

The Friends Messenger

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

Volume LXVIII, Number 3

Third Month, 2019

West Chester Monthly Meeting Calendar – March 2019

Sunday, 3/3: Boy Scouts' Pancake Breakfast at 9 am; Care of Meeting Community Committee meets at 9 am.

Sunday, 3/10: Query reading 10:30am; Meeting for worship with attention to business starts at 12 noon

Sunday, 3/17: Worship & Ministry Committee meets at 9 am; Shared lunch after worship

Sunday, 3/24: Peace & Social Concerns Committee meets at 9 am.

Sunday, 3/31: Poetry sharing at 10:30 am.

Birmingham Monthly Meeting Calendar – March 2019

Our greeters in March are: 3/3 Serita Spadoni;

3/10 Sallie or David Jones; 3/17 Barbara Knickerbocker; 3/24 Marcia Cole-Quigley; 3/31 Ann Upton

Sunday, 3/3: Meeting for worship at 10am with attention to business.

Sunday, 3/10: Youth Committee meets at 10am; Luncheon after worship – What would Jesus have Eaten?

Sunday, 3/17: Religious Ed. Committee, Oversight and Pastoral Care, and Peace & Social Concerns Committee all meet at 8:30 am

Sunday, 3/24: Meeting for Worship 10am

Sunday, 3/31: PYM Friends in Fellowship event

PYM will be sponsoring a Friends in Fellowship event at Birmingham Meeting on Sunday, March 31.

The program will begin with Meeting for Worship at 10:00 am. At 11:15, David Cole, Director of The Hagley Museum, will give a talk on Quaker Settlers, Innovators, and Industry, followed by refreshments. Between 12:30 and 2:00, we will visit the William Brinton 1704 House which is located 2 miles south of the Birmingham meetinghouse. This event is free and open to the public. For further information see www.pym.org/fellowship and click on RSVP to register.

West Chester Monthly Meeting

Minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

February 10, 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 the Tenth Day of the Second Month, 2019.

Meeting opened with a moment of silent worship.

The Co-clerk requested approval of the January minutes and Friends approved the minutes.

The Co-clerk reviewed the proposed agenda. Friends approved the agenda.

REPORTS

Clerk's report

- Co-clerk, Gwenn Knapp, reported that Melora Freeland's Memorial was a rich experience for all who attended.
- Long-time member, Anne Moore passed away on January 23, 2019 in Northampton, MA in the presence of her family.
- Michelle and Steve Lozowski applied for Meeting membership. Marina Pavluk, Melinda Bradley, Lauren Hastings and Lisa Vosburgh have agreed to participate on the Lozowski clearness committee.

Treasurer's report

- Treasurer, David Wickard, requested approval of the 2019 budget as previously presented with one minor revision to the postage line item. Friends approved the budget. Melinda Bradley, Co-clerk of the Youth Religious Education committee raised up to Friends that we are currently staffing the FDS teacher position with volunteers and recommended we revisit this line item prior to establishing the 2020 budget to determine if it will still be our practice to hire an FDS teacher or if we can release those funds for other purposes in the future.
- David reviewed the final 2018 budget and year-end balance sheet with Friends and requested

approval for transferring \$35,000 of surplus to the ramp project. Friends requested we let the decision season for more time to consider. Friends agreed to defer making a decision until next month, or until there is enough time for the request to season.

- David reported that he and John Spangler will address the Stream Protection Fee at a future Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.
- David raised up a request to contribute \$100 to the Quaker Bolivia Link education fund. Friends agreed.

Financial Aid Committee

- Marion Vito, representing the Tuition Aid Committee, revisited the Meeting's method of distributing funds for tuition assistance applicants with children in grades K-12. There were many questions of whether or not the intent of the fund is to fairly support family need and if this is the case, if the recommended 'even distribution' meets the Meeting's obligation. The difficulty that the Committee faces is that they do not have access to all the information that the schools have, including the award that the schools offers. The Meeting proposed that the committee move forward with an even distribution this school year with the understanding that the Meeting will revisit the approach to award calculation for the following school year in the Tenth Month of 2019.

