

# The Friends Messenger

*The Newsletter of West Chester and Birmingham Monthly Meetings of the  
Religious Society of Friends*

Volume LXIII, Number 2

Second Month, 2019

## ***West Chester Monthly Meeting Calendar – February 2019***

**Sunday, 2/3:** Care of Meeting Community Committee meets at 9 am; Youth Religious Education Programs resume.

**Sunday, 2/10:** Query reading 10:30am; Meeting for worship with attention to **business** starts at 12 noon

**Sunday, 2/17:** Worship & Ministry Committee meets at 9 am; **Shared lunch** after worship

**Sunday, 2/24:** Peace & Social Concerns Committee meets at 9 am.

## ***Birmingham Monthly Meeting Calendar – February 2019***

*Our greeters in February are: 2/3 Peg or Tod Baseden;  
2/10 David Leonard; 2/17 Barbara Knickerbocker; 2/24 Tanya Pertzoff-Wells*

**Sunday, 2/3 8:30 am:** Meeting for worship with attention to **business**.

**Sunday, 2/10:** Youth Committee meets to pack cookies for college students; Property Committee hosts a fellowship luncheon after worship.

**Sunday, 2/17:** Religious Ed. Committee and Peace & Social Concerns Committee both meet at 8:30 am

**Sunday, 2/24:** Meeting for Worship

**Monday, 2/11 and 2/25, 7:00 pm:** *The Brandywine Sacred Harp Singers meet from 7-9 pm at the meeting-house.*

*No experience needed! For more information, contact Laura Densmore at 610-793-5102 (home), 610-405-2485 (cell), or by email: FaSoLaura4@gmail.com*

*Information for the March Messenger is due Monday, 2/25*

# West Chester Monthly Meeting

## Minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

### January 13, 2019

West Chester Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends gathered in Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business at the appointed hour on 13th Day of First Month, 2019.

Meeting opened with a period of silent worship. Friends approved the minutes of 12/9/18 as published in the *Messenger*. Friends also approved today's proposed agenda as presented by Co-clerk Deborah Lyons.

#### REPORTS

##### Clerk's Report

In the past month, West Chester Monthly Meeting (WCMM) lost 3 members of our meeting: Nan (Marianne) Potts, Sue Plummer, and Melora Freeland. Obituaries for these Friends will be posted in the Social Room.

A Memorial Meeting for Melora Freeland has been scheduled for February 2. The Clerk expressed thanks to our Funeral Committee for its assistance in the arrangements.

##### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer David Wickard presented a first draft of the 2019 Budget, inviting Friends to review it and raise any initial questions before he presents it to the Finance Committee. Pending that Committee's review and acceptance, David plans to present a finalized budget for approval at Meeting for Business in Second Month. A line item for the Borough's "Stream Protection Fee" in the report prompted some discussion. Member John Spangler offered to explore the question of whether Meeting might be eligible to apply any credits to reduce this fee as a result of the storm-water system installed as part of the Hickman/Jeanes project, or if any cost-sharing with the Hickman might be available.

##### Tuition Aid Committee

Committee member Marian Vito presented information and a question regarding Meeting's method of handling tuition-assistance funds for children in grades K-12 applying to Friends schools.

The question: Should available funds continue to be distributed according to a formula intended to assess individual need? Or should the method be changed to a simple equal distribution of aid? (It was noted that grants from Meeting's fund to assist post-secondary students are awarded on an equal-distribution basis by the donor's mandate.)

The information: Despite the committee's best efforts, the formula it uses to assess individual need has not always resulted in a fair distribution of funds. And the committee cites other problems: For example, it cannot calculate any family's allotment until all families have submitted all forms and information—so each year, delay by some families has resulted in delay for all; a real problem for families trying to make school decisions. Further, if any family's information is inaccurate, all families end up receiving an incorrect amount of assistance.

The Committee plans to invite additional feedback on this topic at next month's Meeting for Business. However, Friends were able to agree on one recommendation: that deadlines on applying for financial aid must be firm. Applications submitted after a deadline will not be considered.

##### Youth Religious Education Committee

Friends were informed that the winter/spring Youth RE calendar, including topic and assigned leader for each date is posted in the Social Room.

