To do this, we must be authentic, logical, and empathetic.

We are encouraged by a practice adopted by Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM), Pendle Hill, and other groups to vet each of our decisions and actions using queries based on our Quaker practice.

**Minute and queries**

Annapolis Friends are called on an ongoing basis to hold ourselves accountable, individually and collectively, in our decisions and practices, our actions and inaction.

Friends are urged to use queries for this purpose. For example:

1. To place our decisions in context, how do we hear the voices and include the concerns of our neighbors in our decisions and actions? Do our assumptions and stereotypes, privilege and assigned social-status impede our efforts to be in community with our neighbors?
2. To consider the impact of our decisions, how might our decisions or practices promote fairness and inclusion of those harmed by racist behavior or systems?
3. To offer a model, how do our decisions or practices fulfill our intention to be an anti-racist faith community? Do they enable us to “let our lives speak” and to be more welcoming?

**Recommended actions**

Friends recognize that we cannot fully understand experiences of those we do not know. Therefore, we are called to “walk cheerfully over the world answering that of God in everyone.” AFM’s Change Group recommends that we adopt this Declaration as a living document that later may be changed and may be part of our learning process. The Change Group also recommends as examples that, individually and as a Meeting, we:

- Make it our custom regularly to seek visits with our African-American neighbors and others we perceive as different in their faith communities and elsewhere to listen and understand their lives and their concerns;
- Invite our neighbors, regardless of race, origin or class, to share our friendship and our communities as they are led; and
- Seek and adopt ways we can act to end racism and other harmful-isms, to undo prejudices, and to make our communities more inclusive, diverse and whole.