Property Committees

- Randy Lyons reported that we received the structural engineer report from Rick Ortega on the divider wall as well as suggestions for what to do next. Randy will make the report available to anyone who wishes to review it.
- He also reported that our architect is finalizing the specifications for the ramp project so that

the Meeting can request competitive bids. Due to the timing of the completion of this work, the need to seek competitive bids and limitations for when work can be conducted, the recommendation is that we delay the start of the project until the summer of 2020. This will provide us with the time we need to secure the bids and the funding the project will require.

Nominating Committee

- Marina Pavluk, clerk of the Nominating Committee, expressed gratitude for everyone agreeing to serve on the committees. She shared draft list of the committees.

Care of Meeting and Worship & Ministry Committees

- Marina Pavluk reported that COM and WMC are recommending a trial 'Spiritual Stretch' for Opening Worship on the 4th Sunday in April. Should Friends find the trial deepens and strengthens the Meeting's spiritual journey, the Spiritual Stretch would take place once a month on the 4th Sunday of the month for the first 10-15 minutes of Meeting for Worship.

Quarterly meeting report

- Co-clerk, Deb Lyons, reported that Goshen's Quarterly Meeting was very enjoyable. Representatives of the Ujima Friends Peace Center presented. She reported that the Nominating Committee of Quarterly Meeting identified a Care Committee for Delaware Valley Friends School. Wilmington Meeting presented their Joys and Challenges report and it sounds like they are doing good things in Wilmington City for the purpose of being good neighbors. Charlie Spadoni is treasure for the Quarter. The April Quarterly meeting will be a joint meeting with Western Quarter on April 28th at Wilmington Friends School. Dr. Amanda Kempt is speaking on 2-hour program. Birmingham Meeting is planning a PYM outreach event on March 31st and will conduct tours of Brinton House. Concord Quarter continues to work on aging concerns and meets monthly on this topic. The

Friends Peace teams will be at Westtown School May 16-18. On February 23rd there will be a talk at Friends Center on aging concerns.

- WCMM will regroup on our Quilt Square.
- Marina Pavluk requested if WCMM would consider making a \$300 contribution to Ujima Friends Peace Center. Friends Approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- Due to the joint Quarterly Meeting planned in April, Friends were asked to approve moving WCMM's April Quarterly meeting to January 2020. Friends approved.
- Kathy Judge and Lauren Hastings, representing the WCFS Annual Fund Committee, requested approval for use of the Meeting's front yard and porch on Saturday May 4th at 8 am for the WCFS Annual Fund Committee yard sale. Use of the front porch and front yard for the yard sale was approved. They also requested approval to use the social room on Thursday, May 2 and Friday, May 3 to store the yard sale items. The meeting approved the request.
 - *Lauren Hastings will include a note about the upcoming yard sale in the weekly announcements leading up to the yard sale.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Friends shared how much fun the Quarter's Square Dance was and requested the Meeting explore a similar outreach opportunity with the school. Marina Pavluk, Lauren Hastings and Ann Gelsomini requested approval to explore this opportunity. The meeting approved.
- The Meeting received a request to utilize the social room by Lisa Larson who runs a local chess club. The request would be for 1 evening week, from 7 pm – 11 pm and 1 Saturday a month from 9 am – 6 pm. The chess club is not sponsored or affiliated by any organization. They have 20-30 active members. They indicated they would be able to pay \$1000/year for the space. This request spurred a good deal of questions and the need to revisit the request next month. Friends requested information to satisfy the following questions:

- Are we willing/able to offer them that much time.
- With 20-30 active members, is the space large enough for them?
- Can our parking lots accommodate the number of cars and will the traffic conflict with other school or Meeting activities.
- Is there a regular date of the week that doesn't conflict with other obligations?
- Does the club have a certificate of liability /insurance?
- What's are the ages of the participants?
- Do we feel this is an equitable exchange?
- Should we check with united Methodist (reference check) – Lauren Hastings agreed to follow up with United Methodist.
- Does the club plan on using the kitchen?
- Marian Vito agreed to follow up with Lisa Larson on these questions.

CLOSING WORSHIP

Meeting closed with a moment of silent worship.