##### Care of Meeting and Property Committees

Randy Lyons presented a joint report from Care of Meeting and Property committees, covering several items.

- A defibrillator is on order for the Meeting, and Meeting is in the process of getting/installing a "KnoxBox" to enable emergency entry into the Meeting House.

- The porch project has received two estimates, one with a price triple that of the other. Meeting cannot move ahead with the project until the architect finalizes the documentation to make possible a more accurate estimate. Not getting a firm bid in a timely fashion may prevent our being able to complete the project this summer as planned—and if the project is delayed, we may need to install a new “interim” ramp from the rear porch into the Meeting. Friends asked that the committee give the architect a deadline for delivery of the finalized documentation. Meanwhile, the committee continues to explore additional grant opportunities and other sources of revenue.
- Addressing the problem of Meeting House doors being left unlocked and lights left on, Randy shared with Friends a proposed “Social Room Use” checklist.
- The Committees for Care of Meeting and for Worship & Ministry are planning to consider the idea of re-introducing Opening Exercises to the Meeting for Worship schedule. Opening Exercises were presentations that took place during the first 15 minutes of Friends’ gathering on First Day mornings, before settling into silence for Meeting for Worship. They covered a wide variety of topics and were usually—but not always--presented by Meeting members. At WCMM, they were a fixture in the First Day morning routine for decades, but were eventually set aside as finding presenters and topics to fill the allotted time became increasingly difficult.
  - If the Committees decide to proceed with this idea, they will draft a description of the nature and timing of the proposed program and present it to some future Meeting for Business. A primary consideration in their deliberations will be that Opening Exercises must help

prepare those in Meeting to settle fully into Worship. Suggestions for their deliberations are welcome.

### **Nominating Committee**

Friends were reminded that sheets listing proposed committees and members for 2019 are posted in the Social Room. Please check the lists, and . . .

- If you want to stay on a committee, write your initials beside your name on the list
- If you wish to step off the committee, cross out your name
- If you’d like to join a committee, add your name to the list.

Committee co-clerk Marian Vito asked that Friends consider whether Meeting wishes to retain or discontinue time limits for membership on certain committees. It is hoped that Friends might return to this question when we meet in Second Month.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Quarterly Meeting Representation: David Wickard, Deb Lyons, and Chris Smith indicated that they would represent WCMM in Quarterly Meeting at Goshen Friends on the 27<sup>th</sup> of First Month. Details about Quarterly Meeting will be included in Meeting’s weekly “announcements” sheet.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Larry Wheeler reported that the clock in the Meeting Room is in working order but its hinges are in bad shape. He is working to fix the hinges.
- Chris Smith mentioned that a stone pillar on one side of the Oaklands Friends Cemetery granite sign is damaged. A Friend reported that the pillar is in the process of being repaired.

### **CLOSING WORSHIP**

Meeting closed with a period of silent worship.  
Submitted in the Loving Spirit,  
Deborah Lyons, Clerk,  
Lisa Vosburgh, Recording Clerk

## **West Chester Monthly Meeting Announcements – February 2019**

We have learned of the death of the following Friends; their full obituaries can be found in the social room: **Nan (Marianne) Potts** passed away on December 16 at the age of 102. **Sue Plummer**, 90, passed away on January 9, 2019. **Melora Freeland** passed away on January 10, 2019 at the age of 85. Melora's Memorial Service will be held here on Saturday, February 2 at 11am. Friends may start to gather at 10:30.

As a follow up to the Gun Safety Presentation on Sunday, January 20, Randy Lyons shared the following website to help further answer your question: What can I do to assure my child's safety -- at home and wherever she/he may be invited to visit? <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/campaigns/gun-safety/Pages/default.aspx>

West Chester Friends Meeting is having a **silent retreat** at the Jesuit Center in Wernersville, PA from **May 24 to 26**. The Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth, situated on 240 acres in Wernersville, PA, is a place of natural beauty, welcoming quiet and spiritual sustenance, about an hour away from West Chester. The facilities and grounds at the Jesuit Center are unbelievable. Learn more about the center by visiting: [www.jesuitcenter.org](http://www.jesuitcenter.org) or reach out to Scott if you plan to attend or have any questions: [scott@envirosureinc.com](mailto:scott@envirosureinc.com).

