

The Friends Messenger

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

Volume LXIII, Number 9

Ninth Month, 2019

West Chester Monthly Meeting Calendar – September 2019

Sunday, 9/1: Care of Meeting Community meets at 9 am; Youth Religious Education meets at 9am

Sunday, 9/8: Query reading at 10:30 am; Meeting for worship with attention to business at 9am.

Sunday, 9/15: Worship & Ministry Committee meets at 9am; Shared Lunch

Sunday, 9/22: Peace & Social Concerns Committee meets at 9 am

Sunday, 9/29: Poetry share

Birmingham Monthly Meeting Calendar – September 2019

Our greeters are: 9/1 Barbara Knickerbocker; 9/8: Marcia Cole-Quigley; 9/15 Vince Schiela; 9/22 Sallie or David Jones; 9/29 Serita Spadoni

Sunday, 9/1: Meeting for worship at 10 am. Meeting for Business is postponed until September 8.

Sunday, 9/8: Meeting for Business 8:30am

Sunday, 9/15: Peace & Social Concerns and Oversight & Pastoral Care Committees both meet at 8:30 am; Worship & Picnic at Westtown Lake

Sunday, 9/22: Religious Education Committee meets at 8:30am; Meeting for Worship at 10 am

Sunday, 9/29: Meeting for worship at 10 am

International Day of Peace- 2 ways to participate!

Saturday, September 21st

Noon-1pm: Sponsored by the Chester County Peace Movement: meet at the Historic Chester County Court House (High St)

2-4pm: Sponsored by The Green Team of West Chester: A celebration of the International Day of Peace with a focus on Climate Action and Youth Activism (please see the flyer)

Where: Chester County Courthouse steps and Unitarian Congregation on High Street in West Chester

2:00-3:00pm -- Music and Speeches on Peace and Climate Activism shared by all ages

3:00 -- March down High Street to the Unitarian Congregation, co-led by Mayor Herrin

3:00-4:00pm -- Entertainment and fellowship at the Unitarian Congregation

Information for the October Messenger is due Monday, 9/30

West Chester Monthly Meeting

Minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

August 11, 2019

Meeting opened with a period of silent worship.

Friends approved the minutes of Seventh Month 2019 as published in the Messenger.

Clerk Gwenn Knapp reviewed the proposed agenda, noting the addition of reports from the Property Committee and Advancement Committee. The Meeting Treasurer will present the Second Quarter Financial Report in Ninth Month. Friends approved this agenda.

Committees Reports:

Youth Religious Education: Our First Day School year will begin on 9/8, the Second First Day of Ninth Month. YRE coordinator Melinda Wenner Bradley requested a schedule change for that day: holding Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business from 9:00 to 10:15 AM, rather than after Meeting for Worship. The day would begin with "coffee hour" (providing doughnuts, juice, and coffee for all) from 8:30 to 9:00. Then First Day Schoolers would head to FDS class while Young People's Group (YPG) would remain in Meeting for Business, take part in drafting a Minute of Travel for this year's FDS teachers, and then possibly help plan Meeting's participation in the 2:00 PM September 21 International Day of Peace celebration scheduled to take place at the "Old" Courthouse (High and Market Streets), honoring the shared purposes of Peace and Earth Care. This year's YRE educational materials—"The Worship Kit" for FDS and the book "Spirit Rising: Young Quaker Voices" for YPG—may be distributed to students before they return to Meeting after FDS/YPG time.

Friends approved this schedule-change proposal.

Property Committee: Randy Lyons informed Friends that there are now two new fans in the Meetinghouse attic; they will be wired soon, and it is hoped that they will help Friends feel cooler in summer and warmer in winter by improving airflow. Randy reported that the

"porch project" continues apace, with grant proposals being developed and the Meeting treasurer being kept abreast of efforts.