Gwenn Knapp, Clerk, Lisa Vosburgh, Recording Clerk

West Chester Monthly Meeting Announcements – March 2019

Friends are invited on **Saturday March 9, 10am-4pm**, at Princeton Monthly Meeting to explore ways in which meetings can work to maintain the day to day spiritual and emotional health of their community. This gathering will put special emphasis on caring for all ages, children, families, and youth. RSVP here: <https://www.pym.org/quaker-life-council/thread-gatherings/registration-building-vibrant-multigenerational-community/>

Join us on **Tuesday, March 12 at 7:00 pm** as **Alex Miller** presents **Forrest Gump/Clandestine Quaker?** Forrest Gump, a remarkable movie, is packed with Quaker values but few would say it's one of the best Quaker movies. Let's discuss! It is not necessary to have seen the film, as the workshop presents numerous clips that tell the story. This will be a forty-five-minute presentation with a 30-minute discussion to follow. There are many mind-stirring revelations in the movie- revelations that are not self-evident at first sight. Childcare will be available upon request; please reach out to Todd, Marina or the meeting secretary to request childcare.

The **Stewards of Children®** workshop, at Downingtown Friends, is rescheduled to **March 12 at 7pm**. *Stewards of Children®* is a training that teaches adults how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. See the full flyer with more details posted in the social room.

Let's do lunch! Shared lunch on **Sunday, March 17** will include a presentation from **Melinda Wenner Bradley**. Melinda Wenner Bradley will share images, stories, and reflections from her travels among Friends in Britain Yearly Meeting and Kenya.

Randy Lyons is considering starting a **Dream Analysis Group** to assist participants in finding the best way to understand their dreams. If you're interested in helping start such a group, please get in touch with him by way of West Chester Monthly Meeting.

West Chester Friends School will be closed **March 15-25** for Spring break.

West Chester Friends School Yard Sale. Doing any spring cleaning? Need to make some room in your home? Then please consider donating those items to the West Chester Friends School Friendly Treasures yard sale, which will be held on Saturday, May 4 at 8 am. Donations may be dropped off at the Meetinghouse Social Room on Thursday, May 2 or

Friday, May 3 between 7:30 am and 5 pm. We are collecting household items, appliances, furniture, jewelry, bicycles, artwork and crafts. We kindly ask that you not bring clothing or books.

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 or reach out to Scott if you plan to attend or have any questions: scott@envirosureinc.com.

Birmingham Friends Meeting

Minutes of MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

February 3, 2019

Meeting opened with a period of silent worship.

The agenda was approved.

Friends approved the Minutes of January 2019 as presented.

Clerk's Report – Connie Eash

In April, Birmingham will be responsible for presenting their Joys and Challenges to Concord Quarterly Meeting. The Clerk will endeavor to write the report leaning heavily on the information in the Meeting's annual letter. Friends were encouraged to send Connie items that they feel are important to be included in the report.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Quaker Life Council is asking for a similar assessment, driven by several queries. A Friend suggested using the Joys and Challenges as the basis for this response as well. David Leonard invited the clerk to meet with the Worship and Ministry Committee to see where the Joys and Challenges report can be used as a basis for the self-assessment.

Friends Association for the Care and Protection of Children needs assistance to support families on SNAP that are still struggling after the partial shutdown of the government. The Clerk listed their immediate needs which she will also distribute via bfriends.

It was noted that it is also possible that the shortage in support will continue, especially if there is another partial shutdown and encouraged Friends to think of Friends Association in their ongoing charitable contributions.

Connie announced that she will be on vacation for the March 3rd Meeting for Business. In her absence, that meeting will be clerked by Celia Lang, our Assistant Clerk.

Oversight and Pastoral Care – Leslie Leonard

After receiving a letter from Meredith Hung requesting membership in for herself and her three daughters: Cassandra, Lillian, and Abigail, a Clearness Committee composed of Susan Brodesser and Susan Mazzarelli met with them on January 8th. Leslie described the visit at their home and their desire and preparedness for membership. The committee recommended that the Meeting approve their request for membership, and Friends approved.

Friends approved a Welcoming Committee composed of Marsha Cole-Quigley, Barbara Quintiliano, Serita Spadoni, and Leslie Leonard.