**Application forms for 2019-2020 Tuition Aid** to members' children in Friends elementary and secondary schools **are available** from the meeting secretary. West Chester Meeting applications are due by February 15, 2019. PYM aid is administered by the *Friends Education Fund* (FEF). PYM/FEF forms are due back at your school by February 15 and are available online at <http://www.friendseducationfund.org/>, from the meeting secretary, and from your school. Concord Quarter forms, due February 16, are available from the meeting secretary, and online: <http://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Tuition> **PYM/FEF and CQM applications must be signed by a Meeting Clerk** before they are returned. **Please note:** in past years, West Chester Meeting has returned your PYM and CQM applications. **We are no longer returning PYM or Concord Quarter tuition assistance forms**, so you'll need to make sure applications are delivered on time. **All deadlines are firm. Applications received after the deadline, for tuition assistance with K-12 or college, will not be considered.**

### **Birmingham Friends Meeting**

#### **Minutes of MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS**

**January 6, 2019**

Meeting opened with a period of silent worship.

The agenda was approved.

Friends approved the Minutes of November 2018 as revised. Friends approved the Minutes of December 2018 as presented.

#### **Clerk's Report – Connie Eash**

On December 23rd, a drawing of our meetinghouse was presented to the Clerk. Friends approved the following minute of appreciation: Birmingham Monthly Meeting expresses its appreciation to Tom Woodward, a member of Downingtown Monthly Meeting, for giving to the Meeting a framed rendering of Birmingham's meetinghouse as it looked in 1777 that Alice L Darlington created

and which is dated July 16, 1895. The Clerk noted for the minutes that at the rise of meeting for worship on December 23rd, Friends present endorsed a traveling minute brought by Friend Ken Park, who was traveling in the ministry from Providence Meeting, Media, PA. His meeting recognizes his calling to travel to meetings in the PYM area in support of Meeting for Worship as central to the Quaker community. The Clerk reminded Friends that the deadline to apply for Tuition Aid from the Meeting for the 2019 - 2020 school year is February 15. Friends need to apply to PYM, Concord Quarter, and Birmingham Meeting separately. The instructions and forms are on the Meeting's website.

**March 31 PYM Event - Barbara Knickerbocker**

Barbara reminded Friends that last fall, the Meeting approved a proposal by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to sponsor a Friends in Fellowship Event at Birmingham on Sunday, March 31. A working group composed of: Barbara Knickerbocker, Valerie Suter, and John Lavin was formed to coordinate with Grace Cooke from PYM to plan for this program. The program will begin at the rise of meeting for worship with a talk by David Cole, Head of the Hagley Museum. The talk is called: Quaker Invention and Innovation in the Brandywine Region. Sandwiches and snacks will be provided by PYM after the talk. Afterward, there will be a tour of the William Brinton 1704 House. Barbara said that the anticipated end of the program would be 1:15. Grace plans to come out to Birmingham in late January to visit the working group and any other interested Friends.

#### **Oversight and Pastoral Care – Leslie Leonard**

The clearness committee composed of David Jones, Celia Lang, and Leslie Leonard met with Clare Elizabeth Worth and Greg Alden Brown on December 23rd to consider their request to be married at the Romansville meeting-house under the care of the Meeting. Clare and Greg live in New Hampshire, far from any Friends' Meetings. They wish to have the support of the Meeting's community in their marriage and will look for opportunities to attend the Meeting when they visit. It was clear during the committee's discussion with Clare and Greg that they have been careful and thoughtful in the development of their relationship.

Friends approved the Clearness Committee's recommendation to take Clare and Greg's marriage under its care. The marriage oversight committee composed of Jarl and Kathy Mork, Bill and Laurie Worth, and Sue Mazzarelli was also approved by Friends.

#### **Youth Committee Report – Serita Spadoni**

Serita presented the Youth Committee report on the results of their Giving Tree project. Birmingham Friends donated a total of \$1400 in gift cards to Friends Association for Care and Protection of Children. The Youth Committee thanked Friends for supporting this organization that serves homeless families in Chester County.