Advancement Committee: Todd Krasnai presented the idea of inviting other Meetings in Concord Quarter and Western Quarter, as well as Downingtown (Uwchlan) Meeting in Caln Quarter, to join in our annual Hibernia Park Pancake Breakfast/Meeting/Nature Walk on 10/6, which happens to be "World Quaker Day." Melinda Bradley noted that the clerks of Western and Concord Quarters will be meeting in the coming week and suggested that they be informed of the invitation. Friends approved. Matt Bradley reported that Delaware Valley Friends School is interested in participating in Quarter activities—and that the school has said it would be happy to encourage students' participation in projects of Concord Quarterly Meeting and its constituent Meetings.

Annual Sessions Report: Matt Bradley recommended that Friends check the PYM Website for the Closing Epistles—not only from the "grownups" but also from the Children's, Middle School Friends', and Young Friends' Epistle groups. They are well and thoughtfully written. Concord Quarter Coordinator Lynne Piersol's report on Annual Sessions—also informative and thoughtfully written--will be posted in the Social Room.

Burial Grounds Committee: Todd Krasnai reported that the Committee suggests holding Meeting for Worship at the Burial Grounds on 11/3. Friends approved.

Quaker Block happenings: A letter of appreciation for Pam Leland's service as Executive Director of The Hickman is being composed. Friends approved inviting Pam to join us for Shared Lunch on 9/15. Incoming Executive Director Jennifer Karsten is coming to The Hickman after serving as director of Pendle Hill; Friends approved

inviting her and her family to join us for Shared Lunch on 10/20.

Property Committee reports that it is awaiting bids for "deep cleaning" of the Meetinghouse from several vendors. WCFS T. Toni Fritz and her husband have received the committee's list of twelve proposed tasks for regular cleaning and will be providing an estimate; she will research other cleaning companies that could provide cleaning for high-level areas (upper window, shades, lights, etc.). Chris Smith is getting estimates for rug cleaning and deodorizing to be done during weekdays.

Larry Wheeler recommended proceeding with this cleaning if Meeting plans to keep present carpeting for more than a year. Friends approved moving forward with all proposed cleaning as soon as possible.

There being no other business requiring attention, Meeting closed with a period of silent worship.

Submitted in the Loving Spirit,

Gwenn Knapp, Clerk

Deborah Lyons, Recording

West Chester Monthly Meeting Announcements – September 2019

Youth Religious Education programs at West Chester Meeting resume on Sunday, September 8!

Our focus this year in the Children's Program (K-5th) and Young People's Group is on ***Stewardship of the Earth as Faith-based Witness***. The calendar for both age groups' programs will be sent to families, and available at meeting and on the website. *Put a copy on the refrigerator at home!* This fall, there are several opportunities to connect with one another across ages and with our wider community. We're also excited to welcome WCU student Zainab Hadjali back as our Child Care Assistant this year.

September 8 is a special morning! The schedule for the morning has been switched around, in the hope to accommodate the needs of people who are parents and encourage everyone to attend Meeting for Business. A light breakfast will be available at 8:30am, and Meeting for Business will be from 9:00-10:15am, followed by a break and worship at 10:30am. During the Meeting for Business, the Youth Religious Education committee report will include presenting the children and youth with books and sharing the "Minute of Travel" for the adults who work with our young people. Child care will be provided from 9:00-11:30am, and there will be a program for children and Young People's Group participants (pre-K and up) together from 10:30 until the return to worship at 11:15am.

October 18-20, we are hosting the **PYM Middle School Friends Retreat**. This is a great opportunity for Middle Schoolers to get together with others their ages. For info and to register: <https://www.pym.org/event/middle-school-friends-fall-gathering-2019/>

Birmingham Monthly Meeting Minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business August 11, 2019

Meeting opened with a period of silent worship.

The agenda was approved.

Friends approved the Minutes of June 2019 sent via bfriends with grammatical changes.

Clerk's Report – Celia Lang

Celia introduced herself to the Meeting as incoming clerk and expressed her excitement at starting this new role and asked for Friends' feedback and advice as she grows into the clerkship of the Meeting.

Friends approved holding the September meeting for business on the 8th. A Friend noted that the first Sundays of the month often have conflicts throughout the year and asked that the Meeting consider moving meetings for business permanently to a different weekend. It was noted that there are ripple effects that would have to be considered before making such a change. The concern was received for further discernment later.