March 31 PYM Event – Barbara Knickerbocker

On January 31st, Val Suter, David Leonard, Serita Spadoni, Connie Eash, Gwynne Ormsby, and Barbara Knickerbocker met with Grace Cooke from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to talk about the Friends in Fellowship Event which will be taking place at Birmingham on March 31. The program will begin with regular worship, followed by a talk by David Cole, Director of the Hagley Museum. His talk is entitled: Quaker Settlers, Innovators & Industry. There will be refreshments following the talk and Friends will be invited to visit the William Brinton 1704 House between 12:30 and 2:00. This program is the second in a series of four Friends in Fellowship Events sponsored by PYM this year. A flier advertising this event will be produced by PYM which the Meeting can use for local publicity purposes. Friends from the Meeting who are planning to stay for the event should register as PYM needs a headcount in order to plan for the proper amount of refreshments. More information will be provided soon on how to register.

Barbara noted that Friends' assistance is required for various sorts of tasks such as setting up chairs, directing parking, and ushering. The organizing committee will ask for help in the weeks ahead. When asked approximately how many Friends from PYM the Meeting should expect, the response was about 100 people.

ADA Restroom Working Group Report – Sallie Jones

Sallie expressed her gratitude for the suggestions the group has received. The Property Committee has worked closely with the Finance Committee and others on funding of the project so as to not lean on the Capital and Preservation Fund. Since the last report, Sallie noted that they have revised upwards the estimate to approximately \$65k for the whole project. Most Friends that Sallie has spoken to prefer to utilize part of the porch for the project instead of taking more space from the shed. Sallie let Friends know that this restroom is a family and ADA compliant re-

stroom open for use by everyone. Sallie has approached five contractors and is expecting a third estimate in about one week. Two contractors chose not to provide estimates. The working group is preparing to negotiate a contract and definite cost for the Meeting's approval.

ADA Bathroom Funding – David Leonard

David reminded Friends that at a joint meeting of the Finance and Property Committees, a fundraising ad-hoc committee was formed to assess the feasibility of raising all the funds necessary to build the Family ADA restroom. David was happy to report that through private meetings with many members of the Meeting, that there is \$50,000 in cash and pledges for the project from 25 households. David noted that in these private meetings, members were enthusiastically supportive of the project. The ad-hoc committee asked for the Meeting's approval to move forward with a public fundraising campaign to raise the remaining money necessary to build the restroom. With the Meeting's approval, the annual Finance Committee letter would contain a request for additional contributions to finish raising funds for the restroom. When the Property Committee has all their bids and makes a recommendation to the Meeting to enter into an agreement to construct the bathroom, the ad-hoc committee would like to have received at least two thirds of the total cost of the construction to feel safe. A Friend asked over what time contributions can be made. The response was that the committee is looking for immediate donations, but no eventual commitment would be turned away. Another Friend asked if the committee will make a grant request to PYM for this project. David shared that they are not planning to do so at this time as PYM has recently pushed back on the Meeting's grant requests and the committee feels confident that we can fund construction of this bathroom ourselves. Since the meetinghouse is a voting location, the committee will engage with Birmingham Township to determine if they will provide any financial support.

Friends approved incorporating this public request into the Finance Committee's annual fundraising letter. Friends also approved the committee requesting funds outside of the Meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Paul Kaniefski

Paul distributed copies of his reports that were also sent out by email in advance. Revenues this year exceeded the budget but were down from 2017. Expenses were slightly lower than budgeted and the Meeting had a residual of about \$5,000.

Paul then reviewed a membership contribution report comparing 2018 to 2017 and was sent out by email in advance. Total contributions declined along with a decline in the number of contributors to the Meeting. The average contribution amount went up in 2018. The Meeting has a consistent 73 members and 11 attenders that have given in both years.

Friends accepted the reports with gratitude.

Finance Report – Mark Mitchell

As reported by the Treasurer, the Meeting has a residual amount of about \$5,000 to be allocated. The Finance Committee recommends that this residual amount be allocated to the Capital and Preservation Fund. Friends approved.

Mark distributed copies of his budget report and the proposed 2019 budget that were also sent out by email in advance. Little has changed since the draft budget from last month. Friends approved the budget as presented.

A Friend suggested that the Finance Committee and Treasurer consider allocating more of the funds for the Capital and Preservation Fund into Friends Fiduciary to build our assets. The committee and treasurer will review the allocation of funds between short and long term investments.