#### **ADA Restroom Working Group Report – Sallie Jones**

Sallie informed Friends that three contractors have recently visited the Meeting to learn about the Meeting's

wish to add an ADA compliant restroom, see the location, and take photos and measurements. Sallie has been coordinating the appointments, corresponding with the contractors to collect bids, and reporting to Property Committee on her progress. Property already has one proposal which was received last March. She expects possibly to have a recommendation of a contractor and proposal for Property Committee's consideration in the next four to six weeks. Sallie noted that while she is continuing to pursue other bids, all the estimates so far are all similar in cost and that the Meeting should expect the project to cost approximately sixty thousand dollars.

A Friend asked how long the construction might take. Sallie noted that one contractor said it might be 9 weeks. Another Friend asked if the new restroom would only be used by handicapped people. The answer was no; Sallie expects that it would be used by anyone and be a family restroom.

#### **Joint Meeting of Finance and Property Committees Report – Sallie Jones**

As an outcome of the October monthly meeting for business, Property and Finance Committees were requested to meet together to name an ad-hoc committee to raise money for an ADA compliant restroom. Sallie reported that members of the two committees have met twice. A set of written guidelines that describe the role of the proposed fundraising group was created and the group discerned names for the ad-hoc committee. The members of the new ad-hoc fundraising group are David Leonard, serving as clerk; Marcia Cole-Quigley; John Lavin; Meredith Hung; Mark Mitchell; and Celia Lang. This ad-hoc group gathered on December 30 to begin planning and the Finance Committee has been publicizing the opportunity for members and attenders to contribute to the Meeting's accessibility fund. The ad-hoc fundraising group will keep us informed on its progress towards attempting to secure contribution commitments of \$60,000.

#### **PYM Quilt Square Project – Sallie Jones**

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has invited each monthly meeting to design and complete a single 10" quilt square following guidelines on the PYM website: <https://www.pym.org/things-are-getting-quilty/>. Sallie noted that this activity is not meant to be a project for our

first-day school class, but one for Friends of any age to take part in. Those Friends taking part will be asked to meet, respond to queries that are provided, and have a conversation to decide how to decorate the square to represent the Meeting. The Meeting's square must be turned in by March 23rd. The squares will be stitched together and displayed at PYM annual sessions in July. Sallie asked for volunteers to do the project. Interested Friends can reach out to her.

### **Finance Committee Draft Budget – Jarl Mork, Mark Mitchell**

Mark presented the draft budget prepared by the Finance Committee. The committee has incorporated all committee requests into its budget with the exception of two items to balance the budget: a reduction in the amount earmarked for tree service and the donation to the fire and ambulance company. Mark also noted that the Capital and Preservation Fund is being underfunded. Through the work done by the Property and Finance Committees over 2018, it is estimated that the Meeting should be allocating \$22,000 annually to the fund, but the budget only has \$10,000 allocated.

Absent any specific direction from the Meeting, the committee has continued to keep the unspent money that the Burial Ground South fund generates in interest separate from the General Fund. Unspent funds are either to be carried forward or reinvested with the BGS fund. Friends felt that the process for how this money is managed requires further discussion at a later time. Friends would also like to see any documents that the Meeting has in regards to the creation and intent of the fund in or around 1982.

A Friend asked if the Meeting would get a report on anticipated expenditures for the coming year from the Capital and Preservation fund. This report typically coincides with the presentation of the budget. There are no large projects planned for the coming year at this time. The Property Committee continues to maintain a replacement schedule that lists what capital improvements would be next in line to be addressed by the Meeting. It was noted that after the Manual of Procedures was

changed, the Property Committee did not believe it was required to provide a report for upcoming projects, but they could formalize the schedule they maintain into a report for the Meeting. The Property and Finance Committees agreed to review the modified procedures and get clarity on what is required to be reported on to the Meeting and provide this information at a future business meeting.

### **Oversight and Pastoral Care – David Jones**

Reporting for Oversight and Pastoral Care, David gave an overview of the Meeting's process for distributing the charitable contributions the Meeting raises from the Chicken Barbecue and the Harvest Buffet. This year, there are 14 charities getting \$311 each. The funds are \$1,500 lower than last year's record-setting year mostly because of reduced Chicken Barbecue proceeds. Friends approved the proposed contribution list as presented. David noted that these contributions may just be tokens, but do demonstrate our support of what the organizations do.