The Meeting received a request for Melinda Wenner Bradley from PYM about hosting a Quaker Family Meetup on December 14th. The Property Committee has already approved the request. The event will provide a welcoming space for parents to gather for a relaxed program of fellowship and worship sharing. Care Providers will be available for the children.

Treasurer's Report – Paul Kaniefski

Paul presented the Meeting's second quarter finances. He distributed copies via bfriends and in paper. Contributions in the first half of the year are up relative to last year and we have raised half of our budgeted contributions. The Meeting's assets in the Green and Consolidated Funds have increased along with the rise in the stock market. Administrative expenses were higher than budgeted and the budgeted amount was already higher than last year. This is due to Tanya spending more time during the transition than expected, but now Tanya has stepped aside so Paul expects that the Meeting's administrative expenses will level out for the second half of the year.

Paul noted that this quarter is the first that Cindy has performed all of the bookkeeping work. While the transition wasn't without bumps, it still went quite well.

Paul indicated that over \$63,000 was raised for the family bathroom project and that he has begun to pay out expenses for the project.

A Friend suggested that the Finance and Peace & Social Concerns Committees consider making a proposal for increasing the Green Fund percentage in next year's budget. Friends accepted the report with gratitude to the Treasurer and Bookkeeper.

Oversight and Pastoral Care – Leslie Leonard

Leslie reported that the welcoming committee composed of Marcia Cole-Quigley, Gwynne Ormsby, Barbara Quintiliano and Celia Lang met with Phoebe Driscoll. They had a pleasant meeting and they heard of her work on peace and her happiness at becoming a member of the Meeting.

Jennifer Clapham, who was a member since the age of six in 1973 has not had any contact with the Meeting for many years. Since 2018, the Oversight and Pastoral Care Committee has attempted to reach out to her, but despite having a very recent address, she has not responded. The committee recommends and Friends approved the release of Jennifer Clapham with regret.

Leslie gave the Meeting better news with regard to the committee's contact with Catlin Butler. Catlin has responded to the Meeting with a letter which Leslie read. While Catlin has attended various monthly meetings in the area, she hasn't found a home yet and is moving to Tennessee with her husband. She would like more time to continue her search and continue as a Member of the Meeting; her membership to the Meeting still provides an important grounding for her life. The committee wrote back to let her know that the Meeting would be happy to continue her membership and asked that she keeps in touch with the Meeting.

Property Committee – Doug Linton, Andy Kirk, and Sallie Jones

Doug and Andy presented the parking proposal that was distributed by bfriends and in paper. Currently, the meetinghouse does not have enough parking spots for the number of Friends that attend meeting

for worship on Sundays, let alone large special events. Without adding more parking spaces, Friends will continue to tear up the lawn and put ruts into the ground in not only the Meeting's property, but also in the Birmingham Lafayette Cemetery where up to twelve cars are parked on Sundays. The committee has written to the cemetery apologizing for the damage and told them that the Meeting is working on adding more parking on our own property.

Friends discussed the option of not holding special events such as voting on the Meeting's property. The response was that in addition to the outreach opportunity, this is a problem not only for special events, but on most Sundays as well. Another Friend was concerned that \$1500 per parking space seemed high and asked if the Meeting could gain economies of scale by adding a larger number of spots at one time. The response was that there are other considerations for parking spaces besides the ones initially proposed including removal of mature trees, and also township restrictions on the amount of impermeable surface allowed without major stormwater runoff management. The small increase in parking allows more time for addressing these concerns. Additionally, Andy noted that the committee was using the same contractor that has done the modified stone for the Meeting's driveway in the past.

When considering parking beyond the initial five parking spots, Friends asked that the committee consider parking on the other side of the drive and also not removing mature trees to make room for parking spaces.

Friends approved the addition of five parking spaces proposal using modified gravel to be paid for from the Preservation Fund. Friends minuted their appreciation for their hard work in researching the options for additional parking for the Meeting.