Changes to Manual of Procedures – Gwynne Ormsby

Gwynne read proposed changes to the Manual of Procedures. The first reading was in December 2018 where June Lunney proposed changing "meeting secretary" to "office manager" since this title is more appropriate for the duties expected. Friends approved the changes as presented.

Peace and Social Concerns – Barbara Quintiliano

The updated Policy Regarding the Carrying of Guns on Birmingham Meeting Property was distributed in advance by email and hard copies were made available. Due to lack of time, the report was held over for a future Meeting for Business. The committee was encouraged to schedule a discussion outside of meeting for business, when this important issue could be more thoroughly explored.

Meeting ended with a period of silent worship.

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

Birmingham Monthly Meeting Announcements – March 2019

First Day School topics for the month will be: March 3- What did Jesus Eat; March 10- Prepare Fellowship Lunch: What Would Jesus Have Eaten?; March 17- Mary and Martha; March 24- Vines & Branches; March 31- Godly Play: Prodigal Son.

Join the **Brandywine Sacred Harp Singers** on Monday, March 11 and/or March 25 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

Sunday, March 10 at 11:15 am, the RE Committee and the FDS will be hosting a fellowship luncheon following Meeting for Worship on the theme "What Jesus Would Eat". Everyone is welcome to join us in fellowship as we break bread together and sample some of these foods.

Saturday, March 30, at 3:00 pm, Friends are invited to attend the **wedding of Clare Worth and Greg Brown** at Romansville Friends Meeting, located off Shadyside Rd. in Romansville. Further info on the address will be forthcoming.

Of Interest to All – March 2019

On Friday, March 15 from noon-5pm, Appoquinimink Friends Meeting hosts its annual Open House to celebrate the lives of those active in the Underground Railroad in the vicinity of Odessa-Middletown, Delaware. All are welcome to enter and learn the stories of Harriet Tubman, John Hunn, Samuel D. Burris, Daniel Corbit and others who were residents or frequent visitors to southern New Castle County while aiding those who longed for freedom. For more information or questions contact kateinmaryland@atlanticbb.net

Saturday, March 16 from 4pm to 8pm, there will be a fundraiser for the **Israel and Palestine Alternatives to Violence Project** at Downingtown Friends. The evening will include live music featuring Jeff Domenick and John Scardina & Friends, a slideshow presentation and Mediterranean inspired pot luck! This is family friendly with childcare provided! Please contact jscardina@wcfriends.org to request childcare, and use this link to participate in the pot luck: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040F45A8A72EA20-avppalestine>

Save the Date! The Hickman is excited to host **Art of Caring: Passport to Art** on **March 30** at Oakbourne Mansion. Proceeds from the event support The Hickman's Resident Assistance Fund, which provides assistance to residents who are facing financial hardships and are no longer able to cover their room and board, and/or additional personal care services. For more information about Art of Caring or to purchase tickets, visit www.thehickman.org or call 484.760.6300

Information for the April Messenger is due Thursday, 3/28

PYM Youth Events

Saturday, March 23 -- Spring Continuing Sessions at Reading Meeting, 10am-4pm
Including an opportunity for witness and action at Berks Family Detention Center
More info here: <https://www.pym.org/event/youth-spring-continuing-sessions-gathering-2019>

Saturday, April 6 -- Quaker Family Meetup at Princeton Meeting
An afternoon of fellowship, worship, and fun with Friends.

May 4-5 -- Spring Family Overnight at Camp Dark Waters
For Children and Families Program (K-5th Grade)

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

3. Deepening Our Faith: Spiritual Nurture

- a. How does the meeting encourage the use of spiritual practices that deepen our faith, enhance the excitement of shared religious discovery and increase the possibility of spiritual transformation?
- b. What is the nature of our shared experience of the Divine and how do we nurture our collective spiritual growth and transformation?
- c. In what ways do we support each other in our spiritual journeys, in our search for God's will and in our efforts to increase understanding of humanity's relationship to life on earth?
- d. How do we recognize, develop and nurture the spiritual gifts of all in our meeting?
- e. How do I incorporate into my personal and family life those daily practices that focus on continued spiritual growth, including worship, reflection and engagement with writings that nurture the soul?*
- f. How does my spiritual life integrate an understanding of a well-ordered relationship with the earth and deepen my reverence for the interconnectedness of all life?*