### **Peace and Social Concerns – Barb Quintiliano**

At a prior meeting for business, the committee was asked to investigate if the Meeting should establish a firearms policy. Pennsylvania state law allows for gun owners to openly carry their weapon unless the property has a policy against firearms.

The committee recommended that the Meeting form a policy and post signs when the policy is adopted by the Meeting. The committee also recommended that the Meeting adopt an active shooter emergency plan.

Due to the lateness of the hour, Friends were asked to read the provided report carefully and that discernment of the report and recommendations be taken up at a future meeting for business. Friends approved setting a future date and time for questions and discussion of this subject.

Meeting ended with a period of silent worship.

Respectfully submitted, John Lavin, Recording Clerk  
Connie Eash, Clerk

## ***Birmingham Monthly Meeting Announcements – February 2019***

February 3, the First Day School topic is "Godly Play: 10 Best Ways"; February 10 is "Love in the Bible"; February 17, "The Responsibilities of Wealth – Luke 12:48".

2019-2020 Tuition Assistance: If you are a member of Birmingham Meeting and your child attends a Quaker elementary, middle or high school, you can get tuition assistance from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (administered by Friends Education Fund), Concord Quarter and Birmingham Meeting. A needs test is required for PYM/FEF aid; contact your school for more information. Applications will be on our website, please check the Resources tab for details. You can also receive applications by email; just send a request. You need to fill out application forms for PYM, CQM and Birmingham. The PYM and CQM forms MUST be signed by our clerk. Return the PYM/FEF application to your child's school by February 15. Mail the CQM application to the address on the form; it must be received by February 15. You can return the Birmingham form by email, USPS mail or you can drop it off at the meetinghouse by February 15.

### **Of Interest to All – February 2019**

The **PYM Eco Justice Collaborative** invites you to join them on the first Tuesday of each month as they explore together issues of environmental and social justice. Call or 'zoom' in on February 5 from 7 to 8 pm for topic "The World We Seek." Join the conversation about FCNL's legislative policy statement as it does, or doesn't, reflect our concerns about climate change and social and economic justice. For more information: <https://www.pym.org/eco-justice-collaborative/>

Friends are invited on **Saturday February 9** starting at 10am for an Outreach & Communications Thread Gathering at Abington Monthly Meeting to work with Friends General Conference, QuakerSpeak, and PYM's Membership Development Granting towards real progress on in-reach, invitation, and welcome!

**Concord Quarter Square Dance at Willistown Friends Meeting! February 9 from 7 to 9pm!** Come one, come all for an evening of square dancing with a live band and caller. No experience necessary. Great for all ages. Snow date is February 23. Questions? email [concordquarter@pym.org](mailto:concordquarter@pym.org) or go to: <https://www.pym.org/event/concord-quarter-square-dance/>

#### **Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Programs for Youth and Families -- Mark your calendars for what's up next!**

**Saturday, March 23** -- Spring Continuing Sessions at Reading Meeting, 10am-4pm

*The day will include a multigenerational opportunity for witness and action at Berks Family Detention Center in the morning, and youth programs for all ages in the afternoon.*

**Saturday, April 6** -- Quaker Family Meetup at Princeton Meeting

*An afternoon of fellowship, worship sharing, and fun with Friends!*

**May 4-5** -- Spring Family Overnight at Camp Dark Waters: *For Children K-5th Grade and their Families*

**May 3-5** -- Camp Swatara Weekend: *For Middle School Friends and Young Friends*

**SUMMER SESSIONS at The College of New Jersey!**

*The PYM Community gathers July 24-28 for multigenerational residential programs, business, witness, and FUN*

**The Friends Messenger**  
**425 North High Street**  
**West Chester, PA 19380**

*Address service requested*

## **2. Deepening Our Faith: Meeting for Business**

- a. Is our meeting for business held in worship in which we seek divine guidance?
- b. How do we sustain prayerful consideration of all aspects of an issue and address difficult problems with a search for truth that is unhurried by the pressures of time?
- c. Do we recognize that we speak through our inaction as well as our action?
- d. *Do I regularly attend meeting for business? If unable to attend, how do I fulfill the responsibility to understand and embrace the decisions made?*
- e. *How do I affirm and support God's presence in the process of discernment and reaching a decision?*
- f. *Do I remain open to personal transformation as the community arrives at the sense of the meeting?*