Sallie Jones then presented a report on the investigation that the committee has done with regard to the humidity in the meetinghouse. There are ongoing

Property conversations about how the humidity could be mitigated. The committee has been running the air conditioning and heat more during summer and winter respectively, but this still leaves the shoulder seasons with the possibility of increased humidity. Property is proposing that the Meeting purchase a dehumidifier that can be installed into the existing heat pump system to help with the shoulder seasons. The quoted price is \$2,700 for the device. Sallie noted that this is the least expensive option for removing humidity that they have found.

After discussing the other options that the committee has been investigating and answering questions on the dehumidifier, Friends approved spending up to \$3000 for the purchase of the dehumidifier from the Preservation Fund.

A Friend asked whether the committee has a start date for the family bathroom. The response was there is no date yet but the requests for permits has started. Also, the selected contractor is currently on vacation.

Meredith Hung

Historians from the Museum of the American Revolution will be touring significant sites from the Battle of the Brandywine on August 21st. They are requesting access to the meetinghouse during their tour and would require only that someone from the Meeting open and close the meetinghouse for them. Meredith volunteered for that duty and Friends approved.

Finance Committee - Mark Mitchell

As per the Meeting's Manual of Procedures, the Finance Committee performs a friendly review annually on the state of the Meeting's financial records which are maintained by the Treasurer and Bookkeeper. The records are reviewed for completeness and correctness. Committee Clerk Mark Mitchell, Treasurer Paul Kaniefski, outgoing Bookkeeper Tanya Pertzoff-Wells and Bookkeeper Cindy Spalding reviewed the

Meeting's 2018 records, receipts, and Quickbooks entries and have determined that they are complete and satisfactory. They expressed their gratitude to our Treasurer, Paul Kaniefski, Bookkeeper, Cindy Spalding, and outgoing Bookkeeper Tanya Pertzoff-Wells for their dutiful work on behalf of the Meeting. Friends accepted the report with thanks.

Mark announced that the Finance Committee has commissioned the creation of a Fundraising ad-hoc working group with the purpose of devising and presenting strategies for raising funds for the long term sustainability of our meeting community and property. The working group is tasked to make recommendations for the Meeting's consideration and will not be responsible for performing any fundraising activities.

Concord Quarterly Meeting – Charles Spadoni

Held over

Emergency Preparedness – Cassie Hung

Held over

Date change for Quarterly Meeting at Birmingham – Chris McKenney

Held over

Meeting ended with a period of silent worship.

Respectfully submitted,
John Lavin, Recording Clerk
Celia Lang, Clerk

Birmingham Monthly Meeting Announcements – September 2019

Please note that our **Meeting for Business** has been rescheduled for **September 8** due to the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Brandywine Sacred Harp Singers will open **Meeting for Worship on Sunday, Sept 1** with their singing, and it will continue after refreshments so please feel free to join in! They meet a couple of Monday evenings each month to sing from the Sacred Harp (both Denson and Cooper revisions). They are a non-denominational community of singers. They're singing emphasizes participation, not performance. You are most welcome to join in – you do not need to know how to read music, no experience necessary! This month they are meeting September 9 and 30 from 7-9 pm at the meetinghouse. For more information, contact Laura Densmore at 610-793-5102 (home), 610-405-2485 (cell), or by email: FaSoLaura4@gmail.com.

Saturday, September 14, from 10am-5pm: Birmingham Friends will participate in the first day of the 2-day annual **Chadds Ford Days** festival. The venue is the Chadds Ford Historical Society, 1736 Creek Rd, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania 19317. A number of Friends have volunteered to staff our table.

Sunday, September 15, 10:00 am, Worship & Ministry and Religious Education invite you to **Westtown School** for worship and a picnic. We'll gather at the fire circle for worship at 10 am. A picnic at the lake will follow. More details to come. Meeting for Worship will be held at Birmingham as well if you choose not to join us at Westtown School.

FDS will begin again on the Sept 1, and the subject for both the 1st and the 8th is "Quakerism: Elizabeth Fry." FDS will attend the picnic on the 15th.

Of Interest to All – September 2019

Concord Quarter Working Group on Aging Concerns will meet on Wednesday, **September 4, 10:30am-noon** at Birmingham Friends Meeting. All who are interested in aging concerns are welcome. For more info: concord-quarter@pym.org.

Secret Gardens of West Chester tour and plant sale is **Saturday, September 7 10am-3pm**. This is a walking tour of private gardens in the Everhart Park area of the borough of West Chester. All proceeds support the Horticultural Therapy Program at Barclay Friends. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit: bf.kendal.org/events or call 610-918-3429.

Monday, September 9, the **Safe Harbor Golf Classic** is taking place at Chester Valley Golf Club in Malvern. Safe Harbor is looking for 5 more teams and there are sponsorship opportunities as well. For more information please visit their website: <https://safeharborofgwc.org/2019-golf-classic-fundraiser-for-safe-harbor-of-chester-county/> Please contact David James, Director of Development, at david@safeharborofgwc.org or 610-340-1182 if you would like to participate.

Monday, September 9, in the **Barn at Pendle Hill from 7:30-9:00 pm**: Open-water swimmer and human rights activist Christopher Swain will speak on What the River Told Me: Reflections on love, oneness, and the living world. Free and open to the public. Registration requested and required for livestream viewing.

The annual Fall Worship at the **Chichester Meetinghouse** is on **September 15 at 11am**. Chichester Meetinghouse is under the care of Concord Meeting, and has worship just twice a year. The current fieldstone Chichester Meetinghouse dates from 1769, replacing the log meetinghouse from 1692. Quakers had settled in this area from 1682 and they met in their home's prior to 1692. The Lenape had been here to welcome them. Quakers and the public are invited to share in the Chichester Meetinghouse meeting for worship. A time of quiet reflection in a wonderful historical site. 611 Meetinghouse Road, Upper Chichester PA 19061.

World Quaker Day is Sunday, October 6! Save the date and join West Chester Monthly Meeting for a Pancake Breakfast and Meeting for Worship at Hibernia Park. Breakfast at 9am with Meeting for Worship/Meditative Nature Walk at 10:30. We have reserved our usual pavilion, #1 in the wooded area off of Old Dam Rd at Hibernia Park. 1 Park Road, Coatesville.

Another great event to celebrate **World Quaker Day!** Concord and Western Quarters' 2019 **Hayride and Campfire Potluck!** On Sunday, October 6 from 5pm to 8pm, join them at the Stratton's Wynnorr Farm for hayrides, campfire and potluck! Bring your instruments and songbooks! For more information, please see the flyer or go to <http://concordquarter.org/> RSVP is requested <http://concordquarter.org/hayride-2019>

Save the Date! West Chester Friends Meeting is having a **silent retreat** at the Jesuit Center in Wernersville, PA from October 4 to 6. 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 the webpage www.jesuitcenter.org Feel free to invite family and friends. Please contact scott@envirosureinc.com if you plan to attend or for more information.

On **Sunday, October 20**, West Chester Monthly Meeting's Peace and Social Concerns Committee will present **actions to reduce personal carbon footprint during shared lunch**. Please feel free to join us for Meeting for Worship at 10:30 with the presentation to follow at noon.

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

Address service requested

g. Grounding for Transformed Lives: Equality and Justice

- a. How does our meeting benefit from established patterns of prejudice, exploitation and economic convenience? What are we doing to change this?
- b. How and how often does our meeting engage in a self-examination of its attitudes and actions regarding race, ability, gender, sexual orientation or class?
- c. What steps are we taking as a meeting to inform ourselves about social injustice and ecological violence embedded in our political and economic systems?
- d. What steps are we taking as a meeting to assure that our meeting and the committees and institutions under our care are respectful of the earth and its people?
- e. Do I regularly examine myself for attitudes and behavior that indicate any hidden prejudice regarding race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or class?*
- f. How do my lifestyle choices affect—positively or negatively—the causes of justice and peace in our nation, the community of nations and the whole of creation?*
- g. How do I demonstrate in my way of living, and in what I teach my children, that love of God entails acknowledging "that of God in every person"?*